



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



The Holy Gospel According to St. Luke

Chapter 18

Bishop Youssef



Introduction

- The main subject of chapter 17 was faith
- This faith is put into action through the constant prayer
- So prayer is the focus of this chapter
- Jesus offers three parables on the power of prayer in this gospel
- The Parable of the Persistent Neighbor, 11:5-13 invites us to urgent prayer
- The Parable of the Persistent Widow, 18:1-8 is focused on one the necessity to pray without ceasing with the patience of faith
- The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector, 18:9-14 concerns the necessity of humility



Introduction

Chapter Outline

- The Parable of the Persistent Widow 18:1-8
- The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector 18:9-14
- Jesus Blesses Little Children 18:15-17
- Jesus Counsels the Rich Young Ruler 18:18-23
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The Parable of the Persistent Widow 18:1-8



- *Then He spoke a parable to them*, The word *then* calls attention to the fact that the parable-teaching immediately to follow was a continuation of what had preceded
- Jesus spoke to them in the previous chapter about suffering and end of time tribulations, so what, then, is the position of the Church?
- It is that of constant prayer
- It is that of the widow whose only weapon is persistent prayer
- It is only by means of this intense prayer that faith will be preserved

The Parable of the Persistent Widow 18:1-8



- *And not lose heart*, Often we fail in praying because we *lose heart*
- We become discouraged, and then no longer pray as we should
- It is easy to *lose heart* in prayer because prayer is hard work that we too often approach lightly
- In Colossians 4:12, St. Paul praised a man named Epaphras because he was *always laboring fervently... in prayers*
- It is easy to *lose heart* in prayer because the Devil hates prayer
- If prayer were powerless, it would be easy

The Parable of the Persistent Widow 18:1-8



- It is easy to *lose heart* in prayer because we are not always convinced of the reality of the power of prayer
- Too often, prayer becomes a last resort instead of a first resource
- Jesus lived a prayerful life
- We must therefore not *lose heart* in prayer
- The woman of Canaan kept praying though she was first denied
- Jacob refused to let go even when his leg was crippled
- Then in verse 2 He tells us about a judge
- This judge had no reverence for God, and consequently no regard for the rights of man

The Parable of the Persistent Widow 18:1-8



- These two things go together
- He that has no regard for God can be expected to have none for man; and our Lord has here indirectly taught us what ought to be the character of a judge that he "should" *fear God* and *regard* the rights of man
- *Regard man*, Had no respect for the opinions or the rights of man
- *she came to him*, Rather, she kept coming to him
- *a widow*, It is a synonym for helplessness
- The widow woman is a representative equally of the Christian Church and of the Christian soul

The Parable of the Persistent Widow 18:1-8



- She was a widow with no one to defend her or protect her; she was asking for justice
- *Get justice for me*, It does not denote revenge, but simply that she wished to have *justice*
- A thing which this judge was "bound" to do, but which it seems he had no intention to do
- *Adversary*, One opposed in law
- In this case it seems that the judge was unwilling to do justice
- In a spiritual sense, many are the adversaries of God's people, as the sins and corruptions of their own hearts, Satan, and his angels, wicked oppressors, and persecutors

The Parable of the Persistent Widow 18:1-8



- *he would not for a while*, Probably this means for a considerable time
- It was his duty to attend to the claims of justice, but this was long delayed
- *Though I do not fear God nor regard man*, He had no shame to acknowledge his own sin
- *I will avenge her*, I will hear her, do her justice, and deliver her from her troublesome adversary
- *she weary me*, It was not from a conscience of duty in him, as a judge, or from a pitying the poor widow; but from a selfish end, for his own ease

The Parable of the Persistent Widow 18:1-8



- So that he might not be disturbed, and his ears stunned with her noise and cry, and he was annoyed with her company day after day
- The unjust judge only reluctantly answered the woman's request
- Jesus did not give this parable to say that God was *like* the unjust judge, but *unlike* him
- God *loves* to answer our prayers, and He even helps us when we pray
- The woman had to overcome the judge's reluctance to help

