Session 24 Necessary Attitudes and Actions of a Disciple (Lk. 17-19)

1. Four lessons related to discipleship (Lk. 17:1-19)
   1. Jesus gave four lessons related to discipleship on His way to Jerusalem in early AD 30 (17:1-10). He called them to avoid anything that causes others to sin (17:1-2), to be proactive in restoring relationships (17:3-4), to exercise faith even when it is small (17:5-6), and to serve with gratitude without a sense of entitlement (17:7-10).
   2. Disciples are to avoid causing others to be offended or to stumble (17:1-2). Jesus warned His disciples not to be a stumbling block to younger believers by sinning against them or causing them to sin by setting a wrong example, by distorting Scripture, or by mistreating them. He told them that it was better to die prematurely (drown) than to cause offense and then answer to God for it.

1Then He said to the disciples, “It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come! 2It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.   
(Lk. 17:1-2)

* + 1. ***Offenses***:The Greek word *skandala* includes things that cause others to sin.
    2. ***Millstone***: A large, heavy, round stone ground flour in a rotary mill as a mule pulled it around.
  1. Disciples are to be proactive in restoring relationships with those who sin against them (17:3-4).   
     We are to rebuke tenderly and then forgive graciously. We must not hold on to grudges or tell others about the people who have sinned against us—we must resist whispering behind their backs.

3“Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents,   
forgive him. 4And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, ‘I repent,’ you shall forgive him.” (Lk. 17:3-4)

* + 1. ***Repent***: We are to speak to those who have sinned against us, rather than refusing to speak up and allowing offense to fester in our heart like a sore. We rebuke them privately with a spirit of gentleness (Mt. 18:15; Gal. 6:1). Our goal is to restore our relationship with them.

1Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one   
in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. (Gal. 6:1)

* + 1. ***Seven times***: Jesus spoke of forgiving seventy times seven—“always.” (Mt. 18:22)
  1. Disciples are to exercise faith even when our faith is small (17:5-6). Jesus did not answer the disciples’ request to increase their faith, but emphasized the need for them to use their faith even if it was small. The smallness of a mustard seed was proverbial. Mulberry trees grow to up to 35 feet tall and have a strong root system. Faith comes from “hearing” God’s Word (Rom. 10:17).

5And the apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith.” 6So the Lord said, “If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.” (Lk. 17:5-6)

* 1. Disciples are to serve with gratitude, with no sense of entitlement (17:7-10). The parable of the unworthy servant highlights gratitude. Gratitude is the context in which our faith flourishes, whereas those with a sense of entitlement often take offense more easily. Jesus exposed the wrong thinking that when we serve, we deserve special treatment from God. “Unprofitable” is also translated as “unworthy” (NASB, NIV, ESV), as in being unworthy of special recognition; it does not refer to being worthless.

7“And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, “Come at once and sit down to eat”? 8But will he not rather say to him, “Prepare something for my supper, and…serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink”? 9Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. 10So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, “We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.” (Lk. 17:7-10)

* 1. Jesus healed ten lepers (17:11-19). Gratitude is the context for God to release more of His goodness.

12…He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. 13They lifted up their voices and said, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” 14…He said to them, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. 15And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned…giving Him thanks…19And He said to him, “Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well [whole].” (Lk. 17:11-19)

* + 1. ***Show yourself to a priest***: The law required a priestly examination to confirm the status of   
       a leper as clean (Lev. 13:49; 14:2-3), thus permitting them to re-enter society.
    2. ***Go***: We see the importance of acting in faith in the context of receiving physical healing. Jesus tested their faith. If they believed, they would “go,” even before seeing their healing.

1. Jesus’ teaching on the kingdom and His second coming (Lk. 17:20-18:8)
   1. Disciples are to be alert and steadfast with understanding of God’s end-time purposes (17:20-37).
   2. In response to a question by the Pharisees, Jesus clarified the nature of the kingdom as having two stages—it is *“already” here* *in part* (17:21), but *“not yet” fully here* until He returns (17:24). The kingdom was present in Jesus at His first coming, and its fullness will be seen when He returns.

20Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, “The kingdom of God does not come with observation; 21nor will they say,   
‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.” (Lk. 17:20-21)

* + 1. ***With observation***: The prophets spoke the coming of Messiah’s reign as being over the whole earth (Jer. 3:17) and confirmed with signs in the sky (Joel 2:30-31). At Jesus’ first coming the kingdom was not accompanied by observable evidence such as a global reign and cosmic signs.
    2. ***Within you***: The kingdom of God is in your midst (NASB, ESV, NIV, RSV). The kingdom has an internal aspect that was not present within the unbelieving Pharisees (17:20). However, the kingdom *was* present in the person and activity of Jesus, God’s appointed King (Ps. 2:6).
  1. Jesus taught on His second coming (17:22-37), speaking further to His disciples to elaborate on His answer to the Pharisees about the future of the kingdom. Because of persecution, His disciples will desire to see the days of the Son of Man (17:22). When Jesus returns, all will see Him (17:24).

