

cell notes

A **meeting** of your cell community has four connected elements – **Welcome, Word, Worship, Witness**.

Luke 18v9-19v28 – Authentic Spirituality is given by Jesus

Welcome (10mins)

Introduce the meeting. Get to know each other. Share with each other stories from doing mission in the last week. What needs are there for prayer for peoples friends? How can you support each other as you seek to **live for Jesus** and **speak for Jesus**.

Word (40mins)

Pray. Read the passage in three sections.

18v9-30. Seek the saviour

9-14. The Pharisee & The Tax Collector

Why does Jesus tell this parable? (9)

What is the point of the parable? (14)

15-17. Children

What is required to enter the kingdom of God?

18-30. The Rich Ruler.

- What is the significance of Jesus being called “good” here?
- What is the point of Jesus' reply? (24-27)
- How can the ruler get eternal life?

18v31-19v10. See the saviour

- What is going to happen to Jesus?
- Why does Jesus tell them this now?
- What do the disciples, the blind man and Zacchaeus have in common?
- How does the blind man's situation change?
- What is notable about Zacchaeus?
- How do these three incidents explain why Jesus has come?

19v11-27. Submit to the saviour

- Why does Jesus tell this final parable? (11)
- What is the conclusion of the parable? (25-27)
- What will happen to those who refuse Jesus' rule?
- What will we do with what we've received from Jesus, as we've studied Luke 9v51-19v27?

Worship (10mins)

Respond in prayer and praise to what you've studied.

Witness (30mins)

Confirm the details of your Invitation Event in week 10, and what you will do around the Carol Service. Make the most of the **easiest** evangelistic opportunity of the year.

Next Week (Week 10) >
Cell Invitation Event

threepray Take time together to pray for three non-Christian friends each that you can speak to them about Jesus, and that he would give them eternal life.

word notes

This passage divides into seven parts. Two triplets followed by a parable to end it. At the end of the passage, in 19v28 Jesus has completed the journey to Jerusalem that he began in 9v51. Our journey with Jesus in the road to Jerusalem comes to its close. Luke has carefully arranged his material here. Common themes run through the section, and a number of earlier themes are picked up again.

18v9-30. Seek the Saviour.

V9-14. Jesus tells a parable and we are told why. Look at v9. See, those around Jesus are confident of their own righteousness and look down on others. So Jesus tells a parable against them. The story of two men going to pray at the Temple. The first is a Pharisee. He is the picture of self-confidence and self-righteousness. He proclaims his righteousness to God. He is not like sinners. He is deeply pious. Meanwhile, in v13, we're told of a Tax Collector who stands at a distance. Tax Collectors were one of the groups singled out by this pharisee as unrighteous. This man will not even look up to heaven, rather he beats his breast and seeks mercy from God. Jesus then teaches us about righteousness. About becoming justified before God. The tax collector goes home justified, not the Pharisee. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled and, and he who humbles himself will be exalted, Jesus teaches, in a repetition of his saying in 14v11. The way to get eternal life is to seek it from the one who can save you.

Luke then tells us that people were bringing babies to Jesus so he could touch them. The disciples rebuke these people but Jesus disagrees. He welcomes the children saying that the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. He uses the image of a child to talk about entering the kingdom. Not everything about what it means to be a child, but one specific aspect. The way that children receive. And he says, v17, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it. The only way to get eternal life is to receive it. Not to make a case for it. Not to earn it. But receive it. Seek it. Receive it.

Finally in this first section we come to the story of a Rich Ruler in v18-30, asking Jesus a question. His question has been asked and answered previously. Back at the start of the journey to Jerusalem a Lawyer asked the same question, attempting to test Jesus. Now the question comes again - "what must I do to inherit eternal life?". These questions top and tail the journey to the cross. They set the agenda. The ruler asks the question, calling Jesus "good teacher". Jesus responds with some teaching saying "No-one is good – except God alone" before continuing to answer the request. Why would Jesus say this. It would appear he is implicitly showing this ruler that he is God. The title good teacher is not refused or corrected. It is appropriate. Jesus is the good teacher for he is God. Jesus then reminds him of the Old Testament commands. The man confidently interjects that he has kept these since he was a boy, v21.

