



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Luke Sermon Series
Supports Session 3: Worthy?
Sermon Title: "The Most Pressing Question in Life"
Passage: Luke 18:18-30

Connection to Luke 18

In Luke 17:20 the Pharisees asked Jesus when the kingdom of God would come. He explained in verse 21 that He was the kingdom, and it was in their midst. What follows is a series of pericopes that contrast the relationship between the downtrodden (widow, tax collector, and children) and the kingdom of God with the relationship between the privileged (Pharisee, young ruler) and the kingdom of God. Luke 18:18-30 emphasizes that wealth has no bearing on a person's entrance into the kingdom.

Introduction/Opening

Humans are inquisitive beings. We come into this world asking questions, we leave this world asking questions, and we ask questions every day in between. That is a ton of whys, whats, wheres, and whos. Most of our questions are insignificant in the grand scheme of things: what are you doing, what's for dinner, how many steps are in my house? Other questions are of significantly more importance: where will I go to college, who will I marry, what will I do with my life? Then there is the really important question—the most pressing question in life—what must I do to have eternal life? That is the question Jesus was asked in verse 18, and His answer cut against the common belief of His day.

Outline

1. To have eternal life, you must trust God not your performance (vv. 18-22).
 - a. The young man was focused on himself and what he could do. He had a performance-based perspective of salvation. He wanted to know what HE had to DO to earn eternal life.
 - b. Jesus' response to obey the commandments seemed to confirm the young man's belief that he could earn his salvation, but it actually contradicted it. Jesus line' of discussion led the young man to understand that even though he had done everything he could, he still had not inherited eternal life.
 - c. Jesus' response must have shattered the man's self-perception. "You still lack one thing." In other words, "You do not have eternal life. Your religious performance doesn't cut it." The one thing he lacked, in spite of his religious performance, was that he had violated the supreme command; he had another god before the one true God. His unwillingness to give up his stuff proved that he really didn't have a relationship with God. He had trusted his performance and not God.

2. To have eternal life you must trust God, not your possessions (vv. 23-30).
 - a. Luke makes it clear in verse 23 that the young man was very rich. In the culture of Jesus' day, Jews believed wealth was a sign of God's blessing and proof of a right standing with the Father. The young man and others probably believed because he was a good man and wealthy, that he already had eternal life.
 - b. Jesus stunned everyone when He said in verse 24, "How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" Shocked, the crowd asked, "Then who can be saved?" (Luke 18:26)
 - c. Jesus made it clear that while wealth doesn't provide eternal life, God does: "What is impossible with man is possible with God."

Conclusion

Verse 23 may be the saddest verse in the Bible: "After he [the young ruler] heard this, he became extremely sad, because he was very rich." He walked away a good man, he walked away a wealthy man, but he also walked away a condemned man. Jesus asked another penetrating question in Mark 8:36: "For what does it benefit someone to gain the whole world and yet lose his life?" The Bible is clear, "For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift—not from works, so that no one can boast" (Eph. 2:8-9).

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