



The Rich Young Ruler

Summary and Goal

We live in a community full of “rich young rulers”—moral, religious, and financially secure. Jesus exposed that the man’s true identity was built not upon his faith, but upon his finances. While it seems impossible for a man to “give up” such wealth, Jesus told us that with God, all things are possible because of what He was about to accomplish on the cross. An idol is anything that we would be miserable without; this man’s idol and identity was his wealth. What “good” idols need to be smashed so that you can take hold of eternal life?

Main Passages

Luke 18:18-34

Session Outline

1. A Critical Question (Luke 18:18-20)
2. The Ruler’s Confidence and Christ’s Scalpel (Luke 18:21-22)
3. The Rich Ruler’s Sadness (Luke 18:23-34)

Theological Theme

It is impossible for sinful man to earn eternal life by his own merits. As an x-ray machine reveals the cancerous tumor, but can do nothing to cure it; so the Law of God reveals the sinful heart of man, but it does not cure the sinful heart.

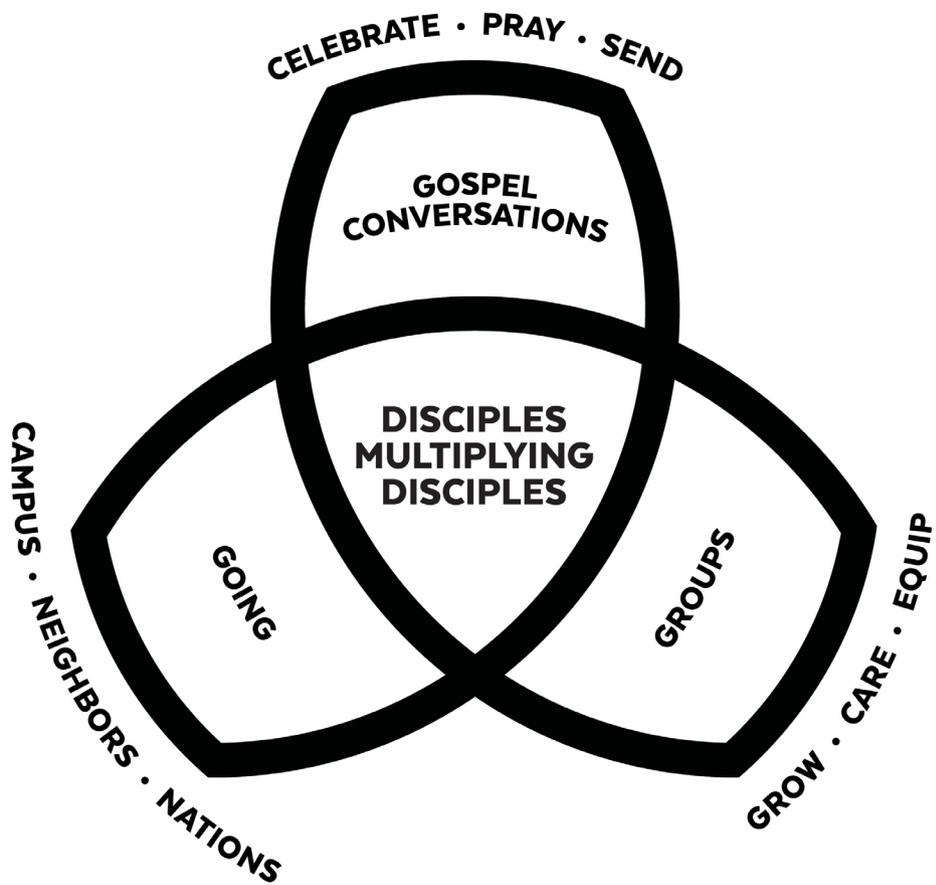
Christ Connection

The Law is unable to make a hell-bound soul fit for heaven, but the atoning sacrifice of Christ is an effectual remedy.

Missional Application

Those who desire to show love to their neighbor and to make a lasting impact on the world labor to spread the gospel to sin-sick souls. All other efforts, as noble as they may be, are ultimately meaningless if they are not paired with the saving work of Christ on the cross.

Disciples Multiplying Disciples



DxD This Week

For the Leader

Pre-enlist someone to share an experience of serving in the community. Serving helps us see outside our bubble and can be a channel of discipleship. Have the Missions representative share about upcoming Engage Middle TN opportunities.

