

Luke - Part 3

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of repentance, the burden for lost souls, and the need for a healthy church, highlighting the significance of the lost sheep, coin, and son parables and the importance of using money wisely for the spread of the gospel.

Duration: 58:03

Scripture: Luke 16:1-13, Luke 17:3-4, Luke 17:10, Luke 20:25, Luke 21:9, Luke 21:16, Luke 24:49

Topics: "Luke"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of having a passion for lost souls and a desire to see them transformed. He shares the commission given to him by the Lord to make slaves into kings through the preaching of the Word. The preacher also highlights the significance of money in Jesus' teachings, stating that one in every six verses of Jesus' teaching in the gospels is about money. He encourages believers to be faithful stewards and to have a heart like the father in the parable of the prodigal son, rather than being like the elder brother who lacked compassion.

Transcript

We'll continue this evening from the Gospel of Luke. We finished at the end of chapter fourteen this morning, and we'd like to look at chapter fifteen. We are so grateful that Luke decided to make a careful investigation and get an accurate record of all that Jesus did and that Jesus spoke.

Because of that, we have the story of the prodigal son, which we would never have got if Luke had not made a careful investigation. Now here there are three parables in Luke chapter fifteen about the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son. And there are a number of things that we can learn from these.

First of all, the lost sheep refers to a sheep that has gone astray and the shepherd going looking for that sheep. That's a picture of Jesus, the shepherd. The prodigal son is a son who's gone astray, coming back to the father, and that's a picture of God the Father.

So we have one parable depicting God the Father and another parable depicting God the Son. So, if we have three parables, which should the third parable represent? The Holy Spirit, and that's pictured like a woman searching for a lost coin. So why is the Holy Spirit pictured like a woman? I think it's because the woman is the church, and the Holy Spirit, when the Spirit of God fills people in the church, the church is going to be searching for lost souls.

Go looking for them and finding them, and search until they find. So if we are in tune with the Holy Spirit, we will do what that woman did, to search for lost souls. And that will be our longing.

Not only lost souls in terms of people who are not converted, but I can imagine that this woman had these ten coins. They were hers already, and then she lost one of them. The sheep were already in the fold, and then he lost one of them.

The son was already in the house, and he went away. So, they picture backsliders too. People who were in the church, and fell away, or backslid.

And when the Holy Spirit fills us, we have that same burden that He has, who does not want anybody to perish, but that all should come to repentance. I would say that any believer who does not have a burden and a passion in his heart for lost souls and backslidden people, and that the church of Jesus Christ should be built, he is not in tune with the Holy Spirit. It is impossible.

He is completely out of tune with the Holy Spirit, completely out of tune with the Son of God, and completely out of tune with God the Father, whatever else there may be good about Him. We must remember this. There are believers who pursue only holiness, and who have no burden for the lost.

They are just interested in purifying themselves. I believe such people are totally out of touch with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. I don't know who they are in touch with.

They are probably just in tune with themselves. And there are many churches like this, who don't have a desire to reach out. One of the prayers I have prayed myself for many, many years, and I have encouraged all the elders in our churches to pray, is, Lord, if there is anyone in this area seeking for a godly life, please bring us in touch with him.

Bring him in touch with us. And if you don't do that, tell us what is wrong with us, so that we can set it right, so that we can be in tune with you and find those people. It's very important that the type of fold into which we bring the lost sheep is a good fold.

If a sheep is lost out in the wilderness, and here is a fold where 99 sheep are biting and tearing each other and full of disease and sickness, don't you think that sheep is safer out there than coming inside such a fold? What's the use bringing a lost soul into a church where people are fighting and quarreling with each other, where people are backbiting, where people have got sin in their life? That soul is far safer there than here. That's the condition of a lot of churches. So we not only need a ministry that goes out to bring lost sheep in, we also need a ministry that keeps these 99 sheep healthy.

Because Jesus said in Luke 15 and verse 7, he described the 99 sheep like this. Please read carefully. There is more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, that's the lost sheep, than 99 righteous persons who need no repentance.

What a wonderful church this is. This church comprises of 99 righteous people who don't need to repent of anything. Now how is it that you get a church where there are people who don't need to repent of anything? Is it because they are perfect? There is no perfect church on earth.

There are no perfect people on earth. And yet if you read your Bible carefully, Jesus said this flock is not a bunch of 99 people who are half-hearted and fighting with each other. This flock consists of 99 believers who are righteous in their life and who don't need any repentance.

Why? Because they are repenting every day. The true church of Jesus Christ comprises of people who judge themselves every day. This has been the habit of my life for many, many years.

And as a result of it, I've discovered sin in my own life which nobody else can see. Every day to cleanse myself. And if you are like that, you won't have time to find fault with other people and criticize others because you'll be so busy cleansing yourself that there you can build a church where that lost sheep can come and be healed.

