

## The King is Coming

Luke 19:11-27

During Roman occupation Rome ruled conquered lands through subordinate rulers. These rulers came into power only because Rome gave them the right by approval. Herod the Great had negotiated with Mark Antony the right to rule Israel. After his death Herod's kingdom was divided into three regions Galilee, Samaria, and Judea. His three sons ruled these regions. Archelaus was made ruler over Judea. He slaughtered 3,000 Jews to intimidate them. It's not surprising that the Jews hated him. He went to Rome to have his rule officially confirmed. A delegation from Judea also went to appeal to Caesar Augustus that he not be made ruler over them because of his brutality. As a compromise, Augustus confirmed Archelaus as ruler but would not give him the title of king until he had won the approval of the people. That never happened. His rule, however, continued to create chaos in Judea and Rome removed him from power replacing him with a series of governors, Pilate being the fifth.

The parable Jesus is going to now share in Luke 19:11-27 is loosely based on this historical event. The crowd following Jesus would be very familiar with this event in their recent history. Let's turn there together.

Of the various topics we could discuss from this text I would like us to consider four points.

- A call to active service
- A call to accountability
- A call to advance the gospel
- A call to anguish

### I. A CALL TO ACTIVE SERVICE – v. 11-14

First of all let's consider the purpose Jesus told this parable.

#### A. The Purpose – v. 11

Jesus resolutely set His face to Jerusalem. He was passing through Jericho where He met Bartimaeus who was blind, but would be given more than physical eyes to see. He then met Zacchaeus who demonstrated his spiritual transformation by giving half of his wealth to the poor and repaying those he defrauded four times what he had taken from them. Both men had a divine encounter with the living Savior. Last week I left you with the challenge to consider who your Zacchaeus was, that person who is the social outcast because of his reputation, that one whom Christ is seeking to save. The Passover is just two weeks away. It will be His last. It is here that He will present Himself as our once and for all sacrifice for sin.

The crowd has continued to follow Him. We read in verse 11 that “while they were listening to this, He went on to tell them a parable.”

What is Luke referring to here that the crowd was listening to? For that we go back to verses 9-10. “Jesus said to them, ‘Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.’”

I said last week and I'll say it again today that verse 10 is the summary of Jesus' ministry on earth. It's the purpose for which He came. They had just heard Him declare His purpose. He could not have been any clearer, and yet we read on in verse 11 that Jesus is going to tell them this parable “because He was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once.” What Jesus had just said was totally lost to them. So caught up in what they hoped would happen for them they missed what could happen to them.

For centuries the Jews believed Messiah would come. They came to believe that Messiah would deliver Israel from bondage just as Moses had delivered Israel from Egypt. He had just told them His purpose was to seek and save the lost yet they

still believed that the Messiah was a political deliverer who would break the bondage of Roman oppression by establishing an earthly kingdom that would overpower Israel's adversaries. He would in this kingdom establish political and social reforms.

Even His own disciples were confused about His purpose. They knew Him to be the Christ, the Son of the living God, but yet just before His ascension we read in Acts 1:6 that they asked Him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

What part of verse 10 translates into establishing an earthly kingdom?

A darkened heart will see and hear only what it wants to and nothing else.

Why is Jesus going to tell this parable? He is telling it because even after what they witnessed with Bartimaeus and Zacchaeus they still believed He was going to set up an earthly kingdom when He reached Jerusalem. That was His purpose. Now notice the plan.

#### B. The Plan – v. 12-13

Again, this parable will resonate with His audience because of the familiarity with their own history. A nobleman was planning a trip to a distant country so that he might have himself appointed as king after which he would return. In the meantime he called 10 of his servants together and gave them each one mina. They were instructed to put the money to work until he returned.

Now let's break the parable down.

A mina was worth about three month's wages. Each servant was given the same amount – one mina. Notice also that while they were instructed to put the mina to work, they were not told how to do so. It was up to them.

Also notice that the nobleman did not tell them when he would return, just that they were to put the mina to work until that time.

Now, you may be thinking this parable sounds a lot like the parable of the talents found in Matthew 25. They are two separate parables, though similar in nature. Let's note some differences.

The place is different. Here Jesus is in Jericho. In Matthew He is in Jerusalem.