Here is a story from 2016 about Brentwood's mission:

<https://brentwoodbaptist.com/engage-middle-tennessee-meeting-people-where-they-are/>

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Session Plan

The Rich Young Ruler

? Ice Breaker

What was your hardest subject in high school? Was it the subject or the teacher that made it difficult? (See Luke 18:34)

Introduction

- ? Have you ever put your whole heart and ability into completing a task, but in the end came up short?
- ? What was the task? Why were you unable to complete it?

Today's passage is about the effort to complete an impossible task. When a rich ruler came and questioned Jesus about inheriting eternal life, Jesus led him to see that he must perfectly and perpetually keep the Law of God. Of course, the rich ruler was not able and never would be able to do so from that day forward. We simply don't have the ability.

1. A Critical Question (Luke 18:18-20)

In verse 18, we read that the rich ruler came to Christ and asked Him, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" The question of how a person might be right with God and enjoy the benefits of eternal life and entrance into the kingdom of God is the most important question any person can ask. The lawyer (Luke 10), the crowd at Pentecost (Acts 2:37), and the Philippian jailer (Acts 16:30) all asked this same question.

- ? Why is it important that every person ask this question? How have you wrestled with this question in your own life?
- ? Why do you think Jesus quoted from the Law? What purpose does the Law of God serve in the life of a Christian?
- ? Application: Why is it important to recognize the ways we have broken God's Law? How is our relationship with Him inhibited if we are unwilling to do so?

2. The Ruler's Confidence and Christ's Scalpel (Luke 18:21-22)

The rich ruler responded, "And he said, 'All these I have kept from my youth.'" Christ held up the mirror of the Law and it revealed this man's sinfulness, but not in the way we might expect. The list of commands

didn't cause the rich ruler to realize his sin and confess it. What was the sin of the rich ruler? Was he sinful? His own testimony was that he was without sin. But he was indeed sinful. In fact, he was shown to be guilty of the most heinous and grievous of sins: self-righteousness. He believed that he would enter into heaven through his own efforts. The root of his hope was his good works.

- ❓ How did the man show that he had missed Jesus' point by his response?
- ❓ How did Christ respond to the rich ruler's self-righteous confidence? Why might His response be surprising?
- ❓ What was Jesus' point? What was He trying to communicate to the rich ruler?
- ❓ Application: On whose merits do you seek to enter heaven? What needs to change so that you aren't seeking to earn salvation through your own efforts?

3. The Rich Ruler's Sadness (Luke 18:23-34)

Verse 23 reads, "After he heard this, he became extremely sad, because he was very rich." His god was too precious to him. He would not leave it for Christ.

- ❓ How did the rich man ultimately respond? How are we all faced with the same decision as this man?
- ❓ Why are all who seek salvation outside of Jesus ultimately left sad? How is ultimate joy found in Him, even as we realize our own efforts will fail us?
- ❓ Application: What path are you currently seeking to be made right with God? How is He speaking to you about that today?

Conclusion

- ❓ Where have you sought eternal life? How have you been challenged or encouraged in this today?
- ❓ Why is it important to know God's Word to learn both the truth of His Law and His means of salvation? How can we encourage one another in this practice?
- ❓ Who do you need to tell about salvation that is found in Jesus alone?

❓ Closing

Have group members meet by gender this week. Ask men and women to separate and discuss this question: What is the greatest dilemma you have faced in your spiritual life? How did you respond?



Expanded Session Content

The Rich Young Ruler

? Ice Breaker

What was your hardest subject in high school? Was it the subject or the teacher that made it difficult? (See Luke 18:34)

Introduction

- ? Have you ever put your whole heart and ability into completing a task, but in the end came up short?
- ? What was the task? Why were you unable to complete it?

Today's passage is about the effort to complete an impossible task. When a rich ruler came and questioned Jesus about inheriting eternal life, Jesus led him to see that he must perfectly and perpetually keep the Law of God.

