

## "Sorrowful"

Luke 18:18-27

- In our passage of the day, we find a question about eternal life
- But the person asking the question is taking a short-term view of life
- This is one of the keys to understanding the narrative
- What is the question?
- What is the answer Jesus gives to the question?
- And why does the answer make the young man asking sorrowful?
  
- "Sorrowful" is our theme, from Luke 18:18-27
  
- This passage is known as the account of the "rich young ruler"
- Anyone viewing the story rightly is disappointed that it ends the way it does
- We hope, for the sake of the young man, that he does just what Jesus says
- That He listens and commits himself to the Savior
- I hope it's not a spoiler for you, but he does not
- Jesus' instructions only make him sorrowful
  
- Let's begin reading about what happened...

Luke 18:18-19

18 And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God.

- The ruler's characterization of Jesus was accurate, whether he knew it or not
- And whether he meant it or not
- Only God is good
- And this young man was speaking to God
  
- The word good means "highly admirable, excelling in any respect, distinguished"
- In the context, when essentially calling Jesus "Rabbi," it would have had moral connotations
- It would have implied an intense reverence only reserved for the truly righteous
- Which is why Jesus says "none is good" or truly righteous, "save one, that is, God"
  
- Jesus' question "Why callest thou me good?" indicates He understood this to be insincere
- Meaning, the young man was not acknowledging His deity, but had other motives
  
- And this is the way Jesus answers...

Luke 18:20-21

20 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.

21 And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up.

- The keeping of these commandments would have indicated "goodness"
- The righteousness implied in the young man's question
- Yet, we know that no man can keep the law perfectly
- And that if we offend in one area, we are guilty of all
  
- So, the response "I have kept" was untrue
- Perhaps he intended to keep
- Or he hoped to keep
- Or he worked hard to keep
- Or he wanted to keep
- But he had not "kept"
- There is only One who is truly good
  
- The One to whom He is speaking is perfect
- He is the fulfillment of the law
- "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin"
- Instead of intending, or hoping, or working, or wanting righteousness
- He could have obtained righteousness through Christ
  
- As Romans 4:3-5 explains...

"For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

- So, we approach the remainder of the text with some hope
- That He will perhaps trust the "Good Master" and follow Him
  
- But there is one thing to be done first...

Luke 18:22

22 Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, 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.

- There are many things that may be standing between us and God
- Those things that we love more than Him and that we are unwilling to give up
- And if we are to follow after Christ, in faith
- We must turn our backs on those things
- He must be our Master
- His will must become our will
- His priorities for us, must become our priorities
- The things in life that ruled us must rule us no more as He becomes our ruler
  
- Money could be holding us back, but there are other things too
- Travel back four chapters in Luke and find this...

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple."

"Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."

- Nothing is being asked of this young man that is not asked of every disciple
- It is up to us, just as it was up to him, to choose
- And his choice brings us to our theme word of the day...

Luke 18:23

23 And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.

- It seems, on this day, the young man chose not to follow
- Perhaps he was willing to do a lot of things to become a disciple
- But not everything
- Certainly not this thing
- To sell all he had, to give up treasure he could see and feel, for treasure in heaven
- The kind which are only seen with eyes of faith
- This word for sorrow is intense
- It means he was exceeding sorrowful, grieved all around
- But he had the wrong kind of sorrow
- Sorrow for himself
- That he could not keep what he wanted for himself, while at the same time serving God
- The Bible says no man can serve two masters in Luke 16:13 "for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon [money]."
- Jesus goes on...

Luke 18:24-27

24 And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

25 For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

26 And they that heard it said, Who then can be saved?

27 And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.

- The portion we read today ends on a positive note
- Riches can have such a tight hold on man
- They grip our hearts in ways very few other things can
- But, praise God, all chains can be broken by God
- Even those that are fastened the tightest

- I wonder if it is money, or anything else, that is keeping us from Him
- Do we refuse to follow in sorrow?
- Is there something we cannot give up?
- Does giving it up sound impossible?
  
- With man, it is impossible
- But it is not impossible with God!

*Christopher Harper, **Take Note** 2021*