The Parable of the Persistent Widow 18:1-8



- We often *feel* that we must do the same when we pray – use our persistence to overcome God’s reluctance
- This misses the point of the parable entirely
- Jesus did not say *that men always ought to pray and not lose heart* because God is reluctant, but because He *is not*, and that is our encouragement to prayer
- Sometimes it does seem to us that God is reluctant to answer our prayers
- Yet the delays in prayer are not needed to change God, but to change us

The Parable of the Persistent Widow 18:1-8



- Persistence in prayer brings a transforming element into our lives, building into us the character of God Himself
- It is a way that God builds into us a heart that cares about things the same way He does
- While the judge was unfair; God is fair
- The judge had no personal interest in the widow; God loves and cares for those who seek Him
- The judge answered the widow's cry out of pure self-interest; God loves to bless His people for their good also

The Parable of the Persistent Widow 18:1-8



- *“Hear what the unjust judge said,* Be encouraged then so you can be frequent and persistent in prayer with God
- If the repeated, persistent cries of the afflicted make an impression on the hearts even of men so wicked; they will much more be regarded by God who is ever ready to give all kinds of blessings abundantly to His children
- *shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him,* The Master tells us that God permits suffering among His servants, long after they have begun to pray for deliverance
- But we are counselled here to cry day and night unto Him, and our prayers shall be treasured up before Him, and in His own good time they will be answered

The Parable of the Persistent Widow 18:1-8



- *though He bears long with them?* Perhaps He meant with their adversaries, their oppressors, and persecutors, who are vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction, whom he endures with much longsuffering, till the sufferings of His people are accomplished, and the iniquities of these men are full
- *He will avenge them speedily,* Suddenly, unexpectedly
- He will surely vindicate them, and that at a time, perhaps, when they were nearly ready to give over and to fall into despair
- *when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?”*, These difficult words seem to point at least to a fear lest, the second coming being long delayed, true faith would have died out of the hearts even of the faithful and believers

The Parable of the Persistent Widow 18:1-8



- Though this is true that God will avenge His elect, yet will He find His elect "faithful?"
- The danger is not that "God" will be unfaithful - He will surely be true to His promises; but the danger is that His elect will be discouraged; will not persevere in prayer; will not continue to have confidence in Him; and will, under heavy trials, fall into despair
- Unless we know who God is (being *not* like the unjust judge) and unless we are people who pray without losing heart, we don't yet have the kind of faith Jesus will look for when He returns

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector 18:9-14



- Previously Jesus had spoken to the disciples, exhorting them to perseverance in prayer
- Now He discourages people from extreme self-confidence
- St. Augustine connects this parable to what Jesus said in verse 8, *when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?*” saying that Jesus knew that some would arrogantly attribute this faith to themselves
- By the term some, He probably meant the Pharisees and their disciples, who (as we have all along in the history of the Gospel observed) were a generation of men who were guilty both of a boasting of themselves, and a scorning and despising all others

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector 18:9-14



- *despised others*, Disdained, made nothing of others, treated them with arrogant contempt
- Our Lord mentioned before that the Pharisees made clean the outside, but pride, vain glory, and contempt for others, were lived within
- *went up*, The Temple stood on Mount Moriah
- They had in the temple set hours for prayer, as may be learned from Acts 3:1, at which some of all sorts went up to worship God
- Our Savior mentions only two
- In this parable, both men prayed, but both men did not come to God the same way

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector 18:9-14



- The Pharisee went up to the temple to pray, but his prayer is no prayer at all; not even a thanksgiving, only a boast
- *stood*, Standing was the ordinary Jewish attitude of prayer, but some suggested that the word seems to imply that he stood by himself to avoid the defiling contact of others
- He spoke with himself, not with God, and in his short prayer he repeated the word I five times
- In his (so-called) prayer, the Pharisee praised himself, and compared himself to *other men*
- *That I am not like other men*, This was the first false step