When Jesus hears this he responds, v22... "one thing", he says "you lack.... sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me". Is Jesus saying that you can buy a ticket to heaven. Seems unlikely! See how the ruler responds. His confidence is gone. V23, he becomes very sad because he has great wealth. Jesus looks at him and says it is so hard for the rich to enter heaven. In fact its easier to get a camel through the eye of a needle. Many interpret this as some reference to an alleged needle gate in Jerusalem that required people to unload their camels before entering. This is very appealing but horrifically wrong for several reasons. Firstly, as we've just said the point wasn't really that the man could get to heaven if he could sell his stuff. The needle gate says – you can do it if you try. Secondly, the audience at the time don't think "ah, tricky but possible". They exclaim - "who then can be saved?". To which Jesus responds, what is impossible with men is possible with God. They think its impossible. And it is – you cannot pass a camel through the eye of a needle. Similarly the rich ruler cannot save himself. Only God can save him.

Where might he find God – standing in front of him, the good teacher – Jesus. He need not seek to know what he must do to get eternal life, only to seek mercy. As this section closes Peter steps in saying that they have left much, and Jesus says that they will be rewarded. This echoes 9v57-62, where we saw both the cost of following Jesus but also that it was worth it. The ruler cannot see past his riches. The pharisee cannot see past his self-righteousness. **Seek the Saviour – let Jesus give you eternal life.**

18v31-19v10 See the Saviour.

Next we find Jesus speaking to his disciples. He tells them that he is about to go up to Jerusalem (see 19v28). When he does the prophets will be fulfilled for Jesus will be killed and will rise from the dead. Why does Jesus tell them this now? At first glance because they need to know what is going on. But then we see v34. The disciples don't understand what Jesus says (though it looks plain to us). And they don't understand because Jesus hides the meaning from them. Why? Read on!! Look at the three carefully arranged incidents together. What do the disciples, the beggar and Zacchaeus have in common. The beggar is blind. Zacchaeus is a short man who cannot see. The beggar's blindness is changed to sight when he asks Jesus for mercy – the healing of his sight. And by faith he gets it. Zacchaeus seeks the saviour and Jesus welcomes this sinner. This wealthy traitor is a son of Abraham – a man with faith in God. The people view him as a sinner but Jesus says that this is the kind of person he has come for. Jesus has come, 19v10, to seek and save what was lost – this is why he has come, and this is why he will die (18v31-32). Notice that at the start and end of this section Jesus calls himself the Son of Man – recalling the Kingly title he used in 17v22,24,30, 18v8. Zacchaeus is lost. Notably, wealthy Zacchaeus, is happy to give up his riches. Jesus keeps the disciples from seeing – they too need Jesus to give them sight. **See the Saviour – let Jesus give you eternal life.**

19v11-28. Submit to the Saviour.

Jesus was near Jerusalem, v11, and people presume that the Son of Man is about to institute his kingdom on earth. To correct this Jesus teaches one more parable. A noble is about to be made king, he must go away to receive his title. While he is gone he entrusts his servants with money. Those who would be his subjects send a message saying they don't want him as their king. Nonetheless he is appointed. He calls his servants back to him to see what he did with his money. We're told of three of the ten. One sees a tenfold increase, another five. And another nothing – because he was afraid of the king. The first two are rewarded handsomely. The latter loses what he had. And we're told that those who rejected his rule will be slaughtered by the king. This is a parable not an allegory so we must not read too much into it. Its challenge appears to be two-fold. There are those entrusted with something by the King – what will they do with that. This is similar to 16v10-12. Use it well and you gain more. This surely refers to his teaching – what will we do with seven weeks of teaching from Jesus about eternal life? The other group face judgement, the one who fails to use Jesus' teaching and those who rejected his rule outright – they end up with no life. **Submit to the Saviour – let Jesus give you eternal life.**