Women’s Bible Study

January 25, 2022

Luke 17-18: When the Son of Man Comes, Will He Find Faith on Earth?

This Year:

* The Gospel of Luke (Chapters 9-24)

Goal of Bible study:

* We come together to realign to the King through the study of His Word.

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,****17****that the man of Godmay be complete, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)*

Review:

🡪Overarching theme of the Kingdom=Restoration through the King (4:18-19)

* Announcement of the coming kingdom (1:32-33)
* Birth of the king (2:11)
* Presentation of the king (2:22)
* Way of the king prepared (3:4)
* The genealogy of the king (3:23-38)
* The anointing of the king (3:21-22)
* The victory of the king over the enemy (4:13)

-Rule of the king begins (4:21)

-The authority of the king (4:32, 36)

-The mission of the king (4:43)

* The Kingdom Community (5:32)
* The King is Lord of the Sabbath (6:5)
* The King appoints new leadership (6:13)
* The Ethic of the Kingdom (6:27)
* The Scope of the Kingdom and the Compassion of the King (7:2, 13)
* Evidence for the King (7:22)
* Love for the King (7:46) **Narrative/Background**
* Those who follow the King must have ears to hear. (8:8) **Travel/Teaching**
* “Who do you say that I am?”-The response to the King (9:20) 🡨Jesus heads to Jerusalem to complete His mission.
* The Dividing Line-Between those who believe and those who reject the King (11-12)
* Repent or Perish: The Urgency of the Message (13-14)
* The Heart of the Father (15-16)
* When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on earth? (17-18)

Summary of Luke 15:

After Jesus warns His listeners to repent or perish (Luke 11-12), the Pharisees criticize Him for eating (table fellowship) with sinners. His response is to tell 3 parables that highlight the heart of the Father which show that rather than criticism, there is joy and celebration in repentance and restoration. We see the heart of the Father to forgive and to compel the self-righteous to join in the celebration of the restoration of the lost.

Summary of Luke 16:

Jesus tells a story of a shrewd manager to make a point that even the people of this age know to be forward thinking when faced with a crisis. He warns against loving money over serving God or seeking the praise of men over the praise of God. He then tells another story of a rich man who didn’t use his wealth to help the poor and his heart is revealed after he dies. Jesus closes the story with a warning that if people don’t hear Moses and the Prophets, they won’t hear anything else.

**Luke 17**

Luke 17:1-10: Faithful Service

*And he said to his disciples, “Temptations to sinare sure to come, but woe to the one through whom they come!****2****It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were cast into the sea than that he should cause one of these little ones to sin.* ***3****Pay attention to yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him,****4****and if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you seven times, saying, ‘I repent,’ you must forgive him.”* ***5****The apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith!”****6****And the Lord said, “If you had faith like a grain of mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.* ***7****“Will any one of you who has a servantplowing or keeping sheep say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come at once and recline at table’?****8****Will he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare supper for me, and dress properly, and serve me while I eat and drink, and afterward you will eat and drink’?****9****Does he thank the servant because he did what was commanded?****10****So you also, when you have done all that you were commanded, say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.’”*

* *What does Jesus say is sure to come? What are His warnings?*

*-*Temptations are sure to come but woe to those through whom they come. Pay attention! Jesus warns that it’s better to drown than to cause a little one to sin or refuse to restore one to fellowship who repents.

* *What is to be our response if a brother sins?*

-Rebuke him, offer repeated forgiveness when he repents.

* *What do the disciples ask Jesus and what is His response?*

-They ask Him to increase their faith. He says they don’t need more faith. Faith is not a possession as much as it is a way of thinking. Jesus is going to define what true faith looks like.

* *What should be the response of a servant after he has done his work?*

-He is unworthy of honor-he was merely doing his duty. The master is not indebted to the servant for the work he has done.

🡪Jesus is countering the mindset of the Pharisees that obedience is a means to gain honor or favor with God.