99 righteous persons who need no repentance. So if you are an elder of a church, what type of church should you build? I know, I'm an elder of a church and I know what type of church I want to build. I want to build a church where everybody judges themselves every day.

So that they don't need any repentance. And those who are not willing for that, well they just get offended and leave the church. And how are we going to build a church where people are going to repent every day and judge themselves every day? Because we preach repentance.

Because we preach from the word of God that we must judge ourselves every day. And we preach continuously again and again and again and again and again a hundred times a year that we must judge ourselves and that we should not judge other people. Gradually over a period of time, you get a church where people have learned to judge themselves.

And not judge other people. That's the church I want to be in. That's the church into which the lost sheep should be brought.

And if you ever build a church, build that type of church. And the lost coin, it's amazing. It says here that she lit a lamp, swept the house, verse 8, searched carefully until she finds it.

She had a passion. She had lost something and she searched until she found it. And if this is the Holy Spirit moving through the church, what a passion to light a lamp, sweep, search until you find it.

This is no casual half-hearted seeking. It's a tremendous passion for lost souls. The Lord has taught me, when I stand up to speak God's word, to think of so many people sitting in the congregation who are bound by sins which they are too ashamed to admit.

Secret sins, fears. Slaves, the Lord says, are sitting in front of you who should be kings. Slaves who should be kings.

And the Lord says, make them kings. Make them kings. Don't let them sit in front of you forever as slaves.

That's the commission the Lord has given me. When you get up to preach the word, make those slaves into kings. Let there be a passion in your heart, the passion of the Holy Spirit, to search, sweep, light a lamp, find until you find.

The third story is of the prodigal son. And notice one thing similar. Sometimes we don't notice that in these parables.

When the shepherd lost a sheep, whose was the loss? The shepherd's or the sheep's? It was the shepherd's. When the woman lost a coin, the coin didn't even know it was lost. And that's the condition of a lot of lost people.

They don't even know they are lost. You think that coin lying under the bed knows it's lost? That's the condition of lost people. But the woman, it was her loss.

And the father, it was his loss that he lost his son. In all the three parables, the loss was the shepherd's and the woman's and the father's. It's God who is the loser.

We think we are lost. In these parables, Jesus taught that God is losing something. And our work in the church is to bring back what God has lost.

That's the message of these parables, if you understand it rightly. And anyone who is in fellowship with the heart of the father will seek to cooperate with God in this ministry. And when the son came back, you know, one thing the son knew that my father loves me, he came back.

And when he came back, the father put the best robe on him, took out the ring from his hand and put it on his hand, anointed him with the Holy Spirit and said, come and sit with me. Now in the story, there's an elder brother. And the elder brother did not share the passion of the father's heart.

And that's a picture of a lot of Christian workers who are doing a good job. He never left the father's house. Look what his testimony is, verse 29.

For so many years, I have been serving you. This elder brother was no lazy man. He was a hard working.

In fact, he was coming from the fields, out in the hot sun, working hard for God, serving the Lord out in the fields, never always serving and not only always serving. He was an upright man living a good life. Verse 29, I have never neglected any command you gave me.

A wonderful example, an upright man with eager to serve the Lord, working out in the fields in the heat. But with no passion for lost souls. Do you think there are Christian workers like that today? Thousands.

No fellowship with the heart of the father. Never once did he tell his father, can I go and look for my younger brother? See where he's lost? Never. Let him go.

I take care of myself. How is it that the father saw the son so far away? Shall I tell you? Because he prayed for his son every day. He would pray and look out of the window.

He would pray and look out of the window. Like Elijah, when he prayed for rain, he prayed and looked to see if the cloud has come. The father was like that.

That's why when he looked out of the window one day after many, many, many, many months of prayer for his lost son. He saw him and he ran and welcomed him. But there are Christian workers today who never pray like that for lost people.

They have no burden. They are doing professional work. Okay, I have to teach the Bible.

Let's get up and do that. Sunday morning, I have to give a sermon. Or I have to do some other work for the Lord and I'm doing it very hard.

I'm working in the field and I satisfy myself. Lots of people like that, but no burden. You know, I see that there are two types of Christian workers.

One is like the father in this story, who's got the heart of a father. And the other is like the elder brother in the story, who has no interest in his younger brother. But he does a faithful work for his father.

And you can make a choice today, which type of servant of God you're going to be. We're all going to be either like the father, like Jesus, or like the elder brother, who's a picture of the Pharisees. And sometimes I feel this story was spoken to expose the elder brother.

Remember this. The story begins with the elder son inside the house and the younger son outside. And the story ends with the younger son inside and the elder son outside.

Many Christian workers will be outside the kingdom because they had no fellowship with the heart of the father. Am I talking only about elders? Every brother and sister in the church must be a servant of the Lord. Every single one of you sitting here, if you're born again, you're a co-worker with Jesus Christ.