Of course, the rich ruler was not able and never would be able to do so from that day forward. We simply don't have the ability. As an illustration of this predicament, let's say that someone has a mango and they accidentally drop it in the dirt. It's not a big deal to simply pick it up and wash off the dirt with fresh water. Now, let's say that someone else has a mango and they cut it open to prepare it for eating. But, when they slice through it they find that the interior is putrid, rotten to the core. Maggots are already eating away at the flesh and it smells terrible. There's no washing it off because it is filthy to the core. It is ruined. The heart of all people is like the second mango. Our hearts aren't like a mango that has been dropped in the dirt and needs to be washed in the water. Our hearts are like a mango that has been eaten by maggots and has rotted to the core, through and through. Our hearts don't need washing. They need replacing (Ezek. 36).

This is what Jesus wanted the rich ruler (and us) to understand. He was holding up the mirror of the Law to show those who are clean in their own eyes that they are not washed of their filth (Prov. 30:12).

Session Summary

In this passage Luke described an encounter between Jesus and a rich ruler. It isn't altogether clear whether the rich ruler came to Jesus with genuine humility and desire to learn or if he had ill will toward Christ and was a part of a scheme to trap him. Yet, Jesus knew and was intent on exposing this man's desperate need of a Savior.

This lesson is hard medicine if you come with a stiffened neck having convinced yourself that you are basically a good person and that God will accept you because you have lived an upright life. If you are planning to enter into heaven by your own efforts, then you will likely feel offended by today's study. But this is a great mercy if this offense will lead you to repentance. It is better to be offended for a time now, than to be condemned for an eternity after this life.

Another way to examine the account of the rich ruler is to consider the root of one's salvation. Do you believe that you will go to heaven? If so, on what basis does that belief rest? In other words, why would God allow you to enter into His heavenly kingdom? What is the root of your profession of faith and hope of heaven? Is the root of your hope for heaven and assurance of salvation the blood of Christ alone; or do you add something of your own to it? If you mix anything of your own with the blood of Christ, then you spoil it. Christ will be a complete Savior to you, or He will be no Savior at all.

1. A Critical Question (Luke 18:18-20)

In verse 18, we read that the rich ruler came to Christ and asked Him, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?"

-  Why is it important that every person ask this question? How have you wrestled with this question in your own life?

The question of how a person might be right with God and enjoy the benefits of eternal life and entrance into the kingdom of God is the most important question any person can ask. The lawyer (Luke 10), the crowd at Pentecost (Acts 2:37), and the Philippian jailer (Acts 16:30) all asked this same question. It is a crucial question for two reasons. First, everyone must find a way to be made fit for heaven. No one comes into the world ready for heaven. No one is born in right standing with the one true and living God.

Second, no one has the answer to this question inside of themselves. The way of salvation has been revealed, written down, and preserved for us today in the sacred Scriptures. It is not, however, found in your heart; it cannot be worked out in your mind. You can't discover the way of life by looking inward or reflecting deeply. Now, the world will tell you differently. The world will tell you to follow your heart; to find your truth; to make your own way; to become your authentic self. This advice is disastrous for this life and the next. Why? Because your heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9). Why would you follow a guide like that? There is a way that seems right to a man, but the end of it is death (Prov. 14:12).

 Why do you think Jesus quoted from the Law? What purpose does the Law of God serve in the life of a Christian?

Jesus led the rich ruler to the Law of God for this reason: the Law serves as a mirror by which one can see clearly. The Law of God reveals both the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man. It shows us God's holiness because the holiness, goodness, and purity of the Law is a reflection of the nature of the One who gave that Law. God is light. There isn't a trace of darkness in Him. He is clothed in righteousness, goodness, and purity. He is perfectly holy.

But the Law doesn't only show us God's holiness; it also reveals to us our wickedness. A regularly worn white shirt seems white enough until you set it next to a brand new, never before worn, unsoiled shirt. It's then that you realize that the old shirt you've been wearing is more yellow than white, and those stains are much deeper than you realized.

Your conduct, words, and thoughts may seem good enough when you compare yourself to those around you. You'll always be able to find someone to point the finger at and say, "Look what he has done!" But this isn't the standard against which we are commanded to measure ourselves. When you set your life against the divine measuring stick; when you bring your case before God's judgment seat, it's then that you realize that your good works are more like filthy rags, your stains are much deeper and darker than you ever imagined and your offenses against your creator are deserving of severe punishment.

 Application: Why is it important to recognize the ways we have broken God's Law? How is our relationship with Him inhibited if we are unwilling to do so?