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector 18:9-14



- It is not hard to have such a high opinion of self when you compare yourself to other people; it often is not difficult to find someone worse
- He did not compare his own imperfections with the infinite perfections of the Eternal, but with the imagined greater imperfections of his fellow-men, and so *he* stood as with pride, but not with pity, on those who were still struggling
- He thanks God, in order to exalt himself, and places his righteousness in his own works, and treats all other men in a condescending and humiliating manner; thanking God, or rather blessing himself

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector 18:9-14



- *extortioners, unjust, adulterers*, the Pharisees were oppressors of the poor, devoured widows' houses, and extorted money from them, under a deception of long prayers: they are fittingly represented by the unjust steward, in Luke 16:1 and they were unclean, unchaste, and an adulterous generation of men, Matthew 12:39
- *or even as this tax collector*, Pointing to him at some distance, with great hate, condescension and contempt
- This was his prayer, or thanksgiving
- *I fast twice a week*, Jews fasted voluntary on Mondays and Thursdays

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector 18:9-14



- He does not think, as Job did in his boasting mood, that he had been “a father to the poor,” and had “made the widow’s heart to sing for joy”, Job 29:13; Job 29:16, nor look back, as Nehemiah looked, upon good deeds done for his country, Nehemiah 13:14, 13:22, 13:31 in the work of reformation
- For him fasting and tithes have come to supersede the “*weightier matters of the Law*”, Matthew 23:23
- “In all of his words the Pharisee asked nothing of God, and so he obtained nothing” St. Augustine

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector 18:9-14



- *standing afar off*, Not because he was a Gentile, and did not dare approach the holy place; (for it is likely he was a Jew); but because he was a true repentant and felt himself completely unworthy to appear before God
- *would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven*, Holding down the head, with the eyes fixed upon the earth, was a sign of deep distress and of a great feeling and confession of guilt
- *beat his breast*, Was a token of excessive grief
- Completely sad and heart-broken, the publican neither recounts nor thinks of good kind deeds done

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector 18:9-14



- This publican's humility in his address to God is described, by his posture; he looked upon the earth, as one that thought himself not worthy to look toward heaven
- By his action; he *beat his breast*, as one full of sorrow and trouble
- By the matter and form of his prayer; he confesses himself a *sinner*; he escapes unto the free grace of God
- Jesus contrasted between a boasting Pharisee who is precise about external fulfillment of the Law and whose pride causes him to be self-centered and blind to his sins as opposed to a tax collector who humbly acknowledges both his sins and his need for God's grace and mercy

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector 18:9-14



- God judge hearts and not words
- The Pharisee was not asking God's forgiveness for his sins; he was only boasting of his good works and despising the tax collector
- He relied on his own power and deeds before God and was blind to his sins and so his sins remained
- The tax collector left himself to God's judgment and God's mercy and therefore, was forgiven
- True humbleness is simply seeing things the way they *are*
- The Pharisee saw himself as something great when he was not, and the tax collector saw himself as a sinner needing God's mercy
- We gain nothing by coming to God in the lie of pride

Jesus Blesses Little Children

18:15-17



- When the Lord offered us the parable of humility as the right way by which our prayers are answered, now the Lord offers us a practical lesson to reveal His humility and His simplicity
- He shows clearly how He is open-armed to the little children, that is, to the simple souls that love humility
- Mothers and fathers were bringing their infants to Jesus to pray over them and bless them, Matthew 19:13; Mark 10:16
- St. Ambrose of Milan comments saying that *the disciples rebuked them*, not because of harsh feeling towards the children but that Jesus might not be pressed by the crowds from getting unnecessary tired

