

## LESSONS FROM HAITI

Too often in serving God, we think we deserve a pat on the back. In Luke 17:7-10, Jesus reminds us that a servant's job is to serve. Don't expect any special badges of honor for doing your duty.

Verse 10 depicts a servant's attitude. Jesus says, "When you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'"

On the way back from our recent mission trip to Haiti, we were all sitting in the air-

port, when Pastor James picked up his Bible... and believe it or not, it fell open to this passage!

Hey, if you're ever going to feel that you've done God a favor - *that He owes you* - it's after you've spent six days in the Haitian bush.

But God is faithful to keep our attitudes straight. After all He's done for us, a trip to Haiti is the least we can do for Him. Always remember, obedience proves that we're thankful - never that we're worthy!

### Devotion Box - Don't Forget To Say Thanks

As Jesus journeyed to Jerusalem, He entered a village and met 10 lepers crying out for mercy. Jesus healed all 10 men - and as soon as they were healed, they immediately raced to the priest to be pronounced clean and begin a new life.

Only one of the men bothered to return to Jesus and say "thanks". That's when Jesus asks in verse 17, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?"

Today, millions the world over, have been healed by Jesus, but we can still hear Him ask, "Didn't I heal John and Jim - save Beverly and Becky - comfort Andy and Ashley... but where are they now?" Are we among the nine? *Nowhere to be found!* Or are we among the few who've taken the time to say thanks?

## THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Jesus talked a lot about His kingdom, but the disciples thought He meant an earthly, concrete, political kingdom. Jesus surprised them with a new concept. He says in verse 20, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."

Guys, this is one of the most vital concepts in Scripture... The kingdom Jesus establishes doesn't sprawl across the land - rather it penetrates men's hearts.

One day, when King Jesus returns, He'll build a physical kingdom - but today, His kingdom is spiritual. Jesus is the King of hearts. This is why God's kingdom is not concerned with *capturing society's institutions* - instead, God wants to *capture society's individuals*. God's goal today is *to salvage sinners... not the system*.

Sociologist Will Durant sums up the difference between God's kingdom and the kingdoms of men. "Caesar hoped to reform men by changing institutions and laws; Christ wished to remake institutions, and lessen laws, by changing men."

## RAPTURE READY

When Jesus returns to earth to establish a physical kingdom no one will miss Him. Luke 17:24 says His coming will be as obvious as a lightning bolt.

The second coming of Jesus means curtains for the world. Jesus will establish His kingdom by destroying the kingdoms of this earth. But before judgment comes down, the church will go up!

Jesus uses Sodom as an example. God ushered Lot and his family out of Sodom, before He rained down fire and brimstone on the city. And here's the point: *God withholds judgment until He removes the righteous.*

This is why Jesus tells us to be ready... verse

32 says, "Remember Lot's wife."

Mrs. Lot was offered an escape, but her heart was still in Sodom. When she turned back for one last look, God turned her into salt - *a podium of sodium*.

The rapture will transport our bodies to heaven, but our hearts should already be there. A heart fixated on the attractions of this world, may just keep a body down.

Two people in one bed... two women grinding grain together... two folks in the field... one is snatched away, the other is left behind. Don't you be left behind! Make sure you're rapture ready!

## LESSONS ON PRAYER

### Prayer's Persistence

In Luke 18:1-5 a woman nags her way into a judge's court... The judge lends an ear to get her off his back. But unlike the judge, God wants to hear our prayers. That's why He also is persuaded by our persistence.

### Prayer's Attitude

In 18:9-14 two men are praying in the temple. The Pharisee is a spiritual showboat. He addresses his prayer to God, but verse 11 says he's only talking "with himself". Rather than praying, he toots his own horn. This self-righteous snob looks down his nose at the broken heart of the tax collector next to him... The tax collector admits his sin... He pleads for mercy...

Jesus makes it clear... God accepts the *humble heart*, not the *holy hype*.

## REACHING THE SAVIOR

En route to Jerusalem, Jesus stops to heal a blind man. He hears that Jesus is nearby, situates himself alongside the road, and cries out.

The people around him tell him to shut up. But he won't be deterred. He may be blind, but he's got a good set of lungs. He keeps screaming, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" Nothing will stop him from reaching out to the Savior.