2. The Ruler's Confidence and Christ's Scalpel (Luke 18:21-22)

The rich ruler responded, "And he said, 'All these I have kept from my youth.'"

 How did the man show that he had missed Jesus' point by his response?

Christ held up the mirror of the Law and it revealed this man's sinfulness, but not in the way we might expect. The list of commands didn't cause the rich ruler to realize his sin and confess it. What was the sin of the rich ruler? Was he sinful? His own testimony was that he was without sin. But he was indeed sinful. In fact, he was shown to be guilty of the most

heinous and grievous of sins: self-righteousness. He believed that he would enter into heaven through his own efforts. The root of his hope was his good works.

It isn't difficult to know that this man was wrong and that he had broken the Law. For one, Jesus exposed his sin, which we'll see in a moment. But even without the rest of the story, we know that this man had sinned against God because the Scriptures tell us plainly that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23), there is none righteous, no not one (Rom. 3:10), and that if anyone does claim to be without sin he is deceiving himself (1 John 1:8). Our hearts are deceitful, and the most damaging lie that your heart will tell you is that you are basically a good person. There are many who are clean in their own eyes but are not washed of their filth.

 How did Christ respond to the rich ruler's self-righteous confidence? Why might His response be surprising?

Luke reported that when Jesus heard the rich ruler's response, he said to him, "You still lack one thing: Sell all you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." Although Jesus knew that this rich ruler had not kept God's Law perfectly, He didn't argue with him about this self-deception. Instead, He took out His scalpel in order to peel back the facade of righteousness and expose the rich ruler's rotten interior. What did Christ expose? He exposed this man's idolatry. The rich ruler worshiped his wealth and was not willing to turn from it. In Exodus 20:3, we read the first command of the Ten Commandments. It is this: "You shall have no other gods before me." Jesus masterfully exposed the rich ruler's secret god that he adored and worshiped—his money.

 What was Jesus' point? What was He trying to communicate to the rich ruler?

Jesus was saying this: "Those who enter into heaven on their own merits can only do so through a life of perfect and perpetual obedience to God's Law." Jesus' aim was to cause the rich ruler to see that he didn't qualify and he could never qualify to enter heaven by his own merits. Similarly, Jesus' aim today through His Word is to help you see that you don't qualify and can never qualify for righteousness by your own merits.

So, what do we do? Who can be saved? If no one qualifies for heaven by their own merits, then all are lost. We have seen that the door of the self-righteous is closed to us. The sinners' door, however is open. Only the humble, those who are stripped of self-righteousness, who put no

confidence in their works, can enter it. The rest are too proud. No one will ever enter heaven by his or her own merits. Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Those who come to Him humbly, repentant, and seeking mercy will enter on His merits.

- ❓ Application: On whose merits do you seek to enter heaven? What needs to change so that you aren't seeking to earn salvation through your own efforts?

3. The Rich Ruler's Sadness (Luke 18:23-34)

- ❓ How did the rich man ultimately respond? How are we all faced with the same decision as this man?

Verse 23 reads, "After he heard this, he became extremely sad, because he was very rich." His god was too precious to him. He would not leave it for Christ.

- ❓ Why are all who seek salvation outside of Jesus ultimately left sad? How is ultimate joy found in Him, even as we realize our own efforts will fail us?

Through the Eye of the Needle

A camel trying to go through the eye of a needle was apparently a proverbial saying for what was impossible; this explains the question from Jesus's hearers. His response was that people cannot be saved by their own efforts but only by salvation that comes by God's grace.

Those who have an abundance of material wealth often are blind to their spiritual needs. To place that wealth under the lordship of Christ proves a higher price than many wealthy people are willing to pay. Jesus used the illustration of something that was impossible from a human perspective—a camel going through the eye of a needle—to emphasize that wealthy people had extreme difficulty in choosing to follow Him. To come to Christ, one must recognize one's personal need and then be willing to trust one's life to Christ.

Jesus told the disciples that what is impossible with man is possible with God (v. 27). The fact is that those who come to Christ for mercy may enter the kingdom, but it will only be through this sinner's door. There is a Shepherd there who keeps it. He calls to his own and his own follow His voice. This Shepherd has laid down His life for the sheep, so that the sheep may come into the sheepfold. Are you one of His sheep? If you are, then this message is a cause for rejoicing for you, for you know the rest and joy that is found on the path toward the sinner's door.

