

Monday, March Nineteenth

Read through the Bible



The Gospel of Luke Week 5



Thank you notes are slowly becoming a lost form of etiquette in our American culture. A few decades ago, it was expected that people write a thank you note if they had received a gift or had gone over to someone's house for a dinner party. But a recent 60 Minutes poll found that, today, just 23% of young folks consider thank you notes to be important. In today's passage, a group of people healed of their diseases fail to say "thanks" to Jesus.

Read: Luke 17:11-37

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- How many lepers did Jesus heal? (see verses 12-14) How many came back to thank Him? (see verses 15-18)

Every day, we find ourselves praying to God for a variety of reasons. We ask Him to help us through a test, or to help us through a difficult conversation with a friend. We ask Him to grant us peace in a situation, or healing from an ailment. But when those prayers are answered, we sometimes find ourselves moving on without giving praise to God (much like the nine other lepers). The one leper's return to Jesus reminds us that He is always worthy of our time and energy to give Him praise!

- What will Jesus' return be like, and how does it keep us from following false Messiahs? (see verses 23-24)

Jesus' return won't be like His first arrival. When Jesus first came into the world as a baby born in Bethlehem, nobody really noticed He had come. But when He returns, the whole world will take notice – He "will be like the lightning which flashes from one end to the other" (v. 24). That is a powerful return!

- What will happen to us on that day? (see verses 34-35)

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Throughout this week, take some time each day to thank God for the ways in which He has blessed you and answered your pleas.

Tuesday, March Twentieth

A group of girls stand outside the entrance of Publix, each holding a collection bucket while standing next to a bright-colored poster board. As you approach the entrance, they quickly run up to you. “Would you like to donate to help us get new volleyball uniforms for our team?” You’ve seen this group of girls for the past few weeks as you’ve made your way into Publix, and each time, you’ve said, “Sorry, girls. I don’t have any cash on me.” But today, you came prepared to donate to their cause. The girls yell, “Thank you!” as you pull out a twenty dollar bill. Their persistence has paid off! In today’s passage, Jesus talks about the importance of persistence in prayer.

Read: Luke 18:1-17

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- What aspect of prayer does the parable of the persistent widow show us? (see verses 2-5)

When we pray with persistence, we demonstrate our belief that God both hears and answers our prayers. If we didn’t believe He could answer our prayer, we wouldn’t keep praying!

- According to the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector, what is it that justifies someone before God? (see verses 10-14)

You can live a moral life. You can fast twice a week. You can tithe. But none of those actions will justify you before God. As the tax collector demonstrates in this passage, we are justified by grace through faith. Authentic repentance reveals our need for a Savior, and we trust in His promises for our lives as a result.

- What were the disciples assuming by rebuking the practice of bringing babies to Jesus? (see verses 15-16)

Respond: Apply what you’ve learned in prayer and action

How can you be persistent in your prayers to God today?

Wednesday, March Twenty-First

On the TV show *Survivor*, roughly 20 people give up their life of luxury and pleasantries for a few months by moving to a deserted island. While there, they must learn to survive on their own as they compete against each other for a grand prize. The hardest transition for many of the contestants is not the change in location, but rather the change in resources. Gone are the plentiful meals and fast cars and comfy beds. Instead, they must now figure out how to live without the life they’ve temporarily given up. In today’s passage, Jesus talks about what one must give up to follow Him.

Read: Luke 18:18-43

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- What was the one thing the man lacked? (see verse 22)

The Bible tells us that, after hearing Jesus’ response, the man “became very sad, because he was very wealthy” (v. 23). It was in that moment that he realized his love for money and worldly possessions was perhaps too great to give up and follow Him. How might you have reacted to Jesus’ words? Would you have been willing to give up everything to follow Him?

- How does Peter demonstrate that the disciples had what the man lacked? (see verse 28)
- How was Jesus able to stop and see the blind man? (see verses 37-40)

“Hush!” “Stop yelling!” “Quiet!” You can imagine the people trying to silence the blind man from calling out to Jesus. But this man’s desire to see Jesus could not be squelched. His persistence is a beautiful example of our own desire to see and experience Jesus in our lives too.

Respond: Apply what you’ve learned in prayer and action

For a few minutes, consider the sacrifices you have made in order to follow Jesus. Think about family, friends, careers, hobbies, etc.

Thursday, March Twenty-Second

A couple of weekends ago, thousands of people made their way to downtown St. Pete to get a glimpse of the Firestone Grand Prix. Some people stood atop parking garages. Others clamored their way to the upper decks of restaurants. Some even met in their friends' high rise condos to see the view from above. Regardless of where they went, they wanted to see what this race through downtown was all about. In today's passage, a tax collector scales a tree to see who this Jesus is all about.

