

A Study of Luke's Gospel  
Week Twenty-Seven  
Luke 19:11-20:8

**Day One**

11 While they were listening to this, he went on to tell them a parable, because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once. 12 He said: "A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return. 13 So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. 'Put this money to work,' he said, 'until I come back.' 14 "But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, 'We don't want this man to be our king.' 15 "He was made king, however, and returned home. Then he sent for the servants to whom he had given the money, in order to find out what they had gained with it. 16 "The first one came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned ten more.' 17 "'Well done, my good servant!' his master replied. 'Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.' 18 "The second came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned five more.' 19 "His master answered, 'You take charge of five cities.' 20 "Then another servant came and said, 'Sir, here is your mina; I have kept it laid away in a piece of cloth. 21 I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in and reap what you did not sow.' 22 "His master replied, 'I will judge you by your own words, you wicked servant! You knew, did you, that I am a hard man, taking out what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow? 23 Why then didn't you put my money on deposit, so that when I came back, I could have collected it with interest?' 24 "Then he said to those standing by, 'Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas.' 25 "'Sir,' they said, 'he already has ten!' 26 "He replied, 'I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what he has will be taken away. 27 But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of me.'"

v. 11-27 – As we have done in past studies, let's keep this story intact and look at some general lessons to be learned from it. Remember, parables are stories with lessons; the details are not to be studied or taken literally. Feel free to add your own insight to this brief list.

1. This parable was told because some thought the kingdom of God was going to appear quickly. So the moral must be that it was not going to appear as quickly as the people thought.
2. Since the Kingdom will tarry, God expects His servants to use what they have to produce increase. The amount of increase will vary from person to person, but the message is clear: God wants His servants to produce some measure of increase according to their ability.
3. Future destiny depends on current faithfulness and productivity.

4. Fear will often prevent you from being productive, because it causes you to avoid calculated risks that have the potential to bring some return and increase.

Are you being productive? If you believe the return of the Lord is imminent, are you acting like it, doing all you can to produce fruit in these last days? If you don't believe the return is imminent, are you laying long-range plans to produce long-term fruit? What could you produce if you had a five-, ten- or twenty-year plan? God doesn't just want holiness; He also wants productivity.

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being *ineffective* and *unproductive* in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:5-9 emphasis added).

### **Day Two**

28 After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. 29 As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, 30 "Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. 31 If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' tell him, 'The Lord needs it.'"

v. 28 – You always went “up” to Jerusalem, even if you were coming from the south. Jerusalem was the focus of spiritual activity for the Jews. Jesus, being a good Jew, went “up” to Jerusalem. Yet Jerusalem never treated Jesus very well, yet He hastened there to do the Father's will. Is there something unpleasant that you need to do? Then I suggest you get about doing it!

vs. 29&30 – I'm not sure I would want to ride into Jerusalem on a donkey that had never been ridden. Plus this would require obedience and faith on the part of the two disciples, for they had to trust that they would find the donkey as Jesus instructed and trust that they would be able to bring the donkey with them. After all, a donkey can be stubborn and could have refused to cooperate. Often we must obey the Lord in faith and only then will we see circumstances turn out as we were promised.

Is the Lord asking you to do something that doesn't make sense, just like He did those two disciples? To their credit, those two obeyed and went. Will you?

v. 31 – Jesus sent these two to borrow a donkey, and they didn't even know who owned it! Now that would require faith. And they had to have faith that the owner would cooperate along with the donkey. I remember one time that a missionary friend asked me to bring some boxes with me when I came to visit him in a foreign country. When I went

to pick up the boxes, I found out a few meant 19! I called him and told him there was no way the airline would allow me to bring those boxes without cost. He told me, "Keep asking for a supervisor and tell them that the boxes are for the Lord's work." I was up a good part of the night worrying about what I would do when the airline did not agree to take the boxes. The next day, I went to the airport and went through five workers and supervisors. Finally, a nicely dressed executive came out, looked at the boxes, heard my plea, and said, "Okay, we'll take them all." After that, I knew something of what those disciples felt like when they went ahead in faith to fetch the donkey.

### **Day Three**

32 Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. 33 As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" 34 They replied, "The Lord needs it." 35 They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. 36 As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.

vs. 32-34 – Disciples always find it the way Jesus had told them it would be. And they were able to secure the services of the donkey because they asked for them. What do you need that you aren't asking for? Why aren't you asking? I'm not only referring to not asking in prayer, but also not asking others who have the potential (and the resources) to help you. James wrote:

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures (James 4:1-3).

Jesus also said:

Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it (John 14:11-14).

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit-fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name (John 15:16).