Following Jesus provides no protection against suffering, but the reward includes eternal life. The rich ruler sought this but walked away from it. The greatest gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ. Jesus gave all He had for our sake. How could we hold anything back from Him?

- ? Application: What path are you currently seeking to be made right with God? How is He speaking to you about that today?

Conclusion

Like the rich ruler in this passage, we all need eternal life. The problem is, however, that neither the rich ruler nor we could ever meet the standard laid out in God's Law. But those who come to Christ humbly for mercy will find it.

- ? Where have you sought eternal life? How have you been challenged or encouraged in this today?
- ? Why is it important to know God's Word to learn both the truth of His Law and His means of salvation? How can we encourage one another in this practice?
- ? Who do you need to tell about salvation that is found in Jesus alone?

? Closing

Have group members meet by gender this week. Ask men and women to separate and discuss this question: What is the greatest dilemma you have faced in your spiritual life? How did you respond?

Prayer of Response

Spend time thanking God that He has provided a way for eternal life through Jesus. As you pray examine your own heart. On what are you depending to secure salvation and eternal life for you? Ask God to help you to cast off any idols that are standing in the way of pursuing Him fully.

Additional Resources

- *The Holiness of God* by R.C. Sproul
- *What is the Gospel?* by Greg Gilbert
- *Gospel of Luke* by Joel Green

For Next Week

Session Title

- The Last Supper

Main Passages

- Luke 22:14-23; 1 Corinthians 11:27-32

Session Outline

1. The Significance of the Supper (Luke 22:14-23)
2. Worthy Recipients of the Supper (1 Cor. 11:27-32)
3. The Purpose of the Supper (1 Cor. 11:23-26)

Memorize

Jesus said, "How hard 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."

- Luke 18:24b-25

Daily Readings

- Monday - Luke 18:1-8
- Tuesday - Luke 18:9-14
- Wednesday - Luke 18:15-17
- Thursday - Luke 18:18-23
- Friday - Luke 18:24-34
- Saturday - Luke 18:35-43

Historical Context of Luke

Purpose

The Gospel of Luke is a carefully researched (1:3), selective presentation of the person and life of Jesus Christ, designed to strengthen the faith of believers (1:3–4) and to challenge the misconceptions of unbelievers, especially those from a Greek background. Its portrait of Jesus is well balanced, skillfully emphasizing his divinity and perfect humanity.

Author

The author of the Third Gospel is not named. Considerable evidence points to Luke as its author. Much of that proof is found in the book of Acts, which identifies itself as a sequel to Luke (Ac 1:1–3). A major line of evidence has to do with the so-called “we” sections of the book (Ac 16:10–17; 20:5–15; 21:1–18; 27:1–37; 28:1–16). Most of Acts is narrated in third-person plural (“they,” “them”), but some later sections having to do with the ministry of the apostle Paul unexpectedly shift to first-person plural (“we,” “us”). This indicates that the author had joined the apostle Paul for the events recorded in those passages. Since there are no “we” passages in the Gospel of Luke, that fits with the author stating that he used eyewitness testimony to the life of Jesus (1:2), indicating he was not such an eyewitness himself.

Since Luke wrote both the Third Gospel and the book of Acts (Ac 1:1–3), it is relevant to consider the dating of both books together. The events at the end of Acts occurred around AD 62–63. That is the earliest point at which Acts could have been written. If Acts was written in the early AD 60s from Rome, where Paul was imprisoned for two years (Ac 28:30), the Third Gospel could date from an earlier stage of that period of imprisonment. The other reasonable possibility is during Paul’s earlier two-year imprisonment in Caesarea (Ac 24:27). From that location, Luke would have been able to travel and interview the eyewitnesses to Jesus’s life and ministry who were still alive.

Setting

Traditionally, the Gospel of Luke is believed to have been written after both Matthew and Mark. Those who date Matthew and Mark in the AD 60s or 70s have tended to push the dating of Luke back to the AD 70s or 80s.

Special Features

The Gospel of Luke is the longest book in the New Testament. Focusing on the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, this Gospel is part one of a two-part history, the book of Acts being part two. Both were dedicated to “most honorable Theophilus” (Lk 1:3; Ac 1:1).