22He said to the disciples, “The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it…24For as the lightning…under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day. 26As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: 27They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 28Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; 29but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire…from heaven and destroyed them all. 30Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.   
(Lk. 17:22-30)

* + 1. ***Son of Man***: This title clearly points to the prophetic word in Daniel 7:13-14 describing the time when Messiah will reign over the whole earth in the millennial kingdom (Rev. 20:4-6).
    2. ***Days of the Son of Man***: This refers to the time when Jesus’ leadership over the nations will be manifest in a unique way as He oversees the end-time events, prophesied in Scripture, that will reveal Him as the Son of Man. These prophesied events include a covenant being established (Dan. 9:27), ten kings aligning with the Antichrist (Rev. 17:17), and the opening of the first seal to release the Antichrist onto the world stage (Rev. 6:2)**.**
    3. The day of the Lord includes the Great Tribulation and the Millennium. It is a time when the Lord will manifest an unprecedented measure of His power before the nations (Rev. 6-19).

2For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. 3For when they say, “Peace and safety!” then sudden destruction [the Great Tribulation] comes upon them…and they shall not escape. 4But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. (1 Thes. 5:2-4)

* + 1. Jesus warned His disciples to flee Jerusalem when they see the abomination of desolation.

15“…when you see the abomination of desolation… 16let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 17Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. 18And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes…21For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world.” (Mt. 24:15-21)

* 1. The Great Tribulation will begin suddenly; most people will not expect it. The disciples asked Jesus where people would suddenly “be taken” from. Jesus answered: where the bodies (corpses) are, the eagles, or vultures, will gather. Eagles do not seek out decaying flesh like vultures do (17:37).

31“In that day, he who is on the housetop…let him not come down…the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. 32Remember Lot’s wife…34I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. 35Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left…” 37And they answered and said to Him, “Where, Lord?” So He said to them, “Wherever the body is, there the eagles [vultures] will be gathered together.” (Lk. 17:22-37)

* 1. Disciples are to persevere in praying for justice (18:1-8). In the parable of the persistent widow, Jesus concluded His teaching on the end times (see Luke 17:20-37) as He continued to speak to “them” (17:22). In this parable, He urged His disciples to pray always as the events associated with His return draw near. “Losing heart” (18:1) is the opposite of having “faith” (18:8).

1Then He spoke a parable to them that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, 2saying: “There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. 3Now there was a widow…saying, ‘Get justice for me from my adversary.’ 4And he would not for a while; but afterward he said…5’I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.’ ” 6Then the Lord said, “Hear what the unjust judge said. 7And shall God not avenge His own elect who   
cry out day and night to Him…8I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes [Jesus’ coming], will He really find faith on the earth?” (Lk. 18:1-8)

* + 1. Jesus *contrasted* God with the unjust judge, rather than *comparing* God with him. This judge had no regard for God’s purpose, for justice, or for the welfare of people (18:2).
    2. The second coming is anticipated here (18:8); it will take place at the end of the most intense time of persecution and injustice in human history (Mt. 24:21).

1. Prayer and humility (Lk. 18:9-17)
   1. In the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector (18:9-14), Jesus teaches the disciples to pray with humility. It gives us insight into the persevering prayer of the previous parable (18:1-8).

9Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: 10“Two men went…to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.   
11The Pharisee stood and prayed… ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men…as this  
tax collector. 12I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’ 13And the tax collector… saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ 14I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for…he who humbles himself will be exalted.” (Lk. 18:9-14)

* 1. Jesus highlighted another aspect of humility that is expressed by responding to God with childlike faith (18:15-17; cf. Mt. 10:13-16; Mk. 19:13-15). Disciples are to bless children and see their value to the kingdom of God. Humility is foundational to receiving God’s grace (Jas. 4:6).

16But Jesus…said, “Let the little children come to Me…17Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.” (Lk. 18:16-17)

1. The rich young ruler (lk. 18:18-30)
   1. The response of this rich man was the opposite of childlike faith (18:18-30; cf. Mt. 19:16-30; Mk. 10:17-31). Disciples are to love and trust in God more than their money and possessions.

18Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” 19So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but…God. 20You know the commandments…” 21And he said, “All these things I have kept from my youth.” 22So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” 23But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich. (Lk. 18:18-23)

* 1. Jesus elaborated on the wisdom of submitting our money and lives to His leadership (18:24-30). Riches come with greater challenges and temptations (1 Tim. 6:9-10). A camel going through the eye of a sewing needle was a proverb for something that was very difficult to do.