Jesus Blesses Little Children

18:15-17



- Because children love to come to Jesus, we should never block the way – or fail to provide them a way
- Christ's interest in the little children was real, and for their own sakes and it was primary; not merely secondary
- Jesus here reminds men that if they hope to enter the kingdom, it must be in the spirit of children, who never think of putting forward any claim of merit or paying any price for kindness showed them
- *as a little child*; without prejudice, pride, ambition, and vanity, with meekness, and humility

Jesus Blesses Little Children 18:15-17



- His late parable of the Pharisee and publican was evidently in the Master's mind when he said this
- The command forbidding anyone to "prevent" children from coming to Jesus has been seen as a justification of infant baptism, together with the Old Covenant practice of male babies entering the covenant on the eighth day of birth, Genesis 17:9-12; Leviticus 12:3

Jesus Counsels the Rich Young Ruler 18:18-23



- This chapter focuses on prayer as the major way to be blessed with the divine fellowship
- We have seen how prayer blends with the faith that motivates us to it, so we pray persistently and with pleasure
- Now, He warns us of a dangerous adversary who makes us lose the Spirit of prayer, which is that of money- worshiping
- *certain ruler*, This man is commonly known as the *rich young ruler*, because he is described as a *ruler*, Luke 18:18, as *rich*, Luke 18:23, and as *young*, Matthew 19:22

Jesus Counsels the Rich Young Ruler 18:18-23



- We don't know if his authority was in the world of politics or in the world of religion
- His question concerning eternal life indicates that he was a Pharisee
- *Good Teacher*, It implied an intense reverence, but nothing more
- The young man distinctly did not then believe the Master was Divine, otherwise he would have never made the great refusal recorded directly afterwards

Jesus Counsels the Rich Young Ruler 18:18-23



- The ruler did not really know who Jesus was
- If he did, he would humble himself as the tax collector did
- *“Why do you call Me good?,* In this, Jesus did not deny His own goodness
- Instead, He asked the man, “Do you understand what you are saying when *you call Me good?*”
- Because *no one is good but One, that is, God.*”

Jesus Counsels the Rich Young Ruler 18:18-23



- This *ruler* was an educated Jew of his day, so of course he knew the *commandments*
- Jesus seems purposely to have mentioned only the plainest commandments of the Second Table which are relevant to man's relation to man, to show the young man that he had fallen short *even of these* in their true interpretation; much more of that love to God which is the essence of the first Table
- In response, the young man claimed to fulfill all of God's commands regarding how we must treat other people

Jesus Counsels the Rich Young Ruler 18:18-23



- It is likely that he actually did keep them in a way that made him righteous in the eyes of men
- But he certainly did not keep them in the full and perfect sense in which Jesus spoke of in the Sermon on the Mount
- Perhaps the young man meant no more than that he had in general observed the commandments
- Perhaps he felt that he is lacking something, otherwise why does he ask Jesus this question
- He felt a troubled conscience, and a mind unassured of God's approval and he clearly recognized that something was needed to make him truly happy

Jesus Counsels the Rich Young Ruler 18:18-23



- There was something gracious and sincere in the youth's eagerness, and therefore Jesus gave him that test of something higher which he seemed to desire, but to which he failed to rise
- Mark wrote: *Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, Mark 10:21*
- The response of Jesus to this man was said in love – no doubt, because Jesus perceived that he was misguided
- Though the man had everything – riches, an outwardly righteous life, respect, and prestige, Jesus could still say to him, *“You still lack one thing.”*

Jesus Counsels the Rich Young Ruler 18:18-23



- The man had *everything* but knew that he did not have eternal life – so he really had *nothing*
- Jesus asked the ruler to give up his money because He could see money was an idol
- He asked him to give it to the *poor* because He could see that he didn't love others the way he should
- He had all the qualities except total dependence on God
- His wealth was a hindrance to that last attribute and so Jesus' asked him to renounce his wealth