Extended Commentary

Luke 18:18-34

18:18. A Jewish civil administrator interrupted Jesus with a question. The question centers on the divisive point between the two leading groups of Jews, the Pharisees and Sadducees. Sadducees, using only the first five books of the Old Testament, found in these books no reference to resurrection, so they denied that resurrection of the dead was possible. Pharisees, following all three parts of the Jewish canon—Law, Prophets, and Writings—saw definite proof of resurrection in Daniel 12:2 and many other references, particularly in the Psalms and Isaiah. Was this administrator trying to get Jesus to take sides, or was he searching for certain hope in his own life? Luke does not give us his motivation, just the question.

This man called Jesus “good teacher.” This represents a common politeness of speech and recognition to some degree of Jesus’ role as an intelligent, caring teacher.

18:19. Jesus caught the man’s attention by challenging his description of Jesus as good. Only one person can be truly good. That is God. Thus, unknowingly, the administrator had linked Jesus to God. Jesus caught the link and brought it out into the open. He repeated traditional Jewish theology in confessing that God alone is good. In so doing, Jesus did not affirm or deny his own claim to deity. Luke expected his readers, however, to see the link that Jesus made and to affirm the obvious—that Jesus, being good, was also God.

18:20. Jesus turned to the source of authority that all Jews accepted—the Law, the Torah of Moses. He quoted part of the Ten Commandments from Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5.

18:21. The man with the question also had a personal testimony. He had rigorously obeyed all the commandments since youth. We must not quibble with his answer at this point and try to point out that all have sinned. That is not under discussion here. Here the issue is obedience and eternal life. This Jew apparently thought on the criteria of his religion that he deserved eternal life, but internally he felt something missing. What was the more beyond moral living?

18:22. Jesus had the answer. He returned to the theme that he had addressed so often—wealth and dedication. Do you trust possessions more than you trust God? he asked the man. Are you trying to put your trust in both possessions and God at the same time? Can you live without your possessions but cannot live without your God? Sell your possessions and find out (see 6:45; 12:13–21, 33; 16:13). I have told you all along that your relationship to the poor and needy is of paramount importance from a kingdom perspective. Take the money you get from your sale, and give it to the poor. Then follow me with the rest of my penniless disciples and see what kingdom living is all about.

18:23. These words cut to the quick. Jesus had found the man’s weak spot. He had great riches and evidently trusted in them to make life meaningful and hopeful. Grief and mourning set in. There was no way he could give up his money, even for God’s kingdom.

18:24. Jesus spoke in the form of lamentation, much as a deep sigh would be used at a funeral to express grief at personal loss. The sad truth is that the rich have a hard time giving up their trust in their possessions. They cannot take the long-term look and realize that one day they will lose control over wealth. Then they will be robbed of eternal treasure, too. No wonder Jesus issued his sad lament: How hard for the rich to enter the kingdom. They have never experienced the need to trust someone or some thing outside their own intelligence and wealth.

18:25. Jesus turned to hyperbole to make a point. He described the utterly impossible. The lure of wealth overpowers the lure of the kingdom, not just in this rich Jewish administrator's life, but in the lives of virtually all rich people and many who are not quite so rich. Thus, the first step to the kingdom is not to solve the problem of putting a camel through a needle's eye. The first step is to get rid of the burden of riches so a person has nothing to trust but Jesus.

18:26. The audience was amazed. If the blessed rich cannot be saved, they declared, who can? They saw that Jesus had described an impossible situation.

18:27. God does the impossible was Jesus' quick answer. Don't try to figure out the hows and whys. Just let God do it. Trust him with your life more than you trust your riches. Place your riches in his control. Watch God work the impossible.

18:28. Blunt and to the point, Peter piped up, "We left all and followed you. Does that qualify us for the kingdom?"

18:29–30. Jesus told Peter not to worry. Those who had given up life's closest relationships, greatest responsibilities, and strongest commitments to follow Jesus had a reward coming. Luke is imprecise in describing the reward, but he puts it in two stages. In this age, the committed, self-denying follower will receive many times as much as he has given up. Is this strictly parallel to the preceding verse, so that the reward is in terms of family? The family of believers will be more important, more numerous, and more meaningful than a follower's family of origin. Or is this much more indefinite so that Jesus was calling for faith even as he promised rewards? God has a reward for you, but you do not need to know exactly what that reward is. You just need to trust God. The second part of the disciples' reward is eternal life, a quality of life beginning here on earth with Jesus as Lord and extending through resurrection to the eternal kingdom.