And you must share fellowship with the father's heart for people who are lost. How much of a burden do you have for people who are lost in other parts of India? I had a great longing when I was young to be an evangelist, to go to North India, live all my life there. And I said, Lord, I'm ready to go, but he never called me.

And I wouldn't go if God didn't call me. So I have done through these years the next best God called me to teach I've taught. But I've kept a very keen interest in all those who work in North India.

I get magazines, I read about it. For years I've done that in my house because I'm interested in what my fellow workers in other denominations are doing in Gujarat, in Rajasthan, in Himachal Pradesh, where I could never go. I want to ask some of you who are living very contented lives here.

Do you have any desire even to know what other people are doing? Even to know. OK, you don't go, but do you have any interest at all in paying 25 rupees and getting a magazine to find out what is happening? You got all your doctrines right. And you got everything right.

And you got such a wonderful holy church. But you are just like that elder brother. You are not like the father.

I'm sorry to disappoint you, but that's the truth. We are fooling yourself when you think you're spiritual. The elder brother said, oh, I don't obey.

I don't disobey any commandment. I've got victory over sin. I've got victory over anger.

I've got victory over the lust of mice. I said, I'm doing such a wonderful thing. I have zero interest in people who are lost.

Is that God's heart? It's the heart of a Pharisee. Pharisee of the Pharisees. And there are a lot of people sitting in separated assemblies who think they are very holy.

Exactly like this elder brother. May God give us light. Chapter 16 to chapter 21 is a long number of chapters dealing with the subject of money.

Some people think I talk too much about money. Jesus spoke about it more than me. You know, if you were to count all the verses in the Gospels, here's a good bit of homework.

If you want to do some homework in your spare time. Read all the verses of Jesus teaching in the Gospels. The teaching sections of Jesus in the Gospels.

And you will discover, 16% of that teaching is on money. Do you know that? One in every six verses is on the subject of money. That's the importance Jesus gave.

I don't believe I give that much importance to it. And most preachers don't speak about it at all. Except telling people to give their tithes.

Which is what Jesus never spoke. There are six chapters here. We've all got to do various things about money.

First of all, this man, who was an unrighteous steward. He planned for the future. That's the essence of that story.

I don't have time to go into it in detail. But the point is, he knew he was losing his job. His future was on this earth.

So he did some crookery. And crooked things. And he prepared for the future.

So that when he loses this job, he'll have friends out there to give him another job. And Jesus said, make friends for eternity. Through the mammon of unrighteousness.

That means, for that steward, his future was only on this earth. For us, our future is in eternity. What did that fellow do? He prepared for his future with the use of money.

The Lord says, you prepare for your future with the use of money. He made friends for the future with money. You make friends for eternity with money.

How do you make friends for eternity with money? When you use your money for the spread of the gospel. And because you used your money wisely for the spread of the gospel. One day, somebody will come up to you in heaven and say, Brother, I'm so thankful that you gave money.

Which resulted in the gospel coming to me. And because of which I was saved. And because of which I'm here.

That's what Jesus said here. So that when you die. Those people will receive you, verse 9, into eternal dwelling places.

When you fail. And when all your money has failed on earth. When you get up there into eternal dwelling places.

Somebody will be there to welcome you and say, I'm here because you gave some money for God's work. That's how I got that tract. That's how I got that tape.

That's how somebody came here to give me the gospel. Because you supported him. That's what Jesus was saying.

And he said it immediately after this parable. Immediately after this story of all these lost sheep. And the lost coin.

And the lost son. And then he said these very strong words. I wish I could spend a whole session on it.

Verse 10 to 13. If you are faithful in a very little. Then you'll be faithful in much.

And if you have not been faithful, verse 11, with unrighteous mammon. Who will give you the true riches? The true riches are revelation on the word of God. Original revelation on the word of God.

I want to ask you brothers here and sisters. How much have you got of original revelation on the word of God? I don't mean what you heard from some brother. Or what you read in a book or heard in a tape.

That's good. That's second best. Along with all that.

How much are you getting original revelation from the Holy Spirit. When you read the word of God. Shall I tell you why you are not getting it? You are not faithful with money.

I don't know anything about your financial dealings. But I can tell you straight. You are not faithful with money.

He will not give you true riches. The second thing we could call true riches. Is the character of Christ in our life.

The character of Christ are the true riches. God gives it to those who are faithful with earthly things. No servant can serve two masters.

Very clear. You got to either serve God or money. Verse 13.

The Pharisees who had missionary programs and who are very religious. Who are also lovers of money. Verse 14.

And they just laughed at him. Oh this extreme preacher from Nazareth has come. Always preaching about money, money, money, money, money.

They laughed at him. And there are people who laugh when we hear such things. And Jesus said to them.

You justify yourself in the sight of men. You appear very spiritual in the sight of men. But God knows your hearts.

