

## Lesson 19

# Teaching on Prayer, Confronting the Rich Ruler, and Healing the Blind Beggar

Luke 19

### Two Parables on Prayer (18:1-14)

Chapter 17 closed with a discussion of the second coming and the danger of being unprepared. A second danger which faced Jesus' disciples was a failure to pray. Hence, Jesus asked, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (18:8). Jesus taught His disciples these two parables on prayer:

**1. The Parable of the Impertunate Widow (18:1-8).** There was a wicked judge over a city to whom a widow brought her petition saying, "Avenge me of mine adversary" (18:3). At first, he would not avenge her; however, by her persistent requests, she persuaded him to avenge her. The wicked judge reasoned, "I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me" (18:5).

This parable contrasts the wicked judge with our good God. If persistence resulted in this wicked judge relieving the widow, how much more will our petitions to our righteous God move Him to relieve our needs (18:7-8)? Jesus assured His disciples that God would respond to their prayers speedily. Would there be enough faith to offer these prayers?

### 2. The Parable of the Pharisee and Publican (18:9-14).

Jesus' second parable on prayer told of two Jews who went to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a publican. The Pharisee's prayer was full of arrogant self-righteousness, delineating to God all of the good which he had done. The publican's prayer was offered in a spirit of humility and deep contrition for sin, petitioning God to show mercy on him. Jesus said that the publican, instead of the Pharisee, went to his house justified.

### Teaching on Humility (18:15-17)

Having said "every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (18:14), Jesus illustrated that spirit with a small child. Some in the multitude were bringing their small children for Jesus to bless. His disciples tried to stop the multitudes from bringing their children. Jesus told His disciples to allow the multitudes to continue bringing their children "for of such is the kingdom of God." Jesus did not say that children are in the kingdom.

Rather, he said, "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein" (18:17). The attitude of the little child is that of the publican (18:13-14)—that of humility and simple, trusting faith, rather than the attitude displayed by the self-righteous Pharisee.

### The Rich Young Ruler (18:18-23)

A rich, young ruler came to Jesus asking, "Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" (18:18)



Jesus refuses the title "Good Master" in the sense in which it is given (cf. Matt. 23:7-11), although in its truest sense it applied to Jesus as God with us (18:19). To inherit eternal life, the young ruler was directed to obey the commandments (18:20; cf. 16:29). The young ruler stated that he had kept the commandments from his youth. Jesus replied, "Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow Me" (18:22). In a moment and with one short sentence, Jesus showed this young man how far removed from the kingdom of God he was. He loved Mammon more than God (cf. 16:13).

### Teaching on the Danger of Love of Money (18:25-30)

Jesus used this occasion to teach His disciples the danger

of loving money. He said, “How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God” (18:25). He did not say that a rich man could not enter the kingdom, for 19:1-10 demonstrates how one rich man, Zacchaeus, received salvation. However, for a rich man to enter the kingdom is so extremely rare that Jesus said it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom (18:25).

Hearing how stringent Jesus’ requirements were, some asked, “Who then can be saved?” (18:26) Jesus explained, “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God” (18:27). A camel going through a needle’s eye is impossible with men, even as a rich man being saved is. Nevertheless, with God even a rich man can be saved.

Peter spoke up, “Lo, we have left all, and followed Thee” (18:28). Peter and the other apostles had done what the rich young ruler was unwilling to do. They had left their businesses (some of them left lucrative jobs) in order to follow Jesus. Jesus promised

them spiritual blessings far greater than the temporal sacrifices which they might have to make to serve Him (18:29-30). All the relationships of natural life find their analogies in the bonds of Christian fellowship—one finds in the kingdom of God those who become his father, mother, brother, and sister while on earth. In addition to these, he will receive eternal life in the world to come (18:30).



**Turning to Jerusalem (18:31-34)**

The long, leisurely trip through Perea was over (cf. 9:51 where this journey began). Jesus turned toward Jerusalem for the final time (18:31). As He began this final ascent, He prepared His disciples for the

events which would occur—namely His rejection by the Jews, abusive treatment by the Romans, scourging, death, and resurrection. Nevertheless, His disciples could not understand Him. What He told them would occur was so contrary to their expectations that they could not conceive that these events could occur.

**Healing of a Blind Beggar at Jericho (18:35-43)**

As Jesus came nigh unto Jericho, a blind beggar sat by the way. Hearing the multitude coming by, he asked what was happening. They told him that Jesus was passing by. Immediately, he began to shout, “Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me.” Those standing nearby told him to keep quiet, but he only cried more loudly. Jesus stopped and had the beggar brought to Him. He asked the beggar, “What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?” (18:41). The beggar asked Jesus to restore his sight. Jesus replied, “Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee” (18:42). Immediately he received his sight. He began to follow Jesus, glorifying God. The people who witnessed this miracle joined him in praising God.

**Questions**

1. What lesson is taught by the parable of the importunate widow (18:1)? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How are the judge and God contrasted? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What moved the judge to answer the widow’s request (18:4-5)? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What does “avenge his . . . elect” (18:7) mean? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What attitude did the Pharisee display (18:9-14):
  - a. Toward God: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Toward himself: \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Toward the publican: \_\_\_\_\_
6. What attitude did the Publican display (18:9-14):
  - a. Toward God: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Toward himself: \_\_\_\_\_
7. What lesson is taught by this parable (18:14)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What attributes of a child must a person have in order to enter the kingdom of God (18:17)? \_\_\_\_\_
9. What positive attributes do you see in the rich young man (18:18-23)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Why did Jesus refuse the title "Good Master" (18:18)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. What did Jesus teach that the young ruler should do to inherit eternal life (18:20)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. What defect did Jesus expose in the young man's character (18:22)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
13. How does Luke 18:23 illustrate Luke 16:13? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
14. Did Jesus teach that it was impossible for a rich man to be saved (18:24)? \_\_\_\_\_
15. What reaction did Jesus' teaching on riches have on the multitude (18:26)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
16. List some sacrifices which the apostles made in order to follow Jesus. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
17. In what sense does one receive houses and relatives as a Christian (18:29-30)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
18. When does one receive eternal life (18:30)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
19. What did Jesus believe about the Old Testament prophets (18:31)? \_\_\_\_\_  
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20. What does Jesus' knowledge of the events to occur in Jerusalem show about the nature of His sacrificial death?

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21. Why could the disciples not understand what Jesus foretold about His death (18:34)?

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22. What reputation did Jesus have in Jericho as demonstrated by the blind man's actions (18:35-38)?

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23. When was the beggar healed (18:43)?

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### Answering Denominational Error

1. Some groups teach that one can be saved by praying as the publican did, "God be merciful to me a sinner." What things must a person believe and do to be saved which were not believed or done by the publican?

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2. Some groups teach that Luke 18:16 is proof that infants can be citizens in the kingdom of God and, therefore, practice infant baptism. What does the Bible teach about infant baptism?

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3. Some Christians teach that we have eternal life as a present possession. What does the Bible say?

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4. Contrast Jesus' healing the blind beggar with that of modern faith healers.

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