18:31. Again, Jesus turned attention from the crowds and opponents to the disciples. They must know that he knew what was happening as he approached Jerusalem. He had begun to tell them about this before (9:22, 44–45; 12:50; 13:32–34; 17:25). First he gave an affirmation. The entire Old Testament prepared the way for him. Everything written in Scripture about him would take place. This appeared to be a reassuring statement, but it turned out to be just the opposite.

18:32–33. What did Scripture say about Jesus, the Son of Man? Enemy Gentiles would take control of him. They would ridicule and mock him, insult him, spit on him, and beat him. Then they would kill him (see Isa. 50:6; 52:13–53:12; Dan. 7:13; Zeph. 3:11–12; Pss. 2; 94:2–7).

18:34. Repeated passion predictions by Jesus did not penetrate the dense, stubborn predispositions of the disciples. They knew the definition of Messiah, kingdom, and salvation/deliverance. They knew Scripture's teaching on God's restoration of Israel's rule. That death could come before the kingdom reigned in Jerusalem just did not compute in their brains. God was not yet ready for them to grasp all this, so he hid it from them. He was able to hide it because they were in no condition to grasp it. Here we see the connection between the electing, choosing work of God in carrying out his plan in his time and the free operation of the disciples' will as they hung on to old ideas and could not grasp Jesus' radically new teaching. The day would come when the disciples would turn the world upside down with the message of a resurrected Messiah. But at this moment they were confused about God's timing, Scripture's meaning, and their previous understandings.¹

References

1. Butler, Trent C., and Max Anders. *Luke*. Holman New Testament Commentary. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000.

Author Bio

Trent Butler (Luke)

Trent C. Butler is a freelance author and editor. He served ten years on the faculty of the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, and for twenty-two years as editor and editorial director for Holman Bible Publishers and LifeWay. He wrote the Word Biblical Commentary volume on Joshua, the Layman's Bible Book Commentary on Isaiah, the Holman Old Testament Commentaries on Isaiah and Hosea through Micah, and the Holman New Testament Commentary on Luke. He served on the editorial Board of the Holman Christian Standard Bible, and edited the Holman Bible Dictionary. Dr. Butler has a Ph.D. in biblical studies and linguistics from Vanderbilt University, has done further study at Heidelberg and Zurich, and has participated in the excavation of Beersheba.

Max Anders (Luke)

Dr. Max Anders is the author of over 25 books, including the bestselling *30 Days to Understanding the Bible*, and is the creator and general editor of the 32-volume Holman Bible Commentary series. He has taught on the college and seminary level and is a veteran pastor. Max provides resources and discipleship strategies at www.maxanders.com to help people grow spiritually.

R.C. Sproul (The Holiness of God)

R.C. Sproul (1939–2017) was founder of Ligonier Ministries in Orlando, Fla. He was also copastor of Saint Andrew's Chapel, first president of Reformation Bible College, and executive editor of *Tabletalk* magazine. His radio program, *Renewing Your Mind*, is still broadcast daily on hundreds of radio stations around the world and can also be heard online.

Greg Gilbert (What is the Gospel?)

Greg Gilbert (M.Div., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary) is senior pastor at Third Avenue Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky. He is the author of *What Is the Gospel?*, *James: A 12-Week Study*, and *Who Is Jesus?*, and is the co-author (with Kevin DeYoung) of *What Is the Mission of the Church?*

Joel Green (The Gospel of Luke)

Joel B. Green is Professor of New Testament Interpretation and Associate Dean for the Center for Advanced Theological Studies, Fuller Theological Seminary. Prior to his appointment at Fuller Seminary in 2007, Dr. Green was Professor of New Testament Interpretation at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky (1997-2007), where he also held administrative positions first as Dean of the School of Theology and then as Vice President of Academic Affairs / Provost. He has served on the faculties of the American Baptist Seminary of the West and Graduate Theological Union, and New College Berkeley, Berkeley, California, a graduate school of Christian and interdisciplinary studies for the whole people of God.