

**"On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan****LUKE 18****Luke 18**

Luke eighteen finds Jesus expanding on the theme of humbly trusting the Father in heaven for life, sustenance, and salvation. The chapter opens with an admonition that **"men ought to pray and not lose heart."** He then proceeds to tell of a widow (*Luke often speaks of widows and God's care for them*). The parable is about the persistence of the woman, who was vulnerable, and the unjustness of the judge, who was insensitive. God sees it all. God sees everything we think and do. Sobering.

The next story is that of a pompous, arrogant, and self-righteous Pharisee and a tax collector, who was looked upon as being synonymous with a sinner. The two of them made their way to the temple to worship and pray. The hypocritical Pharisee prayed a selfish and arrogant prayer so all could hear and see, thanking God he was not as the sinner distanced from him and named a number of notorious sins. The tax collector/sinner, on the other hand, could not even so much as lift his eyes toward heaven, where he was acknowledging to God his sinfulness and his unworthiness to even seek God's face. Jesus must have shocked the audience as He stated about the tax collector,

***'I tell you; this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.'*** (LUKE 18:14)

The parents of children, wanting to have the one they believed to be the Messiah to touch and bless their children, pressed upon Him, only to be withstood by the disciples. The story is touching as Jesus said, these precious little ones are those whose vulnerability and

openness is the attitude of those entering the Kingdom of God.

***"And they were bringing even their babies to Him so that He would touch them, but when the disciples saw it, they began rebuking them. But Jesus called for them, saying, "Permit the children to come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. "Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it at all."***

Interesting that both the primary words for baby and children are used in the passage above. The primary word for baby, infant, is the Greek word *"brephē,"* and the primary word for a young child from a toddler onward to age twelve or so *"paidia."* Jesus said those weak, vulnerable, and need to be cared for are those who should not be kept from Jesus. Even though they cannot immediately "bring something to the table," they are no trouble to the lover of men's souls.

The next story brings full circle the attitudes and actions of those who are looked upon as the most valuable to God by men. The Lord speaks of a young man whom He loved and who wanted to follow Him, yet with all the things that the young man had "going for him," he lacked eternal discernment and proper judgment. He failed to see that the Lord Jesus will only receive someone, anyone who is willing to give all their life, unreservedly, without withholding even the most precious of their possessions to Him. The young man had many riches and could not part with them in order to have Jesus. Only by giving our life to Jesus, our whole life, our whole heart, will the Lord Jesus receive us.

**Prayer and Action Steps**

*I'd rather have Jesus than silver or gold; I'd rather be His than have riches untold; I'd rather have Jesus than houses or lands; I'd rather be led by His nail-pierced hand.*

*Than to be the king of a vast domain Or be held in sin's dread sway; I'd rather have Jesus than anything this world affords today.*

*I'd rather have Jesus than men's applause; I'd rather be faithful to His dear cause; I'd rather have Jesus than worldwide fame; I'd rather be true to His holy name. Amen.*