Jesus Counsels the Rich Young Ruler 18:18-23



- The call to forsake everything and follow Jesus is a call to put God first in all things
- It is full obedience to the first table of the law, which dealt with a man's relation to God
- *Very sorrowful* and *very rich* is a tragic combination, yet common enough in those who make an idol out of riches
- This command to sell all and give to the poor was *special*
- The youth had asked for some great thing to do, and Jesus, by thus revealing to him his own self-deception, shows him that in spite of his spiritual pride, he is but trying to serve two masters

A Teaching on the Danger of Riches 18:24-30



- Jesus did not change the demands of discipleship when the rich man walked away
- He did use the man's sorrow as an occasion to teach His disciples and all who would hear
- Jesus wished to teach them and us that riches are always a temptation and a snare, 1 Timothy 6:9-10
- Let us not forget that Judas heard these words only a few days or weeks before he sold his Lord
- Riches are a problem because they tend to make us satisfied with this life, instead of longing for the age to come
- As well, sometimes riches are sought at the expense of seeking God

A Teaching on the Danger of Riches 18:24-30



- We usually only think of *poverty* as a problem
- Jesus told us that riches may present a much more serious problem
- Some have explained that 'the needle's eye' was that of the small side gate for passengers (at the side of the large city gates), through which a camel might press its way
- And some thought that the huge ropes to which the anchors of ships were tied were made of camel hair and this suggests that it is easier for the rope called a "camel" to pass through a needle used to make the fishing nets than for a rich man to enter the gates of heaven

A Teaching on the Danger of Riches 18:24-30



- It is a comparison that would have appealed to the Apostles, many of whom were fishermen from the Galilee and familiar with ships and their equipment
- St. Cyril of Alexandria suggests this is the comparison Jesus was making: *By "camel" here he means not the living thing, the beast of burden, but the thick rope to which sailors tie their anchors. He shows this comparison to be not entirely pointless (as a camel would be), but he makes it an exceedingly difficult matter; in fact, next to impossible (Fragment from the Gospel of Matthew, 219)*

A Teaching on the Danger of Riches 18:24-30



- The wealthy often do not feel they need God because they believe their wealth affords them the power to handle any crisis they may face
- That is why Jesus listed "poverty of spirit" as the first Beatitude
- St. John Chrysostom emphasizes the importance of understanding the point that Jesus made by saying, "God does not then forbid men to be rich, but to be the slaves of their riches.... There is no profit in riches while the soul suffers poverty, no hurt in poverty, while the soul abounds in wealth."

A Teaching on the Danger of Riches 18:24-30



- There is an almost child-like simplicity in the question asked by the disciples and seemed to suggest that most people were rich, and that therefore barely any could be saved
- Perhaps the apostles had hoped that their following of Jesus would make them rich and influential, and prominent leaders in the Messianic kingdom of the immediate future
- And now they heard what seemed to them a broad condemnation, excluding all who possessed, and, by implication, all who sought after riches from the kingdom

A Teaching on the Danger of Riches 18:24-30



- They did not imagine there was any difficulty of rich men coming into the kingdom of the Messiah, which they took to be a worldly one, and would be filled with rich men
- Salvation seemed to belong by right to the rulers of synagogues and other rich people
- The thought of the disciples still lives
- Wealth and intellect make men *seem* better
- Acknowledging we need God is the first step in the spiritual journey to salvation
- Yes, impossible, Jesus repeated, from a man's point of view

A Teaching on the Danger of Riches 18:24-30



- God's grace is enough to save the rich man; we have the examples of people like Zacchaeus, Joseph of Arimathea, and Barnabas
- Impossible from the platform of legal obedience on which the young ruler (verse 21) had taken his stand
- Or the Pharisee in his prayer (verses 11,12); but it was not impossible with God
- He might give this salvation as a perfectly free gift, completely undeserved, perfectly unmerited, as He did to the prodigal son when he returned, or to the publican when he beat his chest in almost voiceless mourning, or still more clearly, not many days later, to the penitent thief dying on the cross

A Teaching on the Danger of Riches 18:24-30



- The disciples and Apostles recognize that they have done what the young man was unable to do
- The disciples *did* give up everything (or most everything) to follow Jesus
- The ruler had failed when the test was applied to him; he was a clear example of failure in the rich to enter the kingdom
- But they had not failed when the test had been applied to them; they had given all up for his sake
- They, in the person of Peter, asked in the simplicity of his heart, (as is evident from the reply), what would be their reward?