And what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God. Detestable in God's sight. Remember this verse.

I have it hung up in my sitting room. So that I can look at it and remember it all my life. I have had it for 20 years at least.

That which man esteems greatly is detestable in the sight of God. Make a list of all the things that man esteems greatly. And say Lord this is all detestable in God's eyes.

I don't want any of it. I will not glory in anything that man values highly. Have you got things that man values highly? Okay.

You have them. What can you do about it? But don't think they have any value before God. Don't gloat over it.

Don't meditate on it. Have you got a good looking face? Well, I am not saying cut it up and make it look ugly. Leave it as it is.

But don't think that that helps you to serve God better. Have you got a lot of intelligence which man values highly? Okay. But don't think it has got any value before God.

Have you got a good house, good job? No value before God. Have you got degrees and titles? No value before God. That anything which the world values highly is detestable in the sight of God.

God values humility. The fear of God which the world does not value. You value those things and your service for the Lord will be far more effective.

And then another story about money. The rich man and Lazarus. Verse 19 onwards.

Again, a man who was entrusted with money by God. A rich man. And he did not use it faithfully.

He did not care for the poor. And that poor man sitting at the door was his own brother. Do you know that? He was a son of Abraham.

And the rich man was a son of Abraham. Every Jew was a son of Abraham. That person sitting there was his own brother.

His own family member. And if a man does not know how to help his brother when he is in need. If he just prays the Lord, be warmed and filled and you do not give what he needs.

The Bible says, how can you say you have faith? Faith without works is dead. That's why the rich man went to hell. He had no faith.

And I noticed here that it's very interesting what Jesus said. The beggar died. The poor man, verse 22, died.

The rich man died, verse 22, and was also buried. I can imagine he must have had a fantastic burial. With the bishop coming there and saying he was a good man.

And all the nice things people say when a man dies. But the man is in hell. While all this funeral is going on.

And the poor man, he doesn't even say he was buried. You know there are some people who join certain churches because they want a decent burial. Marriage and burial.

That's why they join churches. The poor man was not buried. I don't know whether maybe they tossed his body into the garbage bin.

And the corporation came and took it off perhaps. But the man was already in heaven. What does it matter what they did with his body? And there in heaven, this rich man could see.

This man whom I despised is up there. With all my money, I didn't make it. God has chosen the poor of the world rich in faith.

Faith without works is dead. If God has given you money, he expects you to use it to bless other people. Why did the rich man go to hell? He knew the answer.

Because he said to Abraham. Please send Lazarus to warn my five brothers. Because unless someone goes to them from the dead.

If someone goes to them from the dead. Verse 30. They will repent.

He knew why he went to hell. Because he did not repent of his sin. And he knew why Lazarus went to heaven.

Because he repented of his sin. Repentance. 99 righteous persons who don't need repentance.

That's what Jesus was emphasizing. He knew that he went to hell because he didn't repent. He said.

Please go and tell my brothers. They go to church. But they haven't repented.

And then we come to. In chapter 17. Jesus says.

About another. He says. If your brother sins.

Verse 3. Rebuke him. If he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you.

17. Verse 4. Seven times a day. Forgive him seven times a day.

And the apostle said. Increase my faith. And then he gave another parable.

About. Someone who. Is.

Who's working for the Lord. And when he comes back. The Lord says to him.

Now prepare. Something for me. And this is the word.

I wanted to show you. Verse 10. When you have done.

Every. Single. Thing.

Which the Lord has commanded you. Say. We are unworthy slaves.

We have only done that. Which we have. We should have done.

The Lord was teaching his disciples. Humility. He said.

After you've done everything. Possible. Come to the Lord.

And say. Lord. I'm still an.

Unprofitable. Servant. Keep that attitude.

All your life. When can you get this degree. Unprofitable.

Servant. Unworthy. Slave.

According. To. Verse 10.

After you've. Obeyed. Every.

Single. Command. Of the Lord.
When you've. Obeyed. Every.
Command. Of the Lord. You get.
A degree. From the Lord. Unworthy.
Slave. Unprofitable. Servant.
It's a long road. For most of us. Right.
To get there. When are you going to finish. Obeying.
All the commands. Of the Lord. To get this degree.
Of unworthy. Slave. But long.
Before that. Most of us think. We are pretty.
Profitable. And pretty. Worthy.
And that's. Why. The Lord.
Cannot. Use us. Any further.
We don't. Take this. Seriously.
Just because. He blessed. You a little bit.
Here. A little bit. There.
You suddenly. Begin to think. You're.
Somebody. After. You've.
Obeyed. Everything. The Lord.
Says. You're. Still.
An unprofitable. Servant. And then.
We have. A lesson. On.
Thankfulness. Verse. 11.
To. 21. About.
This. Leper. Who.
Was. Cleansed. And because.
He came. To the Lord. To express.