And he soon discovers that nothing will stop the Savior from answering his request. As always, desperate determination ends up with Divine deliverance.

## Devotion Box - Like A Little Child

Jesus had a special place in His heart for kids, for He saw in them attitudes we need as children of God. Here's a list of child-like traits to emulate: *faith, honesty, sensitivity, a teachable heart, a healthy curiosity, a willingness and spontaneity.*

Jesus says in verse 16, "...of such is the kingdom of God."

The adult world can make us hard, cold, cynical. Even kids today tend to grow up too fast. In so many ways we need to return and become like little children.

As a Christian gets older, he or she grows younger and younger at heart!

## Devotion Box - Poking Around In Your Life

The rich young ruler would've been made an elder or deacon in most churches. He had all the qualifications: *manners, morals, money, and youth*. But there was one thing missing – the man lacked a heart sold out to God.

In 18:18 he calls Jesus, "Good Teacher" – and in verse 19, the Lord picks up on his statement, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God." In essence Jesus is saying, "*When you call Me good, does it mean I'm your God?*" Sadly, the answer was *no*. Like a doctor giving an examination, Jesus starts poking around in the man's life... and when he touches his money... he squeals.

In verse 22 Jesus tells him, "Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." But check out verse 23, "But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich."

If Jesus were to start poking around in your life – looking for stuff you love more than Him... is there something He could touch that would make you squeal? Guys, you can possess money... as long as money doesn't possess you.

## A LITTLE MAN STANDS TALL

Luke 19 begins with the story of a short man with a long list of sins.

Verse 2 tells us Zacchaeus was "a *chief* tax collector". He'd worked his way up the IRS chain of command. He was a little guy who had made it big! Zacchaeus had used his power and position to rip people off, and make himself rich.

But in Luke 19 we find Zacchaeus up a tree... literally!

Being a short man there was no way he could see over the crowd lining the street. He had heard so much about Jesus, he didn't want to miss this opportunity to see Him, so Zacchaeus shimmies up a sycamore tree to get a better view.

And that's where Jesus sees him! He says to the tax collector in verse 5, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house."

Understand how this shocked the Jews. Revenue agents were Roman collaborators. They were traitors to Israel, and most were swindlers to boot.

But the acceptance Jesus showed Zacchaeus that day delivered him from his greed and deception. Zacchaeus got up from lunch ready to pay back all he had defrauded... plus interest. Zacchaeus had done power lunches before, but never this powerful. The love of Jesus changed his life. It caused him to love others.

The love of Jesus still causes little men to stand tall and prove their repentance in tangible ways. Hey, don't spend time with Jesus if you want to remain the same.

## BREAD AND WINE

At the Passover Jesus gave a 1500-year-old tradition a make-over. He gave new meaning to the bread and wine – it now represents His body and blood.

Bible commentator, J Vernon McGee, makes an interesting observation, "The Lord used two of the most frail elements in the world as symbols of His body and blood. Bread and wine will both spoil in a few days. When He raised a monument, it was not made of brass or marble, but of two frail elements that perish."

It was another lesson on how God uses the weak and humble to do His work.

## A THEOLOGICAL SHOOT OUT

In chapter 20, theological trappers are seeking Jesus' pelt. The Jewish hierarchy doesn't care about truth, they're out for blood. They want to catch Jesus in a spiritual snafu. They're looking for ammunition to discredit Him.

In *round one*, verse 2, the Jews question Jesus' authority. Jesus counters their question with one of His own. In verse 4, He asks, "The baptism of John - was it from heaven or from men?" Suddenly, the tables turn...

If the Jews say "heaven", then why didn't they follow John? If they say "men", then those who respected John as a man of God would be mad at them.

That's when the Jews quickly change the subject. When was the last time *you* changed the subject on Jesus?

In *round two*, verse 21, the Jews try to tie Jesus up with the topic of taxes. Should Rome be supported with coins that belong to God? They figure Jesus will either favor God, or the Romans. Choose one, and He'll offend the other.

But instead, Jesus offends the Jews. God isn't nearly as concerned with money as they are... He says, "give your coins to Caesar, but give your heart to God."

In *round three*, verse 27, a hypothetical wife who outlives 7 husbands. It reminds me of the wife who was visited by an angel. The messenger says, "Prepare yourself to be a widow. Your husband is about to die a violent death." She thought a second, then said, "I have one question - *will I be acquitted?*" This hypothetical honey buried 7 husbands, and was acquitted each time.