A Teaching on the Danger of Riches 18:24-30



- The Master respond by saying that His promises are not only for His disciples but to all His followers
- The twelve may have their unique reward, *“Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”* Matthew 19:28
- But there will be universal honor for all who sacrifice for Jesus’ sake; whatever has been given up for Him will be returned to us many times over, both *in this present time, and in the age to come eternal life*

A Teaching on the Danger of Riches 18:24-30



- *Many times more* is obviously not meant in a material sense
- Jesus did not promise a hundred mothers and a hundred wives
- *Many times over* is spiritual in its fulfillment
- God will be a debtor to no man
- It is impossible for us to give more to God than He gives back to us
- Having and keeping the heart of a giver will keep you from being corrupted by riches
- We all must do what Psalm 62:10 says: *If riches increase, do not set your heart on them*, and giving is key

Third Prediction of Jesus's Death and Resurrection 18:31-34



- It is appropriate for the Christian to be released from the bondage of the love of money, and from the chains of asking for temporal wealth
- It is quite impossible to be blessed with the crucified Christ in His glory, without sharing Him the cross
- Therefore, the Lord Jesus directed the attention of His disciples towards His cross, His pain, and His death as a true way to glory
- They were travelling on the road to Jerusalem to the Feast of Passover, and privately delivered to them, what follows

Third Prediction of Jesus's Death and Resurrection 18:31-34



- In saying *all things*, Jesus emphasized the aspects *concerning the Son of Man* that were commonly neglected and overlooked by the Jewish people of His day – that the Messiah would suffer and die as a sin-bearing servant
- He had outlined the Passion for the disciples before on two occasions
- But never so clearly as now
- He even tells them the manner of His end and reminded them of His coming suffering and death, emphasizing the shame and humiliation He would bear

Third Prediction of Jesus's Death and Resurrection 18:31-34



- *For He will be delivered to the Gentiles,* One of His own disciples would deliver Him over to the religious leaders for money
- Certainly, Jesus did not arrange His own betrayal, yet He confidently said it would happen
- *They will scourge Him,* This sharp and brutal whipping was a particular agony and humiliation to endure
- He suffered from the disloyalty of friends; from injustice; from deliberate insult and humiliation; from physical pain; and from great humiliation and degradation
- His suffering would continue to His death

Third Prediction of Jesus's Death and Resurrection 18:31-34



- Jesus triumphantly told His disciples that the story would not end with His suffering, humiliation, and death
- He would *rise again* in resurrected glory
- The Spirit of Christ, in the Old Testament prophets, testified beforehand His sufferings, and the glory that should follow, 1 Peter 1:11
- The disciples' prejudices were so strong, that they would not understand these things literally
- They were so intent upon the prophecies which spoke of Christ's glory, that they overlooked those which spoke of His sufferings
- Perhaps God did not open their eyes to this truth because they couldn't handle it yet

A Blind Man Receives His Sight

18:35-43



- Jericho was once called "the City of Palms," afterwards "the City of Perfumes"
- It was about eighteen miles from Jerusalem
- This poor blind man sat by the wayside, begging
- He was not only blind, but also poor
- The blind man could not see Jesus, but he could hear Him
- Learning that Jesus is passing by, the blind man was persistent in making use of this opportunity and take advantage of the presence of Christ
- In calling out to Jesus, he acknowledges his belief that Jesus is the promised Messiah by using Jesus' messianic title, "Son of David" and kept shouting for His *mercy*

