

Following the King

Studies in Luke's Gospel

Luke 18:9-30

Introduction

1. What do you understand by the term 'faith'? What role does 'faith' have in the Christian life?¹
2. What is the difference between 'belief' and 'faith'?

Read Luke 18:9-30

*Jesus' words in 18:1-8 provide us with the context for understanding the teaching of vv. 9-30. Vv. 1-8 introduce 'faith' as the over-arching topic of concern. 'Faith' is expressed in prayer, and seen in our commitment to pray without giving up (v. 1). Jesus' question in v. 8, about whether the Son of Man will find 'faith' when he comes, directly introduces the verses to follow. Lots of people have 'faith' but vv. 9-30 describe **the kind of faith** Jesus expects of his disciples.*

(1) The Pharisee & the tax collector, vv 9-14

3. The Pharisee and the tax collector stand in sharp contrast to each other. Identify the particular differences between them?
4. If prayer, as our passage appears to suggest, is an expression of faith, what do we learn about the 'faith' of the Pharisee and the 'faith' of the tax collector?²
5. What does it mean to be 'justified before God' (v 14)? According to this parable how is a person justified before God? Look up Romans 5:1-2a. What light does this shed on your discussion?
6. As we go on in the Christian life is there a temptation that we may sometimes think like the Pharisee in this parable? If so, how can we guard against this temptation?

(2) Little children & the rich young ruler, vv 15-30

7. Similar to vv. 9-14 there is a sharp contrast at play in vv 15-17 and vv 18-23. What is this contrast?
8. What do you think it means to 'receive the kingdom of God like a little child' (v. 17)? How is this an illustration of the kind of 'faith' Jesus wants to see in his disciples?
9. What comments would you make about the 'faith' of the rich man in vv. 19-23?³
10. Re-read Jesus well-known words in v. 25. Why is it so hard for a rich person to enter God's kingdom?

¹ These same questions appeared in last week's study (Luke 17:5-6). No harm considering them again given that tonight's study is all about 'faith'.

² Think about the 'object' of each man's faith: who did they each have faith in?

³ Keep in mind that 'faith' and 'trust' are the same things. In whom or what did the rich man place his trust?

Study 08

11. What are some examples of the way in which people (ourselves included) place too much trust in material possessions, money, wealth etc.?
12. “*He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose*”.⁴ What do you think this means and how does it relate to Jesus' teaching in vv. 28-30?
13. Throughout this series in Luke's Gospel we have heard Jesus speaking about the cost of following him. What have been some of these costs? How do Jesus' words in vv. 29-30 put these 'costs' into perspective?
14. Read Ephesians 1:3-14 for a summary of the kinds of things Jesus had in mind in v. 30!

Conclusion

- In light of what you have read and discussed today, finish the following sentence: *Following Jesus means...*

Pray it in

- Two or three people should pray out loud, asking God to help us all become the disciples He has called us to be.

⁴ This is a quote from the journal of missionary, Jim Elliot. He was murdered in Ecuador in 1956 at the hands of the very people he was trying to reach with the gospel.