His. Thankfulness. He also.
Got. Salvation. Your.
Faith. Has. Saved.
You. Verse. 19.
The. Others. Only.
Got. Healing. From.
The. Leprosy. This.
Man. Got. Salvation.
As. Well. You.
Always. Get. More.
From. The. Lord.
When. Come. Back.
To. Thank. Him.
You. Come. To.
Him. For. Prayer.
You. Ask. Him.
For. Something. You.
Get. Something. And.
After. The. Answer.
You. Come. Back.
To. Thank. Him.
You. Will. Get.
Something. More. Remember.
That. And. Then.
He. Spoke. About.
His. Second. Coming.
And. I. Will. Say.

You. Look. Here.
Look. There. Don't.
Go. Running. After.
Them. Because. Just.
As. The. Lightning.
When. It. Flashes.
Out. Of. One.
Part. Of. The.
Sky. And. Shines.
To. The. Other.
Part. So. Will.
The. Son. Of.
Man. Be. In.
His. Day. Now.
Let. Me. Express.
My. Conviction. You.
Probably. Heard. A. Lot.
Of. Things. I. These.
Days. Which. Are.
Quite. Contrary. To.
The. Traditions. That.
You. Have. Believed.
Let. Me. Shock.
You. One. More.
Time. I. Do. Not.
Believe. There. Is.
A. Coming. Jesus. Christ.

Seven. Years. Before.
His. Public. Coming.
I. Believe. There. Is.
Only. One. Coming.
As. The. Lightning.
Flashes. From. One.
Part. Of. The.
Sky. To. The.
Other. Christ. Will.
Come. At. The.
End. Of. The.
Tribulation. We. Will.
Be. Here. During.
The. Tribulation. We.
Will. Suffer. We.
Will. Stand. For.
The. Lord. God.
We. Will. Lightning.
The. Sky. And.
When. People. Say.
No. No. No.
He. Has. Come.
Secretly. There. He.
Has. Come. Secretly.
There. Verse. Twenty.
Three. He. Don't.
Believe. Them. I. Don't.

Believe. Them. That.
Was. A. Doctrine. That.
Originated. In. England.
A. Hundred. And. Fifty.
Years. Ago. And.
The. Echoes. Are.
Heard. All. Over.
The. World. That's.
All. But. Nobody.
Ever. Believed. It.
For. Eighteen. Fifty.
Years. That's. How.
It. Will. Be.
We. Must. Be.
Ready. For. The.
Coming. Of. The.
Lord. And. Persecution.
That. Will. Come.
Before. That. And.
In. That. Day.
What. Will. Happen.
There. Will. Be.
Two. People. In.
One. Bed. Verse.
Thirty. Four. One.
Will. Be. Taken.
And. Other. Left.

There. Will. Be.
Two. Women. Grinding.
Together. In. The.
Same. Place. Verse.
Thirty. Five. One.
Will. Be. Taken.
The. Other. Will.
Be. Left. That's.
It's. Going. Be.
At. The. Coming.
Of. The. Lord.
And. So. The.
Lord. Said. Always.
Be. Ready. For.
It. For. Example.
If. You. Are.
Going. The. House.
Stop. Verse. Thirty.
One. You. Should.
Not. Have. To.
Go. Down. To.
Your. House. If.
You. Are. Out.
In. The. Field.
You. Should. Not.
Have. To. Go.
Back. Today. Those.

Days. They. Worked.
In. The. Field.
Today. We. Work.
In. An. Office.
I. Read. It. Like.
This. If. You.
Go. To. The.
Office. And. Then.
Go. So. In.
Office. Of. The.
Lord. Comes. You.
Don't. Have. To.
Say. Lord. Please.
Have. To. Go.
Back. Home. You.
Shouldn't. Have. To.
Turn. Back. You're.
Up. Roof. Of.
Your. House. You.
Shouldn't. Have. Any.
Attachment. To. Anything.
Inside. The. House.
You. Must. Be.
Ready. To. Go.
From. There. No.
Attachment. To. Go.
Home. You. Must.

Every. Day. Harassing.
Me. Every. Day.
Is. Making. Me.
Fall. Into. Some.
Sin. Please. Help.
Me. No. Answer.
The. Judge. Says.
Don't. Disturb. Me.
And. The. Widow.
Is. Helpless. Think.
Not. Helpless. Maybe.
That's. Why. You.
Don't. Go. To.
God. In. Prayer.
The. More. Helpless.
We. Are. The.
More. We. Can.
Dirty. Thought. Repent.
Deeply. Cry. Out.
To. God. And.
Say. Lord. I'm.
Sorry. I've. Slipped.
Up. Weep. On.
Your. Pillow. At.
Night. And. Cry.
Out. For. Victory.
That's. How. Got.