Again, it reminds me of the woman who thought it was legal to have 16 husbands. After all, the pastor said, "For better, for worse, for richer, for poorer."

The question, though, the Jews pose about this hypothetical woman is, of the 7 men, whose wife will she be in heaven? Jesus' answer is both biblical and brilliant. Human marriages end at death - in heaven we'll all be married to Jesus!

In *the final round*, verse 41, Jesus gets a knock out. The Jews have been overmatched all along. They've been arguing God's book with its Author. But He now ends this spiritual sparring match with a quote from the Psalms - and a question of His own.

2 Samuel 7 makes it clear the Messiah will be David's descendant. Yet, Jesus quotes David in Psalm 110:1, as calling the Messiah his Lord. David was king, and no one was greater than the king, but God. But that was the point, the Messiah was God... The Jews saw the Messiah in only human terms... "*the Son of David*". But Jesus stretches their perception... He takes them to Scripture and shows that the Bible teaches Messiah's deity. If they can accept His deity, maybe they'll be able to accept that Jesus is God.

But it didn't work. They don't want to reason from Scripture. Their minds are made up. They stop *grilling Jesus*, and set their sights on *killing Jesus*.

## GOD'S TIMEPIECE

Jesus prophesies of the distant future, and His ultimate return. Think of Luke 21 as a child searching for a hidden object. He's moving in the right direction and his parents keep coaxing... "closer, closer, you're getting closer."

False christs, rumors of wars, persecution... you're not there yet. World wars, killer quakes, famines, pestilences... you're getting closer. Jerusalem surrounded and under siege... you're almost there. Cosmic upheavals and signs in the heavens... you're on the brink.

Verse 27 tells us, "*Then* they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." After the heavens are shaken, Jesus returns.

Understand, God's timepiece is not a Rolex, or a Timex, but Jerusalem. Jesus makes an astounding statement about the holy city in Luke 21:24, "And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."

On June 10, 1967 in Israel's famous Six-day War, General Moshe Dayan led his Jewish paratroopers into the old city of Jerusalem, and took it from the Muslim Arabs. For the first time in 1900 years Jerusalem was out from under Gentile control. It was an event that marked the beginning of the end. Jesus predicted that the *times of the Gentiles* would last until Jerusalem was no longer trampled by the Gentiles.

When *the times of the Gentiles* are over, God will again turn the focus of His attention to the nation Israel. The end times almost had its official beginning in June of 1967.

But Moshe Dayan made a strange move. Rather than solidify Israeli control, he gave authority of the temple mount back to the Arabs. To pacify the Muslims, the Israelis placed the holiest sight in Judaism right back under Arab control.

Today, the Old City is a part of Israel, and politically governed by Jews. But practically and religiously Gentiles still trample the sacred ground of the temple. When will it end? It could happen any day! Jesus is coming soon.

In fact, Jesus says in verse 29, when you see the fig tree blossom you know that summer is near, likewise when you see these signs come to pass the end is at hand.

That's why we're told in verse 28, "when these things *begin* to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near." The Bible teaches that before God refocuses on Israel, He'll first rapture the Church.

Jesus didn't say when all these signs *have already occurred* - but, "when these things *begin* to happen..." We'll be spared the terrible judgments of the Great Tribulation.

And if it's time to meet Jesus let's not get distracted by the cares and temptations of this life. Watch and be ready. Don't get absorbed in worldly pursuits. Set your heart on heaven.

## Devotion Box - Greatness in the Kingdom

In Luke 22 Jesus tries to prepare His disciples for His death, but the clueless disciples are arguing over who is the greatest - who deserves the *MVD* - "*the most valuable disciple*".

Jesus says the world measures greatness by how many folks you manipulate. But in God's Kingdom, those that rise the highest are those who stoop the lowest to serve. It's not how many people you control, but how many do you serve.