The audience is different. Here Jesus is speaking to the crowd. In Matthew He is speaking to the disciples.

The person in the parable is different. Here it is a nobleman. In Matthew it is a businessman.

The number of servants is different. Here there are 10 servants. In Matthew there are only three.

The item and amount given is different. Here they receive one mina each. In Matthew they receive talents – one gets five, another two, and the third gets one.

Finally we see that in Luke the rewards are different while in Matthew they are the same.

Let's stop for a moment and understand what Jesus is referring to in this parable.

The nobleman is Jesus. He is speaking of His return to heaven where He will be given the kingdom by the Father. Only the Father can appoint Him as king. At the beginning of His earthly ministry when Jesus was led out into the wilderness, Satan wanted to give Jesus the kingdom without the cross. He refused that kingdom.

Later on the people wanted to make Jesus King and once tried to do so by force. He refused that kingdom.

Only the Father can confer that on Him. He also indicates that the kingdom would be established later, at an undisclosed time. Jesus was telling them that He was going away for a prolonged absence, but at some point would return.

In His absence His followers are given the responsibility of caring for one thing. The 10 servants represent His followers. Each has been entrusted with one thing, one thing of great value. That one thing that is the same for all of us that we have all been entrusted with is the gospel and we are told to put it to work. That's what the word occupy means in the KJV. From the Greek word we get our English word pragmatic – they were to be productive with what was given to them. They were expected to be trustworthy with that responsibility. That was the plan. Notice now the problem.

### C. The Problem – v. 14

His subjects hated Him.  
John 1:10-12

This is not the same group of people in verse 13. This was meant to warn the Jews not to reject their king and yet many did just that. During the weeks of Passover their shouts of adoration will turn to shouts of accusation. One week they want to crown Him. A week later they will want to crucify Him.

While some believed, many rejected Him and it's the same today. The term citizens or subjects is a general term referring to everyone. We are all under His control or dominion whether a person accepts or rejects Him. Since He created the world, it is under His rule, even though it may seem like Satan is ruling it. We are all His subjects and no one will be able to keep Him from ruling. He has been crowned and will return as the reigning King. Revelation 19:6 "Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: 'Hallelujah!' For our Lord God Almighty reigns."

Revelation 19: 11, 16 "I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice He judges and makes war... On His robe and on His thigh He

has the name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." He is king over all but many hate Him.

We have been given a call to action, a call to go out and put to work the gospel message in spite of the rejection of many, in spite of those who refuse to heed the message of the gospel. We are to do that until He returns. When He does there will be a call to accountability.

## II. A CALL TO ACCOUNTABILITY – v. 15-27

No matter what the subjects thought of Him, this nobleman was still appointed king and returned and asked for the servants to give an accounting of what they had done with what had been given them. Notice that while 10 servants are given one mina each, only three report on their conduct. I believe that indicates the gamut or range of their results.

### A. The Profitable – v. 15-19

Two reported that their efforts resulted in the mina being profitable, it's value had increased. They were faithful servants and for their faithfulness the nobleman rewarded them appropriately even though when he left them he mentioned nothing about any reward. As far as they knew they were act wisely with what was entrusted.

This parable teaches us to be faithful in using the gospel so that others will come to know Christ. It also shows that some have greater opportunity than others, but faithfulness is key.

There is a little booklet written by Dawson Trotman, founder of the Navigators ministry titled *Born to Reproduce*. It describes his path to salvation through the prayers of two faithful Sunday school teachers and Scripture memory. As he grew in faith one of the verses that became an important part of his life and ministry was Jeremiah 33:3 "Call unto Me, and I will answer thee, and show thee

great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.”  
Another verse was Ephesians 3:20 “Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.”

In time he began to meet with a friend to pray those verses. They committed to pray for a whole year, if necessary, until they believed God had heard them and was going to give them what they were asking. They began to pray Acts 1:8 to be witnesses. He began teaching a class of 6 boys. The first week they wouldn't listen. He prayed. He met alone with the ring leader. The next Sunday all six boys listened and got saved. In time the class grew from 6 to 225 boys who got saved. His Sunday school class grew to 400. He and his friend prayed for all the boys by name and then began to pray for other nearby towns that people would get saved.