It. I. Want. To.
Ask. You. When.
Was. The. Last.
Time. Your. Pillow.
Got. A. Little. Wet.
With. Tears. Because.
You. Were. Crying.
Out. For. Victory.
Sin. Never. And.
You're. Surprised. That.
You. Don't. Get.
Victory. I'm. Not.
Surprised. Who. Are.
The. Ones. Who.
Get. Victory. Those.
Who. Weep. In.
Sorrow. Because. They.
Dishonored. The. Lord.
By. Sin. In.
Their. Life. That.
Day. The. Others.
Will. Only. Argue.
Whether. It's. Theologically.
Possible. To. Get.
Victory. You. Can.
Keep. Arguing. About.
That. The. Ones.

Weep. Get. The.
Victory. That's. All.
Can. Say. Blessed.
Are. Those. Who.
Mourn. They. Shall.
Be. Comforted. Lord.
My. Enemy. Is.
Troubling. Me. Lord.
My. Enemy. Is.
Troubling. My. Enemy.
Is. Troubling. Me.
Lord. Enemy. Lord.
My. Enemy. Me.
Lord. My. Enemy.
Is. Troubling. Me.
Lord. My. Enemy.
Is. Troubling. Me.
Lord. My. Troubling.
My. Him. Him.
Him. Him. And.
Poor. Public. And.
Over. There. Who.
Belongs. To. Some.
Despised. Denomination. He.
Says. Oh. God.
I'm. A sinner. And.
That. Man. Goes.

Home. Justified. Remember.

That. The. first will be lost and the last will be first.

And here is another story about money. Verse 18 onwards, the rich young ruler who was not willing to pay the price. And another story of money in chapter 19 of Zacchaeus.

Zacchaeus was a rich man who had cheated many people in his life. And one day, but he had an eagerness. Sometimes we think these crooked tax collectors and all, they will not find God.

Even today, you know, we have these income tax inspectors and sales tax inspectors. We think they're all crooks. They all just take bribes and they're not interested in God, but Jesus loved even them.

Among them, Jesus knew some of them are interested in the Lord. Zacchaeus was so eager. He climbed up a tree and I see something about the way Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit.

Jesus lived on earth as a man. As he walked through the road, the Holy Spirit said to him, just look up now. There's a man in that tree.

And he looked up. There was. It's wonderful to listen to the Holy Spirit.

That's how you can be led to lost souls in the most efficient way. Learn to listen to the Holy Spirit, my brothers and sisters. And he, and he told him, I want to come to your house today.

And it says, as soon as he came to the house, Zacchaeus stopped. Verse eight, he stopped outside the house and he said, Lord, you're a holy man. You can't come to my house.

I built this with black money. I cheated so many people. I didn't pay the wages properly to the laborers who built this.

And I've taken a lot of money wrongfully, a lot of things inside this house, which I got with illegal money unrighteously. I know I've got a verse there saying, God bless our home. All that is there, but it's I know you can't bless it.

I got light on it. Did Jesus give him a sermon on righteousness and money matters? No, he was so Jesus was so holy, so pure that light just went out from him. That Zacchaeus just got convicted without a sermon.

And he said, Lord, I'm going to give half my money to the poor and anyone whom I've cheated, I'm going to give back four times. Now the old Testament law said in numbers, chapter five, that whenever, uh, is it chapter five or chapter six? I don't remember. We did it in our study that when you make restitution, you must add 20%.

Here, Zacchaeus was adding 300% because he's cheated some people so many years ago, he calculated the interest quickly in his mind. And he said, must be at least 400%. Now I have to give back when you return money where you have wronged people.

Don't give back just the amount you stole. Give back with the interest. Give more.

That's what Zacchaeus did. And as soon as Jesus heard that, he said, salvation has come to this house. Here is a man who's willing to set right his financial unrighteousness of the past.

Here's a man who's willing to give back what he's done, taken wrongfully. Salvation has come. I will not say that salvation has come to somebody till I see that he has set right the wrongs of his past life.

When I see that he's willing to do that, I also will say salvation has come. Another parable about money. He said about a noble man, verse 11 to 27, about who's went far away and he called his 10 slaves and said, do business with this till I come.

Gave them each some money. And these people, these servants were, some were faithful and some were not. And one man was so faithful with that one mina that he produced 10 minas with it.

Another man, not so faithful, he produced 5 minas with it. Another man, he wrapped up that mina in a handkerchief, buried it under the ground and gave it back exactly like that when the master came. He didn't steal anything.

He just wasted his one life. Now there's one, you know, all of them got one mina. In Matthew 25, there's another parable where they were given different, one was given 5, one was given 2, one was given 1. That's pictures, you know, some are given more gifts and some are given less.

But what is it where all of us are equal? Here everybody got equal amounts. It's different from the Matthew 25 parable. That refers to gifts.

Somebody has an apostle, somebody is an evangelist, somebody has more opportunity than you. You're a mother with children, you don't have the opportunity to travel the world. So God expects more from the one to whom he has given 5 than from you to whom he has given 2. But here it is different.