🡪As Jesus is warning His disciples about temptation and sin, they ask Him to increase their faith. He tells them they don’t need more faith, but rather faith is a disposition or frame of mind. Those who participate in the kingdom have faith to avoid sin and temptation, are quick to restore the repentant, and recognize they are merely doing their duty as servants of their master.

Luke 17:11-19 One with Gratitude

*On the way to Jerusalem he was passing along between Samaria and Galilee.****12****And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers who stood at a distance****13****and lifted up their voices, saying, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.”****14****When he saw them he said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went they were cleansed.****15****Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice;****16****and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan.****17****Then Jesus answered, “Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine?****18****Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?”****19****And he said to him, “Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well.”*

🡪Jesus’s travels continue on His way to Jerusalem, passing through Samaria and Galilee. Along the way, He has been teaching the disciples about faithfulness but again and again, they seem to miss God’s purposes. Yet, there are examples of faithfulness which Jesus uses to continue to instruct His disciples.

* *Who does Jesus meet along the way? What do they ask Him?*

-He meets 10 lepers. They ask for mercy

* *What is Jesus’s response? What happens?*

-He sends them to the priests to be inspected. Along the way, they are healed.

* *What does one recognize and what does he do?*

-He has been healed and his healing has come at the hand of Jesus. He returns to Jesus with gratitude and a recognition of His authority.

-Luke then challenges any who may have prejudice regarding who receives favor from God by pointing out this man was a Samaritan.

🡪What separates the nine from the one is their apparent lack of gratitude and failure to recognize their healing comes from.

🡪All were healed so this one being “made well” goes beyond physical healing. He has faith and responds faithfully to God’s mercy to him.

🡪Faithfulness responds in gratitude.

Luke 17:20-37 Faithfulness at the Coming of the Son of Man

*Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, “The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed,****21****nor will they say, ‘Look, here it is!’ or ‘There!’ for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.”* ***22****And he said to the disciples, “The days are coming when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it.****23****And they will say to you, ‘Look, there!’ or ‘Look, here!’ Do not go out or follow them.****24****For as the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will the Son of Man be in his day.* ***25****But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.****26****Just as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of Man.****27****They were eating and drinking and marrying and being given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.****28****Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot—they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building,****29****but on the day when Lot went out from Sodom, fire and sulfur rained from heaven and destroyed them all—****30****so will it be on the day when the Son of Man is revealed.****31****On that day, let the one who is on the housetop, with his goods in the house, not come down to take them away, and likewise let the one who is in the field not turn back.****32****Remember Lot's wife.****33****Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will keep it.****34****I tell you, in that night there will be two in one bed. One will be taken and the other left.****35****There will be two women grinding together. One will be taken and the other left.”* ***37****And they said to him, “Where, Lord?” He said to them, “Where the corpseis, there the vultures will gather.”*

🡪In contrast to the Samaritan who recognizes God’s working through Jesus, the Pharisees don’t have that awareness.

* *Who asks Jesus about the kingdom of God? How does Jesus respond to them?*

*-*The Pharisees ask Him when the kingdom will come. Jesus pronounces that the kingdom is already active, even where it is not recognized, including among them. (The kingdom is tied to the person and work of Jesus, so not recognizing Him, they fail to respond to its arrival)

* *Who does Jesus then turn to and what does He say?*

-Jesus turns to His disciples to instruct them and shows what it will be like when the Son of Man is revealed. His teaching points to the need to be faithfully ready with a sense of urgency.

* *The days of the Son of Man are like what other days?*

-They are like the days of Noah, and the day of Sodom’s destruction. In all cases, life is going on normally when judgment comes suddenly.

* *What does Jesus say must happen first?*

-First, He must suffer and be rejected. The cross is not a deviation from the kingdom but is an integral part of God’s plan.

🡪 As the Pharisees are seeking a physical, earthly kingdom, they miss the person and work of Jesus. Yet, Jesus warns that the Son of Man will indeed be revealed and as such we ought to live with faithful urgency. He warns that like Lot’s wife, our allegiance can’t be in two places. In order to gain life, we have to lose our lives.

🡪Faithfulness walks in expectation and doesn’t hold to the things of this world.