24He said, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! 25For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom…” 28Then Peter said, “See, we have left all and followed You.” 29So He said…“there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, 30who shall not receive many times more in this present time, and in the age to come eternal life.” (Lk. 18:24-30)

1. Jesus healed a blind beggar (Lk. 18:35-43)
   1. Jesus healed a blind beggar near Jericho (18:35-43; cf. Mt. 20:30-34; Mk. 10:46-52). Disciples are to express humility by persevering in crying out for mercy and seeking God for breakthrough. The blind man was named Bartimaeus (Mk. 10:46). Jericho is about 15 miles east of Jerusalem.

35…as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging…37They told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. 38And he cried out, saying, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” 39Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” 40So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him…He asked him, 41saying, “What do you want Me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, that I may receive my sight.” 42Then Jesus said… “Receive your sight; your faith has made you well.” 43And immediately he received his sight. (Lk. 18:35-43)

* 1. Jesus connected Bartimaeus’ faith (his confident persistence) to receiving his sight. The opposition gave him opportunity to express his faith (18:39). Jesus helped him focus his faith by asking him what he wanted God to do for him (18:41). Jesus opened his eyes physically and spiritually.

1. the Salvation of Zacchaeus (Lk. 19:1-10)
   1. Zacchaeus responded to Jesus in humility with repentance and received salvation (19:1-10). Disciples are to bear fruits of repentance in practical ways. Zacchaeus is an example of a man who responded to the Lord in the right way related to how he viewed his wealth (19:2).

2…a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich…4So he…climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him…5and [Jesus] said to him, “Zacchaeus…today I must stay at your house”…7They all complained, saying, “He has gone to be a guest with…a sinner.” 8Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone…I restore fourfold.” 9And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house…10for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.” (Lk. 19:1-10)

* 1. Zacchaeus expressed the humility of the tax collector in the parable in Luke 18:9-14, along with demonstrating childlike faith (18:16-17) in believing so easily and even climbing the tree to see Jesus (19:4). Moreover, he responded in an opposite spirit to the rich young ruler (18:18-23).

1. the Parable of the ten minas (Lk. 19:11-27)
   1. Jesus told the parable of the ten minas to prepare the people for the delay that would occur before the kingdom was established with Messiah sitting on the throne of David in Jerusalem (19:11-27). Many expected the kingdom of God to appear immediately, when Jesus was received in Jerusalem. Disciples are to be diligent in serving the Lord in the time before He returns.

11Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem   
and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. 12Therefore He said: “A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom…13So he called   
ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, ‘Do business till I come’… 15And so it was that when he returned…he commanded these servants…to be called to him…  
16Then came the first, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned ten minas.’ 17And he said to him, ‘Well done…because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.’ 18And the second came, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned five minas.’ 19Likewise he said to him, ‘You also be over five cities.’ 20“Then another came, saying, ‘Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. 21For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.’…24And he said to those who stood by, ‘Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.’ 25(But they said to him, ‘Master, he has ten minas.’) 26For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given…” (Lk. 19:11-26)

* 1. The “far country” speaks of heaven (19:12), where Jesus went to receive the kingdom from His Father. A *mina* was a Greek coin worth about three months’ wages—about $10,000 in today’s value. In the parable of the talents (Mt. 25), each received a different sum of money, representing the different gifts and opportunities that each believer has. In this parable, each received the same sum, representing the one life that each has to invest for the Master.
  2. Jesus rode on a colt to enter Jerusalem (19:35-40; cf. Mt. 21:7-9; Mk. 11:7-10; Jn. 12:12-19). Many rejoiced as they spoke the words from Psalm 118:26 designed to welcome Messiah to Israel.

37Then, as He was now drawing near…the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice…38saying: “ ‘Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!’ ”  
(Lk. 19:37-38)

* 1. Jesus stopped just outside Jerusalem to weep over the city (19:41-44). Later, in AD 70, Roman soldiers under the command of Titus surrounded Jerusalem and totally destroyed it.

41As He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, 42saying, “If you had known…the things that make for your peace!...43For days will come…when your enemies will…close you in on every side, 44and level you…to the ground…because you did not know the time of your visitation.”  
 (Lk. 19:41-44)

* 1. Jesus cleansed the temple for the second time (19:45-46; cf. Mt. 21:12-13; Mk. 11:15-17).

45Then He went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in it, 46saying to them, “It is written, ‘My house is a house of prayer,’…” 47But the chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people sought to destroy Him. (Lk. 19:45-47)