# Bible Scan - Luke 17-24

Calvary Chapel

If you have questions on tonight's study email Pastor Sandy - [sandyadams@calvarychapel.org](mailto:sandyadams@calvarychapel.org)  
For back issues of Bible Scan study guides: [www.calvarychapelstonemountain.com/biblescan.htm](http://www.calvarychapelstonemountain.com/biblescan.htm)

Calvary Chapel Announcements - *The Brook*, our bookstore and café, is now open on Sunday, check it out after the service tonight... Chuck Smith will be speaking Wednesday, January 16 at 7:30 pm; Gayle Erwin will be speaking Thursday, January 17 at 7:30 pm; Deep South Pastors and Church Leaders Conference, January 16-18- If you can volunteer to help, see Pastor Bob - Next Bible Scan - January 13, 2002 - John 1-6

"Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us." - Luke 24:32

Bible Scan  
Memory Verse

## THE SEVEN LAST STATEMENTS OF JESUS

Devotion Box - A  
Repeated Miracle

Even from the cross Jesus reveals His compassion... Verse 34 tells us that Jesus prays for our forgiveness, as the soldiers gamble away his clothes... "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." The soldiers don't realize the safest bet is to trust in Jesus. His mercies never fail.

This was the first of seven statements Jesus makes on the cross...

In Luke 23:43 one of the thieves crucified next to Jesus, asks, "remember me when you come into your kingdom." Unlike the other thief, this man was repentant. Jesus rewards his faith with His answer... "Today you will be with Me in paradise."

In John 19:26-27 Jesus turns over the care of His mother Mary to His friend John. Jesus introduces the new relationship by saying to Mary, "Woman, behold your son!" Then turning to John, He says, "Behold your mother!"

At noon the sky went dark for three hours. Matthew 27:46 tells us that's when Jesus cried out, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?"

Jesus' final three statements come in a flurry at the end of his ordeal.

The first of the last three is preparation for the final two. In John 19:28 Jesus cried, "I thirst". Soldiers moisten his lips so he can utter His grand finale.

John 19:30 records the words, "It is finished." All the work that needed to be done for our salvation, had been done. The penalty of sin was paid in full.

The 7<sup>th</sup> and final statement from the cross is in Luke 23:46. Just before Jesus breathes His last, He prays, "Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit."

When the temple guards grab Jesus one of the disciples takes a sword, and aims at the servant of the High Priest. He meant to split his head wide open, but the guy moved at the last second, and it clipped off the guy's right ear.

In 22:51 Jesus works a miracle for the man who came to arrest Him. He picks up his ear and reattaches it to his head. Again, Jesus loves His enemies.

Sadly, this is the miracle Jesus has repeated over and over for 1900 years. All too often His impulsive disciples go on the attack and hurt the folks Jesus wants to save! Jesus has to heal the wounds inflicted by His own well-meaning disciples.

Devotion Box - He Is Risen

Devotion Box - A Burning Heart

On Sunday morning the women who buried Jesus come to the tomb to finish the job. They're met by an angel who asks, "Why do you seek the living among the dead?" It's a good question... *why are you treating Jesus as if He were dead?* The angel says they should've listened to Jesus. He predicted He would be crucified, yet rise the third day. Suddenly, they remembered His words.

Some Christians today go to church, quote the creeds, declare doctrines. They claim to believe in the resurrection, but they too are treating the living as if He were dead! They speak of the works of Jesus in past tense. Their knowledge of Jesus is limited to the pages of Scripture. They don't know Him personally. I've been to church services that seemed like a memorial to a dead man rather than an encounter with the risen Christ. Make sure you've experienced the reality of the resurrection. Jesus rose from an *empty tomb* to fill our *empty hearts*.

Two discouraged disciples were heading home to Emmaus when joined by a stranger. The traveler was Jesus, but their eyes were closed to His identity. Imagine walking with Jesus side by side, yet not knowing it was Him. Yet this is the experience of many Christians. Jesus promised to be with us - to never leave us or forsake us - but we don't always sense His presence. Our problem is a lack of faith.

Jesus stirs up the faith of these two disciples with the Scriptures. When faith fills their heart their eyes open. Suddenly they know it's Jesus - yet as soon as He's identified, He vanishes. The two disciples remark how their hearts burned within them while they were with Him. Guys, Jesus is able to fire us up. This is always the result of an encounter with Christ - *a burning heart*.

Augustine wrote, "You as-  
ended before our eyes, and we  
turned back grieving, only to  
find you in our hearts." This  
was why the disciples "returned to Jerusalem with great joy"...  
Jesus had left in the clouds, but He remained in their hearts.

THE ASCENSION