Everybody's got the same. What is it that you can say, we've all got the same? We've all got 24 hours a day. There's nobody who has 25.

Every person gets 24 hours a day. It is his decision how he spends it. It is your decision how much time you spend studying the word, how much time you spend in spiritual things.

That's your decision. And how much time you spend playing the fool and in useless conversation. Another thing that all of us are equal in is we all have the same body with the same lusts in the flesh through which we are tempted.

Everybody in the world. We are tempted to impatience, we are tempted to anger, we are tempted sexually, we are tempted to jealousy, we are tempted to love money, we are tempted to pride. It's the same thing for everybody.

But there are different degrees of faithfulness in these people. God gave me a body, that's like one Meena. God gave you a body and God gave another brother a body.

And that brother may have been so faithful because he was so diligent in putting the flesh to death, taking up the cross, that he made tremendous use of his body for the glory of God and produced ten Meenas. Another brother, not so faithful, produced five. And maybe I was so unfaithful.

I just kept it like this and said, Lord, I've got a place in heaven that's enough for me. And I wasted my body. I wasted my time.

Not all believers are equally faithful. So please remember that. It's a parable about faithfulness.

And then we read of the story where Jesus rode on a donkey, verse 30 and onwards, and verse 35, and entered the city of Jerusalem. In those days kings used to ride on horses. But Jesus chose a donkey.

He was always like that. When he was born, he chose a stable. When he had a job, he chose a carpenter's job.

When he wanted to ride as a king, he rode on a donkey. Have you ever seen a man riding on a donkey? You've seen people riding on horses. It looks grand.

See a man riding on a donkey. And there you see a picture of what Jesus took. It's so humiliating.

He wanted to, all that is big and great in the eyes of men is an abomination to God. Jesus chose donkeys. In the Old Testament he spoke through a donkey, Balaam's donkey.

He rode on a donkey. Jesus has chosen the weak people. And that's a great encouragement to you and me, even if you're as stupid as a donkey.

You know, Jesus can sit on you and ride on you, speak through you. That's what the message comes through. And when Jesus speaks through you and uses you and people throw their shirts down and say, boy, that was tremendous.

Don't think they're praising you. If that donkey got little ideas in its head, oh, this is wonderful. Everybody's throwing their shirts in front of me.

I'm an important donkey. Well, he was important as long as Jesus sat on him. The moment Jesus stepped off, he was just the same old donkey as he was before.

And nobody threw any shirts before in front of him after that. That's a lesson to you and me. When people appreciate you for something you have done for the Lord, remember you're just a little old donkey.

Because Jesus sat on you, some people appreciated you. The moment Jesus leaves you, you'll be the same old donkey again. It's a wonderful story to tell us what we really are.

We read in chapter 20, I want to read one verse. Verse 25, Jesus said about money again, render to Caesar what is Caesar's and render to God what is God's. Don't cheat from the government and give to God's work.

Don't steal from the government taxes and then give to God's work. Pay your taxes and then give to God. Very important principle.

Chapter 21, we read in about the second coming of the Lord, a number of signs that the Lord gave about wars, verse 9, earthquakes, famines, verse 11, and times of persecution. You will be delivered up by your parents and brothers and relatives, verse 16. But don't be afraid.

A word that we need to keep in mind in the future, verse 18, not a hair of your head will perish, and so on. You are familiar with all that. And then we go to chapter 22.

Here we read, first of all, in verse 24, how even after all these years of preaching to them, they were still discussing who is the greatest. So we see that the Lord did not choose disciples who were perfect. He chose people who, even after so many years of listening to his preaching, were still struggling for position

and honor.

Now to me that's a great encouragement that the Lord did not call perfect people. Peter was not perfect. James was not perfect.

John was not perfect. They were struggling for position. But the Lord, when they were filled with the Holy Spirit, everything changed.

They were not struggling for position anymore. And then I see here in verse 31, Jesus speaking to Simon. Simon, Simon, 31 and 32, Satan has desired to have you to sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you, not that you will never fall, but that your faith may not fail.

Some of us would like the Lord to pray for us that we never fall. Why is it that the Lord did not pray that Simon should never fall? No. He prayed that when you fall, your faith should not fail.

Because, and here is a word of encouragement, when we fall, that is fulfilling a purpose in our life. God allows us to fall to humble our pride. And we fall and fall and fall and fall, till finally we say, Lord, I am no good.

I can never get victory. I am just failing so often. And when you come to that zero point, at that point, you don't lose your faith and say, Lord, even though I am failing, I believe in you.

I believe you love me. I believe sin will not have dominion over me. You will do a work in me.

It will be accomplished. Remember that. Failure serves a purpose.