What do you need? Is there anyone you can ask to use, have or borrow it?

vs. 35&36 – I don't know about you, but I wouldn't want to put my clothing on a donkey or below a donkey as the donkey walked over it. My clothes would smell like a donkey

or be wearing donkey mess. But the Lord doesn't want us to be too attached to the things that He gives us; everything we have is to be used for His purpose and glory.

By the way, there was biblical precedent for what the people were doing with their clothes:

They hurried and took their cloaks and spread them under him on the bare steps. Then they blew the trumpet and shouted, "Jehu is king!" (2 Kings 9:13).

The people were acknowledging that Jesus was their king. Having seen the movie *The Passion of the Christ*, I was reminded that the people didn't want Jesus killed. It was the leaders and the mob they assembled that created the urgency for Jesus' death. Most of the people didn't even know until it was too late to prevent.

### Day Four

37 When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen: 38 "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" 39 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!" 40 "I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."

v. 37 – This was a happy scene. The disciples were reflecting on all that they had seen and praised God. It would be good today to think of all God's blessings and miracles in your life and to praise Him for them. Perhaps you should do something public, like go out to dinner or celebrate at home with family or friends. The disciples didn't rejoice or praise in a corner; they did it in public with loud voices.

v. 38 – The disciples had something specific to say when they praised God. What do you say when you praise God? Is there content to your praise? Do you tell God who He is, speak of His great works and declare that there is none other like Him? Can you praise with ease, or do you struggle to find what to say? If you struggle, you may not be praising often enough.

v. 39 – Your praise will usually offend someone. I heard a teacher say one time that a fanatic is anyone who loves Jesus more than I do. The Pharisees were offended by the public spectacle, which was declaring Jesus to be King and praising God for what had been accomplished through Jesus' life. I also heard someone teach that effective worship comes from one being God-conscious and not self-conscious. The more you think about yourself and what you are doing, the less attention and energy you have to focus on God. Who is the focus of your worship?

v. 40 – God will not allow His great deeds to do unnoticed or unheralded. And God was not about to let King Jesus enter into Jerusalem without fanfare. After all, what Jesus did was foretold in the Bible:

Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey (Zechariah 9:9).

If the people hadn't acknowledged this royal parade, God would have arranged for nature to have made some noise. Are you prepared today to make some noise for God, trumpeting what He has done for you? If so, go for it!

### **Day Five**

41 As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it 42 and said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace-but now it is hidden from your eyes. 43 The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. 44 They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you."

vs. 41&42 – Jesus wept for Jerusalem. He loved this city but knew that the coming events surrounding His death meant that Jerusalem would be destroyed. Notice that I did not say that Jesus would judge Jerusalem. They would judge themselves by rejecting God and His word. In John, Jesus said:

“As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say” (John 12:47-50).

We must be careful when we announce that God is going to judge people, cities or sinners. Judgment will come, but it is people who bring it on themselves. Instead of accepting the salvation that could come through Jesus, they lose the protection and help that He offers. It is like someone standing in the rain. God offers them an umbrella but they refuse. God doesn't make them wet; their decision to reject the umbrella causes them to get wet. If they curse God for the rain, they are missing the point. He offers them protection from the rain, not freedom from rain. And God sets the rules.

vs. 43&44 – Jesus here referred to the fall of Jerusalem, which would take place in the year 70 AD. Obviously, Jerusalem would pay dearly for not recognizing who Jesus was and what God was doing. Their rejection of Jesus must have been a choice, for God held them responsible for their decision. Instead of rejoicing over His miracles, the Pharisees were uptight that His disciples made a public spectacle. Because they rejected God's public spectacle, another spectacle would come through the Roman armies that would

destroy the city. Instead of choosing salvation they chose destruction. This reminds me of what the Lord said to Israel through Moses:

Deut 30:19-20

“This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the LORD is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob”  
(Deuteronomy 30:19-20).

Jesus provided an opportunity for Jerusalem to choose life, but instead they chose death. It took about 40 years for Jesus’ prediction to come true, but come true it did.

We are free to choose, but we are not free from the consequences of our choices. Jerusalem was free to reject Jesus, but when they did, they were then responsible for the consequences of their choice.

### **Day Six**

45 Then he entered the temple area and began driving out those who were selling.  
46 "It is written," he said to them, "'My house will be a house of prayer'; but you have made it 'a den of robbers.'" 47 Every day he was teaching at the temple. But the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the leaders among the people were trying to kill him. 48 Yet they could not find any way to do it, because all the people hung on his words.

v. 45 – The Temple in Jesus’ day had become a mall, a central business district for God’s work. There were money-changers to exchange currency for the many travelers who came to Jerusalem. So that people would not have to bring their sacrifices with them, merchants sold sheep and other animals for worship. What’s more, the high priest’s family got a percentage of all this commerce, which is why the High Priest wanted Jesus out of the way—He was bad for business.