Read: Luke 19:1-27

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- How do the people view Zacchaeus? (see verse 7) How does Jesus view Zacchaeus? (see verses 9-10)
- Why does Jesus say that "salvation has come to this house"? (see verses 5-9)

In Week 1, we talked about how many Jews at the time assumed they were saved by their lineage to Abraham and his faithfulness to God (see Luke 3:8-9). But here, we see that salvation is not just for the Jews, but for all who place their faith in Him. For Zacchaeus, he was now a son of Abraham not by blood, but by faith.

- Why does Jesus tell the parable of the ten minas? (see verse 11)

People thought the kingdom of God was going to appear at once (v. 11), but Jesus knew this was not the case. In telling the parable of the ten minas, Jesus instead challenged His listeners to work on being faithful servants of their resources while they waited for the kingdom of God to come about ("Put this money to work until I come back" – verse 13).

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

What are you doing with your "ten minas" while you await Christ's return? What is one simple way you can invest your time, talents, and/or treasures into His ministry today?

Friday, March Twenty-Third

On Sunday, we at Our Savior (along with Christian churches all over the world) will celebrate Palm Sunday. We will take the time to celebrate that we have a King who is triumphant over sin, death, and the devil. But we will also take the time to anticipate the suffering and anguish that Jesus would experience in just a short while after that victory march...

Read: Luke 19:28-48

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- What do the people do and say as Jesus arrives in Jerusalem? (see verses 35-38)

It seems like a rather strange scene for us today when we read of people laying cloaks on the road and waving palm branches in the air, but these actions were of great significance. The laying of cloaks, for example, was a gesture of showing loyalty and respect to the individual (see 2 Kings 9:13). Similarly, the waving of the palm branches symbolized victory and triumph. In many ways, Jesus' journey into Jerusalem was a victory march in which people recognized Him as their King. Well...not all people...(see verse 39).

- What event does Jesus foreshadow in verses 41-44?
- Why did Jesus drive out those who were selling doves and other temple sacrifices? (see verses 45-46)

This "den of robbers" had set up shop in the outer courts of the temple. Their aim was simple – prey on people coming to the temple by charging them an arm a leg for temple sacrifices. On top of that, they had set up shop in the one area of the temple where the Gentiles were allowed to pray. Jesus clearly did not like what they were doing and where they were doing it, so He quickly put an end to their little scheme!

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Take some time to give thanks that Jesus is our victorious King!

Saturday, March Twenty-Fourth

Have you ever played a game of Jenga before? If you've never played before or haven't played in a while, Jenga involves stacking blocks of wood three by three in opposite directions in order to create a tower. Then, one by one, each player takes out one piece of the tower. However, if you take out a piece in an unwise or careless way, the whole tower will come crashing down, and you'll lose the game! In today's passage, Jesus talks about the important piece that holds everything together.

Read: Luke 20:1-26

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- How do these chief priests and teachers of the law respond to Jesus' question? (see verses 5-7)
- Why had Jesus spoken against them? (see verses 17-19)

Back then, when buildings were first constructed, they began with the first piece – the cornerstone. This stone served as the piece by which the entire building was built upon. Without the cornerstone, the building would crumble. With the parable of the tenants, Jesus reminds His critics that though they have rejected Him, He has become the cornerstone – everything hinges on Him!

- How does Jesus answer the peoples' question? (see verses 22-25)

The deadline to file your taxes is coming up in a few weeks! Every year, a portion of Americans try and find ways to get out of paying their taxes. Jesus' response, though, is pretty clear – pay your taxes! As His followers, we follow the principle of giving what we owe, whether it is to the government, a friend, or God Himself.

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

As the passage suggests, Jesus is the cornerstone of our faith. What recent situation or experience has caused you to either question or find peace in that reality?

Sunday, March Twenty-Fifth

Throughout our lifetimes, we sometimes find ourselves wondering about heaven. What will it be like? Will we recognize people? What will we be doing? Will we have a sense of time? What will we feel? Will our cats and dogs be there? While God has not revealed to us the specific answers to many of these questions, He has given us a robust understanding through His Word of what we can expect (and not expect). In today's passage, a group of Sadducees ask Jesus a specific question of what the resurrection will be like.

Read: Luke 20:27-47

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- How does Jesus respond to the Sadducees' question of marriage at the resurrection? (see verses 33-38)

The Sadducees were focused on understanding what worldly matters like marriage would look like in eternity. But Jesus is quick to shut them down: our identity won't be found in things like who we are married to; it will be found in who we are to God. As His children of the resurrection, *that* will be the primary identity that matters (v. 36).

- How does Jesus describe the teachers of the law? (see verses 46-47)

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Spend some time in prayer and ask God to prepare your heart for the coming week. Don't forget about our Holy Week services:

Maundy Thursday: 7 pm at Both Campuses

Good Friday: 7 pm at Both Campuses

Easter Morning: 8 am, 10 am, and 11:30 am at St. Pete
10 am at East Bay

Questions? Comments? Contact Vicar Chris at chris.futch@oursaviorfl.org or (727) 531-2761.