

The Vine

A Bird's Eye View

Read Luke chapters 17 through 20. As you read note how different people react to Jesus and how Jesus reacts to them. These chapters bring us right into the last week of Jesus' earthly life.

Week Five: Receiving the Kingdom

March 2 - March 9, 2008

Children. It doesn't matter if you have children, want children, or are somewhat of a child yourself, everyone has thoughts about children. You may be thinking of the cute and cuddly newborn. How their little lips are so cute and their tiny fingernails are amazing examples of God's creating power. Or you may be thinking of the time your four-month-old nephew spit-up down your shirt. Children draw our attention, either by their magnificence or by their messiness. Rich and famous people also draw our attention. This week in The Vine we are going to look at two situations when Jesus and His disciples interact with children and a rich man. Watch as He draws out lessons about the Kingdom.

Enjoy your time in scripture. Don't be rushed. Find a place where you can spend some undisturbed minutes and let the scripture soak into you. Be comfortable enough to enjoy your time, but not so cozy it makes you tired.

First Encounter

Read Luke 18:15-30

What do you think the parents bringing their children to Jesus were hoping for? What did they want Jesus to do? Imagine the picture of Him with the children.

What was the disciples' view of the children? How might you agree with keeping the kids away? How were they wrong?

One commentary says, "In ancient culture, children could be seen but not heard. They were left on society's fringe until they were old enough to be useful." (Bock, Darrell, Luke, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series, IVP, 1994, p 289) What does this passage show about the difference between how Jesus values people and how the world does?

Why does Jesus, the Lord of the Universe, have time for children? Do you believe He still has time for the children? Do you believe He has time for you?

If the King owns the Kingdom, how does the Kingdom belong to such as these?

Think of how children ask for things and how they react when they receive them. How does this affect you at your age? How can you set your heart to be more like a child?

Prayer Reflection: Lord help me to trust you as a child. To run to you as a child. To sit in your lap as the perfect Father you are.

Spend some time just basking in the Lord's love and acceptance. He loves you. He likes you. He enjoys this time with you.

Second Encounter

Read Luke 18:15-30

How is the ruler's question in verse 18 a good question? What might be behind the question?



How many of the Ten Commandments can you list without looking? Write in as many as you can in the box. Look at Exodus 20:1-17 and fill in the rest.

The Ten Commandments	
1:	
2:	
3:	
4:	
5:	
6:	
7:	
8:	
9:	
10:	

Which of the top ten does Jesus mention? What do they have in common? Which does He not mention? What do they have in common?

Is the ruler a good guy? What does he lack?

Prayer Reflection: Ask the Lord to reveal to you anything that would keep you from following Him fully. Any material possession or relationship or title. Anything. Give these things to the Lord. Pray to be fully devoted to Jesus.

Third Encounter

Read all of Luke 18:15-30 twice looking for things that you missed in earlier readings.

How are both sections similar? Different?

What does the passage say about riches? Are riches bad?

How is His request to the rich man like what He says in verse 17? What is needed in both?

Eye of the Needle

Some people say that the eye of the needle is a small door in the wall of Jerusalem, and a camel can get through it if it takes off its load and scoots through on its knees. This may sound good, but when looking at the passage, it is clear this is not what Jesus was saying. The people don't respond by saying, "Great! All I have to do is take off my burden and kneel." The people respond with astonishment and Jesus Himself says that it is impossible with men. All too often an attempt is made to bend scripture. Resist it by digging into the text to test and confirm every theme and idea.

What does this passage say about the cost of following Jesus?


Restate what Jesus was saying in verses 29 - 30. How does this relate to Jesus conversation with the rich man?

Prayer Reflection: Reflect on following God with your whole heart, mind, and strength. Ask Him to help you in areas where you may not be following Him fully. Don't rush here. Relax in His presence.

Small Group Guide

NOTE: This is a guide. The following questions are designed for you to choose the ones that best apply to your group. Feel free to add to these questions or reword them as you prayerfully prepare for your small group.

1. What are some ways that the Church can show that children are significant? Who besides children does the world see as insignificant?
2. Bringing children to Jesus would be messy and noisy, it might get them off schedule. How does Jesus handle the interruption? How do we sometimes shun those seen as insignificant in order to be on time? In order to get the big things done? What can protect us from this?
3. What is the contrast between the two types of people who approached Jesus? How does Jesus respond to each? In each story, what do those who approach Jesus have according to the world? What does Jesus say they have?

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4. Have someone read verse 18 with the attitude you think the ruler had. What does his question show about his view of eternal life? How might the disciples feel about this rich guy joining the team?

 5. Are you more like the children or the rich ruler? Explain.

 6. What are the persistent dangers with riches? What can be done to protect ourselves from these dangers?

 7. Who is a child or someone else who the world sees as insignificant around you? What can you specifically do to show that Jesus sees them as significant? As an individual? As a group? Is there something you would be willing to give up? What would be most difficult to give up?

 8. What does Jesus say about the disciples' investment in the Kingdom of God? When does this investment pay off?

 9. How do you get into the Kingdom?

Written by The Vine Team.
Email thevine@kcconline.org
with comments or questions.
We would love to hear what
you think about it. We are also
looking for people willing to
help create The Vine. If this
interests you, let us know.