There is nothing wrong with all this business, except that it was overshadowing the larger work that the Temple was to represent. The Temple was to be a house of worship and prayer, not commerce and trade.

The same is true today. The Church should not primarily be a place of business, although business is part of what the Church has to do. But it can’t be all about selling books, collecting money, building structures and promoting ministry “stars.” I was convicted in my own ministry of how often I talked about me instead of Jesus, how often I talked about prayer instead of praying.

v. 46 – Jesus quoted from Isaiah to justify what He was doing:

And foreigners who bind themselves to the LORD to serve him, to love the name of the LORD, and to worship him, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant — these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations” (Isaiah 56:6-7).

Jesus wasn't simply condemning the business practices of the Temple; He was also condemning the fact that the Temple had become a closed area instead of any open one. By that, I mean that the Temple was to be a house of prayer for all nations—all nations were to have access and all nations were to be lifted up in prayer. Instead the Temple had become an exclusive club, open only to “pure” or “purified” Jews. That was never the Lord's intent. I wonder if the den of robbers didn't pertain more to the fact that the Jews had stolen the mission of the Temple, which was spiritual and evangelistic, and turned it into something that was singular and parochial.

vs. 47&48 – Jesus never did anything in secret. He taught in public, but the leaders were plotting in secret to kill Him. The leaders were unsuccessful because the people hung on Jesus' words. It is amazing to me that the people had more spiritual sense than their spiritual leaders. Being a spiritual leader is no guarantee of spiritual correctness, yet many leaders today portray themselves as “little popes.” They act as though they are always correct and automatically know better than “the people” because they are leaders. This attitude is flawed, and thus the leaders and people who subscribe to that belief are flawed as well.

Can you imagine? The leaders who represented God and maintained God's system were plotting to kill God in order to preserve what God had given them. What is wrong with this picture?

If God has showed you something or given you something to do and leadership doesn't agree, don't assume they are automatically correct. They may be, but then again they may be wrong. No one can hear from God for you. That is your job.

### **Day Seven**

20:1 One day as he was teaching the people in the temple courts and preaching the gospel, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, together with the elders, came up to him. 2 "Tell us by what authority you are doing these things," they said. "Who gave you this authority?" 3 He replied, "I will also ask you a question. Tell me, 4 John's baptism—was it from heaven, or from men?" 5 They discussed it among themselves and said, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will ask, 'Why didn't you believe him?'" 6 But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us, because they are persuaded that John was a prophet." 7 So they answered, "We don't know where it was from." 8 Jesus said, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things."

vs. 1&2 – Jesus seldom did anything to dispel the confusion or controversy surrounding His ministry. He did not explain Himself or justify what He was doing for His skeptics or enemies. Don't waste time on defending yourself or God. Just get about doing what God wants you to do. Your enemy wants you to waste time and spin you wheels trying to convince people who will never be convinced.

The authorities wanted to know who gave Jesus the authority to do things, because they felt that they had the exclusive “franchise” for Israel. Unless it went through them, it wasn't legitimate. God bypassed them and did it Himself. I think of the passage in Jeremiah:

"Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of my pasture!" declares the LORD. Therefore this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says to the shepherds who tend my people: "Because you have scattered my flock and driven them away and have not bestowed care on them, I will bestow punishment on you for the evil you have done," declares the LORD. "I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and will bring them back to their pasture, where they will be fruitful and increase in number. I will place shepherds over them who will tend them, and they will no longer be afraid or terrified, nor will any be missing," declares the LORD (Jeremiah 23:1-4).

This is exactly what Jesus did. The shepherds had failed and now God stepped in to take care of His people.

vs. 3-8 – Jesus responded to their question with a question of His own. It was a simple but profound question about John the Baptist. The leaders immediately went into a consultation about how they should answer. They weren't concerned about the truth; they were concerned about the fallout from their answer. When leaders are political and try to protect their position instead of pursue the truth, they are in a bad place. The leaders were never interested in what God thought or wanted. They wanted to protect their status with the people.

When the leaders deferred an answer to Jesus question, He followed and did the same. He never answered their question; He let His actions speak for Him. As Peter wrote:

To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly (1 Peter 2:20-24).

As you can see, we are to do just as Jesus did. We are not to defend ourselves or retaliate when our enemies attack. I urge you to get busy doing what God wants you to do and not be distracted by your critics or enemies. In this way, you will be just like Jesus.