Summary of Luke 17:

Jesus warns His followers that temptations will come but there is judgment for those who cause little ones to sin or who refuse to welcome those who repent. As the disciples ask Him to increase their faith, He shows them that faith is not a something they need to possess more of but rather, it is a mindset of faithfulness, as a servant who is merely doing his duty. Luke then points to an interaction with 10 lepers who are healed but faith is seen in the one who recognizes his healing comes from Jesus and who responds in gratitude. The kingdom of God is not coming as they expect and yet the revealing of the Son of Man will be unexpected and sudden like the judgment which came in the days of Noah and Lot. Remembering Lot’s wife, our allegiance can’t be divided, rather in order to gain our life, we must lose it.

**Luke 18**

Luke 18:1-8: Faithful Persistence

*And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart.****2****He said, “In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man.****3****And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Give me justice against my adversary.’****4****For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, ‘Though I neither fear God nor respect man,****5****yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.’”****6****And the Lord said, “Hear what the unrighteous judge says.****7****And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them?****8****I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”*

* *What is the purpose of Jesus’s parable?*

-So that they would pray always and not lose heart

* *Why does the judge respond to the widow? How does Jesus compare this to God?*

*-*He responds because of her persistence. If an unrighteous judge will respond to persistence, will not God do the same?

* *What question does Jesus ask as He concludes?*

-Will the Son of Man find faith (faithfulness) on the earth when He comes?

*🡪*In this larger section on faithfulness at the coming of the Son of Man, the climax is Jesus’ teaching about persistent prayer and not losing heart. Faith is hopeful and tenacious in the midst of present, unjust circumstances.

🡪Faith is certain of God’s justice and is resolute in faithfulness because of that assurance. Given God’s promised coming justice, how will people respond? Will faith be found?

Luke 18:9-17: The Parable of the Self Righteous

*He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and treated others with contempt:****10****“Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.****11****The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayedthus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.****12****I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’****13****But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’****14****I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”*

***15****Now they were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them. And when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them.****16****But Jesus called them to him, saying, “Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God.****17****Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.”*

*🡪*Tying these sections together is that dividing line-those who have faith/walk faithfully vs. those concerned with their own honor and position.

* *What is the purpose of this parable and who does He tell it to?*

-He tells it to those who treat others with contempt and who are self-righteous.

* *How does the Pharisee pray? How does the tax collector pray?*

-The Pharisee thanks God he is not a sinner. The tax collector recognizes his sin and desperate need for mercy.

* *What is “upside down” about this kingdom?*

*-*Those who exalt self will be humbled and the humble will be exalted.

* *What is the disciples’ response to infants being brought to Jesus? What is Jesus’s response to them?*

*-*They don’t think Jesus’s time should be taken up with such “unimportant” people. Denying children access to Jesus means refusing to welcome those with great need. Jesus calls His followers to embrace a value system that welcomes all, including the often overlooked.

🡪Faith recognizes one’s need for mercy because of sin. Faithfulness to God includes extending hospitality and welcome to the least in society.

Luke 18:18-30-The Danger of Wealth

*And a ruler asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”****19****And Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.****20****You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.’”****21****And he said, “All these I have kept from my youth.”****22****When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.”****23****But when he heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich.****24****Jesus, seeing that he had become sad, said, “How difficult it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!****25****For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.”****26****Those who heard it said, “Then who can be saved?”****27****But he said, “What is impossible with man is possible with God.”****28****And Peter said, “See, we have left our homes and followed you.”****29****And he said to them, “Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God,****30****who will not receive many times more in this time, and in the age to come eternal life.”*

* *What does the ruler ask Jesus? How does He respond? Why?*

-He asks what he must “do” to inherit eternal life. He calls Jesus “Good Teacher” showing his preoccupation with status. Jesus doesn’t give commendation or call him “good” in return but points him to the commandments. The ruler responds that he’s kept those things.