A Blind Man Receives His Sight

18:35-43



- St. Ephrem the Syrian described *those who went before warned him that he should be quiet* by saying, “They were trying to prevent him, fearing that his eyes may be opened, and the Pharisees might recognize him and be irritated.”
- He would not be embarrassed, and he would not be quiet
- He knew that Jesus was the *Son of David*, meaning the Messiah, and kept shouting for His *mercy*
- The blind man’s prayer, sitting on the roadside begging is an effective prayer, though of few words
- Nothing could stop Jesus on His journey to Jerusalem; yet He *stood still* to answer a persistent plea for mercy

A Blind Man Receives His Sight

18:35-43



- With his heart's cries, so full of faith, he managed to stop the entire procession and find the Lord Jesus ordering them he be brought to Him
- When he drew near, the man heard the Lord say (Luke 18: 41) *"What do you want Me to do for you?"*
- This is a wonderful, simple question God has not stopped asking
- Sometimes we go without when God would want to give us something simply because we will not answer this question, and *we do not have because we do not ask* (James 4:2)

A Blind Man Receives His Sight

18:35-43



- Jesus asked this question with full knowledge that this man was blind
- He knew what he needed and what he wanted, but God still wants us to tell Him our needs as a constant expression of our trust and reliance on Him
- The blind man knew how to submit to Jesus – he called Jesus “*Lord*” and asked to *receive his sight*

A Blind Man Receives His Sight

18:35-43



- His persistence is an act of faith and Jesus rewards him by restoring his sight
- Jesus granted the man's request and healed him of blindness
- Jesus connected the man's healing with the man's *faith*
- The blind man, now healed and saved, began to follow Jesus
- The way of Jesus became his way
- This was especially significant considering that Jesus was on His way towards Jerusalem to die

A Blind Man Receives His Sight

18:35-43



- There were many notable aspects of this man's faith that made him ready to receive from Jesus
- It was faith that wanted Jesus; faith that knew who He was; faith that could tell Jesus what it wanted; faith that could call Jesus *Lord*
- The prayer of faith, guided by Christ's encouraging promises, and grounded on them, shall not be in vain
- If we rightly understand these things, we must come to Christ, like the blind man, earnestly beseeching Him to open our eyes, and to show us clearly the superiority of His teachings, and the value of His salvation



Discussion

- The judge is described as someone who neither fears God nor respects, or regards, people. What impression does this give us of the judge? Would we expect a judge like this to be helpful to someone seeking justice? Why, or why not?
- What does the parable tell us about “faith”? What would it mean for the Son of Man to “find faith on earth” – that is, what behavior or behaviors would demonstrate that “faith” – in light of this parable?



Discussion

- What lesson does the parable teach – 18:6-8? (Think: How do you harmonize this with Jesus' warning against vain repetitions – Matthew 6:7?)
- Describe the self-righteousness of the Pharisee.
- Describe the humility of the publican (tax collector).
- Who were being brought to Jesus? Why – 18:15?

Discussion



- Luke 18:18-19. Who was this ruler (Luke 23:13,35, 24:20)? Does being “good” have one meaning? What might be some different uses of the word “good”? How is God’s goodness different from others? How does the ruler use it?
- Luke 18:20-21. From where do the commandments that Jesus relates to the ruler come (Exodus 20:1-16)? What is unique about the particular commandments Jesus quotes? Which ones does Jesus leave out? List them

Discussion



- Luke 18:22-23. What does the ruler lack? What does Jesus call this ruler to do? What would selling all of his possessions force him to do?
- Luke 18:24-27. Why is it difficult for the wealthy to enter the kingdom of God? Do you consider yourself wealthy? How about compared to the rest of the world? Is not bad stewardship to give up all your money? Does God sometimes call us to do things that don't make sense?

Discussion



- Luke 18:28-30. What is Peter's response to Jesus' words? Does the Lord rebuke Peter for saying this? How does Jesus respond to Peter? What does he say? Should this make it easier to give up whatever we are holding back? Does it? Why/why not?