So that's why the Lord, because failure was the way Simon's pride was broken. Simon said, even if everybody denies you, I won't deny you. Such a man has to fall.

He has to deny the Lord three times within a period of a few hours. And that breaks him. It breaks him so badly that later on he says, I'm going back to my fishing.

That's the man. That was his preparation for Pentecost. If he had not fallen that day, he would have stood up on the day of Pentecost like an arrogant, proud man.

But do you think he could stand on the day of Pentecost as an arrogant, proud man, looking down on all the poor sinners underneath beneath him? No. He stood there as a broken man saying, you are just like me, sinners. I'm the biggest sinner of all.

That's the type of person whom God picks up, fills with the spirit and uses in his service. And then we see the story of the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus knelt down and prayed, Father, verse 42, let this cup pass from me. Three times he prayed.

What was this cup? It was certainly not the physical death on Calvary. There are many martyrs who have gone singing to the cross. I cannot imagine Jesus being scared of dying on the cross.

He was not a coward. What was he what was he praying? Father, take away this cup from me. Let me explain to you.

There was only one thing Jesus was afraid of, and that was a break of fellowship with his Father for three hours on the cross. He had fellowship with the Father from all eternity, and he knew that when he took the

sin of the world upon himself, he would have to suffer the punishment for sin, which is not physical death. Physical death is not the punishment for sin.

Eternal death, separation from God, that's what Jesus endured on the cross for three hours. He endured hell on the cross for three hours. Hell is a place where God forsakes people, and that's what Jesus endured for three hours when he said, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? And he said, Father, isn't there any other way? There was no other way.

And he said, Okay, for their sake, I'll do it. You know, in my younger days, I used to see the love of Jesus for me on Calvary. The more I understood this passage, I saw the love of God more in Gethsemane in Jesus' love for me than on Calvary.

Calvary, he died physically. In Gethsemane, he made that choice for my sake to be willing to lose fellowship with the Father for three hours, which he cherished more than anything else. Take the most valuable thing you have in life.

Fellowship with the Father was more important for Jesus than even that. He gave that up for me. That's what you must remember.

Ask God to show you how much he loved you from Gethsemane. And then we read of how the Lord looked at Peter, verse 61, in the midst of his trial. He remembered Peter, and he looked at him, saying, I've forgiven you, Peter.

And that's what turned people, turned Peter back to him. I want to ask you, is there somebody who has wronged you, who perhaps needs a look of forgiveness from you today, who is waiting for you to look at him with forgiveness, but you won't look at him? You're angry? Please learn an example from Jesus. Chapter 23, we read about the cross.

Just one thing I want to say here about this thief who hung on the cross. How is it he recognized that this man, Jesus, had done nothing wrong? He says that, the one thief. This man has done nothing wrong because of the way Jesus conducted himself when he hung on the cross.

That thief had seen so many people crucified, cursing, swearing, everything. But here he saw someone saying, Father, forgive them. And not criticizing them or cursing them.

And he was convicted. Do you know when other people around us will be convicted? When they see our forgiving nature. When they see a Christ-likeness in our life.

That's what made the Roman centurion say, this is the Son of God. That's what brought conviction to that thief. And he said, this is a righteous man.

He's not like us. He took the blame for his own sin. Unlike the other thief who said, I don't deserve this.

But this thief said, I deserve my death. You know who paradise is reserved for? Those who admit that they deserve hell. One thief admitted he deserved crucifixion.

The other thief did not admit it. That's what opened the door of paradise for him. One last thing.

In chapter 24, we read of Jesus walking on the road to Emmaus with these two disciples. And there's a wonderful word. It says, it's a seven-mile journey.

Seven miles. They must have taken two, two and a half hours to walk. And for two and a half hours, they had a Bible study on the scriptures.

As he opened their eyes, we read in 24 and verse, he, verse 27, he began to explain the scriptures to them. And their hearts burned within them. Verse 32, as Jesus spoke.

That's how it is when Jesus speaks. My dear brothers and sisters, those of you who are called to preach the word of God, let this be the longing of your heart. That when you preach the word of God, if Jesus is speaking through you, like it says in verse 32, the hearts of people will burn.

They pray that God will set your heart so much on fire that when you expound the scriptures, as Jesus speaks through you, he's the same yesterday, today and forever. The hearts of people will burn within them. That's what we need in India today.

Many, many preachers through whom Jesus speaks and makes the hearts of people burn. Even if it's a two and a half hour sermon. Finally, he told the disciples, go and wait in Jerusalem till you are filled with the Holy Spirit.

Verse 49, see how the Holy Spirit comes right through the book of Luke. Wait for the promise of the Father and wait until you are clothed with power from on high. And they went and did that.

And they went to Jerusalem till the Lord met with them. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you for your word.

We pray that all the lessons we have learned from this wonderful gospel, which Luke took so much trouble to carefully investigate and write, will bring eternal results in each of our lives. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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