* *What does Jesus say that he lacks? What is the ruler’s response?*

*-*Jesus says he lacks “one thing” and calls him to sell all he has and give to the marginalized in society. He is calling him to reject seeking status, honor, or his own righteousness. The ruler, at the point of decision, responds with deep sadness. Even the crowd’s response shows a persistent belief that God’s blessing is tied to one’s power, status, and material possessions.

* *How does Peter respond?*

*-*The disciples have consistently not grasped Jesus’s mission but here we see their faithfulness to leave all and follow Jesus. He assures them this has eternal value.

🡪Faithfulness includes forsaking all claims to status and power and following Jesus in humility.

Luke 18:31-43-The Blind “See”

*And taking the twelve, he said to them, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished.****32****For he will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon.****33****And after flogging him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise.”****34****But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said.* ***35****As he drew near to Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging.****36****And hearing a crowd going by, he inquired what this meant.****37****They told him, “Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.”****38****And he cried out, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”****39****And those who were in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”****40****And Jesus stopped and commanded him to be brought to him. And when he came near, he asked him,****41****“What do you want me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, let me recover my sight.”****42****And Jesus said to him, “Recover your sight; your faith has made you well.”****43****And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.*

* *What does Jesus say to His disciples? What is their response?*

*-*He clearly tells them that all that is written of Him will be fulfilled-His suffering, death and resurrection. They understand none of it.

* *As they come near Jericho, who do they meet? What does he recognize about Jesus?*

-They meet a blind man who recognizes who Jesus is as the Son of David.

* *What does Jesus do for him?*

-He restores his sight.

🡪Everything written about Jesus will be fulfilled. The Pharisees has access to this and yet they did not see Jesus for who He was. The blind man actually “saw” Jesus as the Son of David, looking with expectation for God to fulfill His promises.

🡪An outcast in society, his faith brings him into a relationship with a new community, made up of Jesus and His followers.

🡪Faith “sees” Jesus for who He is.

Summary of Luke 18:

Like the persistent widow seeking justice, faith looks to the coming justice of God. Faithfulness includes recognizing the need for mercy as a sinner and welcoming the least in society. Status and honor are not to be held onto, but faith includes forsaking all claims of status and following Jesus. The Pharisees and often the disciples are blinded to what was foretold about Jesus but in an ironic twist, a blind man “sees” who Jesus is, the promised Son of David.

Thoughts on Luke 17-18:

* We often think we need more faith but Jesus points to faith as a way of thinking, or a persistent faithfulness to believe in who He is and what He has done.
* Faith includes restoring those who repent, faithfully doing our duty as servants, responding in gratitude, being ready for the Son of Man, persisting in prayer for God’s justice, recognizing our desperate need for mercy, welcoming the weak and outcast, giving up all claims to status and following Jesus, seeing Him for who He is.
* In losing our lives, our lives are saved, and we will be rescued when the Son of Man comes. Justice will be given, the humble exalted, and we will receive the kingdom/eternal life.
* Will the Son of Man find faith (faithfulness) on the earth when He comes?
* Ultimately, the Son of Man will find faith as we are in Christ, and we are united to Him and His faithfulness.

Discussion Questions:

1. Have you prayed and asked God to increase your faith? What is a better way to think about it?

2. What does faith/faithfulness look like? Where does our mindset need to be adjusted?

3. Do we believe that we must lose our lives? Why do we hold so tightly to our lives, our rights, our status, or position and how does that reflect our faith?

4. How does it encourage you that our faith rests in Christ’s faithfulness even when we lack faith?

🡪Pray that we would be people who walk in faith/faithfulness to who Jesus is and that we would be willing to lose all for the sake of following Jesus. Yet may we rest that having faith/faithfulness is not a work we do, rather it is a transformed mind that sees Jesus for who He is, and rests in our union with Him and His ultimate faithfulness to save. He is faithful, even when we are not.

Homework:

* Review your discussion question answers and reflect on what God is showing you.
* Read Luke 19-20
* Consider getting additional resources to help in your study time.
* Next Study: Tuesday, February 22 (4th Tuesday)

Sources Used:

G.K. Beale and Benjamin Gladd, *The Story Retold*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2020.

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Gundry, Robert. *A Survey of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003.