

Parables of Luke – part 3

Lk. 18:1-6 – Jesus, the master of the simple story with a profound spiritual message – in so few words can set up such perfect scenarios right off the top of His head (Pharisees chastise about His mingling with sinners and He spouts out a trilogy of parables that corners them and fully exposes their false theology)

--The people and location are fabricated for the sake of teaching a lesson the story would be quite familiar to its listeners since Jerusalem had had its fair share of both widows and godless, unjust judges.

1. The Judge

--The judge has a very simple but very well-chosen description – He's the worst a person can be in this life: No reverence for God and no care for people.

--He's indifferent to God and mankind – No interest or care for the first and greatest commandment or the second greatest commandment.

--Additionally, he knows that he is this way and is quite comfortable with it. He's described by others as evil and he agrees with the descriptive completely! (He sleeps good at night)

--Adding insult to injury, he is in position of authority where he decides the fate of others and the justice of others, but he has no moral compass.

--This has huge implications for whoever was unfortunate enough to be in his jurisdiction.

--Woe be to you if you ever fall into the power of a person like this—there is no appeal to their heart whatsoever!

--A legal system only works properly one way—those who enforce and interpret the Law have to fear God and be the servants of people—

Jehoshaphat's appointing of judges: **II Chron. 19:4-7.**

--There were a number of judges not far from this man's condition during the days of Jesus—the people of that day called them "robber Judges" (like trying to get justice in certain parts of Mexico—the first thing they want to know is how much money you have on you)

--In the Talmud, it says that some were so corrupt that they would pervert justice for a single meal.

--"Respect"= such a crucial indicator of where this guy was. This was a culture that worked off of shame and honor. You would do things for the sake of honor and not do things for the sake of shame. Our culture had a lot of that in the not too distant past. You could count on a certain level of morals and respect and doing the right thing because people would be ashamed to do otherwise...today it seems that people have no shame

--It is the downward spiral of a culture until it implodes.

In that culture, you did what brought honor at all costs and you avoided what brought shame at all cost

--This man could not be shamed no matter what you did to him; he had no respect for anything or anyone; he had no shame.

--When a wicked person of this level is in power of any kind it has devastating consequences to society since they are making decisions that affect people's lives.

2. The Widow

--This woman is in the worst possible situation – She is destitute financially but also she is destitute because she has no man in her life.

Women were powerless in this culture; still are in many ways in there outfits in the blazing heat, and mostly not allowed into public)

--The courts belonged to men in those days; men sat in the gates aslt with men in matters of justice.

--The best bet a woman had was to have a man in her life who would take the case to the court for her, but she apparently had none (no husband, son, uncle, brother in law, or nephew)

--The only time a woman was allowed in a court was when there was no man to go for her.

--She is destitute, powerless, helpless, deprived, lowly, unknown, unprotected, uncared for— Last person who could ever expect to get justice.

--She has no hope of any sympathy from this judge.

--Jesus is painting these extreme pictures with just a minimal amount of language!

3. Her ploy – V. 3 she keeps coming back! She does not give up.

--There is nothing to sway him – she has no pull either from conscience from fear, or from shame or guilt.

4. The Result – v. 4

--We get soliloquy from him similar to the prodigal son—speaking to himself about his situation

--He's a self-confessed wretch with no noble motives.

--“Continually” literally means “forever”

--He has no regard for God or people, but he does have regard for himself!

--“she will wear me out” – a boxing term used by Paul: I Cor. 9:27 = “she will keep beating me with this”

--This woman is painful to him!

--The powerful wicked judge is defeated by powerless woman through her prayer list that Jesus recommends to us.

--Look back at the previous chapter (remember chapter breaks can be quite arbitrary and even misleading) **V. 22** who is speaking to? Disciples. What is He speaking about? His second coming!

--**V. 22** -- He's warning them that the days of Jesus walking the earth were about over and that though those days had been trying, they would be like a cake walk compared to what was coming.

--In Cha. 18:1 there is no audience or scene change—“He was telling them” with regards to His delay in coming and the difficulty of the times between His first and second comings **“that they should always pray and never lose heart”**

--Jesus is indeed building an invisible kingdom through salvation being enthroned in the hearts of those who believe in Him.

--But the invisible is just a precursor to the visible kingdom that He will set up in the future.

--Praying patiently and persistently to that end is what's in view here.

--In case we beg to differ, look how He concludes the parable: v. 8

--How many prayed that Jesus would come today? Isn't that exactly what He taught us to do? Does praying for that factor into your prayers much at all?

--It sure did in the prayers and wishes of the saints of New Testament!

II Pet. 3:12-14; Rom. 8:21-25 “waiting patiently”, I Cor. 16:22

--Not only does Jesus tell us to pray that way but that we, like the widow, should never lose heart in praying that way.

When you travel somewhere, don't you most often plan out your destination first? Not until then can you know how the trip will go, what you can and cannot do, how much money it will take, how long you'll be gone, etc.

--Christians, quite often, don't know what to do or how to handle day to day issues because we have no real sense of our destination.

--When we know how it ends and keep that in view all times, we know how to prorate our money, time, energies.

--How we handle our lives day to day should be powerfully influenced by strong and persistent prayer that Jesus comes!

We are in a sense like this widow in this wicked world we live in, we are powerless, no influence, all alone, but the Judge is not at all like the one in the story. He is righteous, He is moved with pity, He loves unconditionally, He longs to help us,

--If a wicked judge will protect a powerless widow, how much more will the righteous Judge protect His own.

--As we cry to Him, how often? V. 7? Do you do that? **I Thess. 1:10**

--We can't live our lives the way the Lord wants unless we live it in the light of the Second Coming.

--It colors all else that we pray: **Mt. 6:10**

--We are comforted in it: **I Thess. 4:13-18**

--We are purified by it: **I Jn. 3:2-3**

--We are driven to reach others for Christ: **II Cor. 5:10-11**

The Christian life is lived properly through reverse engineering – take the finished product – redeemed in soul and body, in the presence of the Sovereign Lord who is reigning as king forever in a new heaven and earth, righteousness is the only option, what matters is how we served and who we served, wickedness has been judged eternally and the smoke of their torment ascends forever, ever intent of the heart has been revealed and answered to —from this perspective, reverse engineer how you should currently live.