Four weeks into their prayer time, they began to pray that God would use them in every State. They prayed for every state. After five weeks they began to pray for the world. Today the Navigators have a global ministry in the military, on college campuses and in churches – reaching the lost and discipling believers to reproduce.

Here's where faithfulness comes in. He writes: I don't think that time has much to do with whether God hears you or not; but I do believe that time has something to do with whether or not your faith is built up as you pray and ask. I don't believe that God will ever give much to those who have their little conscience-easer prayers in the morning and evening. If you cannot take 1/48<sup>th</sup> of your day to be alone with your mighty God and King, I rather doubt that He is going to do very much through you.”

He continues by noting that the greatest place for soul-winning is the home. It begins there. We can pray for the world, we can pray for each state, we

can pray for our city or work place or school, but are we praying for our home.

Parents, are you praying that your children are saved and then talking with them about how they can be?

Grandparents, are you praying for your grandchildren to be saved and then talking with them about how they can be?

Grandchildren, are you praying for your grandparents to be saved and then talking with them about how they can be?

Do you pray for your siblings to be saved?

Do you pray for your co-workers or classmates?

Then do you talk to them?

Here's what I think is a typical prayer. How do I know it's typical, because I've prayed it.

“Lord, so and so needs to be saved. Send someone who can share the gospel with them.”

How many of you looked in the mirror this morning?

Newsflash: you're a someone, I'm a someone.

I have to admit to you that I have been praying wrong. I have been praying that we would see some growth in our church. “Lord, it would be great to see more people, more families, more kids.”

That's not a bad prayer, but I need to change it.

Instead, I need to be praying that people will be saved and that I can be the instrument to faithfully take the gospel that has been entrusted to me. Yes, it's frightening. What do I say? How do I talk to a stranger? Worse yet, how do I talk to someone I've known for a long time? What if they make fun of me or ask a question I can't answer?

Dawson Trotman confesses “Sometimes I am almost afraid to ask the Lord to give me a soul, because I know that if I ask Him, I am going to have to get busy. I have been a Christian for 29 years, and it still frightens me to talk to a man about his need of salvation.”

Sometimes we look at someone like Zacchaeus or

blind Bartimaeus and figure they won't believe. It's not our business to make that determination. My work, our work is to tell them the gospel and let them decide. What will it take for us to wake up and realize that as God's people we are to get the message of the gospel out to people?

We wouldn't hesitate for a second to warn someone to get out of a burning building, but when it comes to warning them about eternity we hope someone else will tell them. We are called to be profitable with the gospel message, to faithfully share it. Some of those who gave an account were faithful.

I Thessalonians 2:4

Consider the impact of the gospel as the Apostles faithfully spread the gospel. In Acts 2:41 on the Day of Pentecost 3,000 were saved. In Acts 4:4 5,000 were saved. In Acts 5:28 they were accused of filling all Jerusalem with the gospel. Acts records the growth of the early church as the gospel was faithfully shared by Peter and Phillip and Paul. The gospel of Christ is the power of God for salvation, a gospel that we are not to be ashamed of. (Romans 1:16) It will not return void.

But notice the paradox.

#### B. The Paradox – v. 20-21

About this person Warren Wiersbe concludes "It is a basic principle of the Christian life that wasted opportunity means a loss of reward and possibly loss of the privilege of service."

There is no such thing as standing still. This servant is described as "another" servant. Luke does not use the word "allos" which means another of the same kind. Instead he uses "heteros" which means another of a different kind. He was lazy and indifferent. He had a false assessment of the nobleman to whom he was accountable. He had no desire to please the master. He was driven by fear rather than motivated by love as were the other two.

Rather than take the blame himself he accused the king of being harsh, strict, and unfair. He even accused the king of stealing crops he didn't plant. He had no real respect for or true relationship with the king. He was not a true believer. We see that in verse 22 when the king describes him as a wicked servant. Jesus never called any of His true followers as wicked servants. That is how we know this servant was not a true servant to the king.

John MacArthur sums it up this way: "The worthless slave represents people who claim to be followers of Christ, are involved with the church, surrounded by the privileges and truth of the gospel, and even make a profession of faith. Yet in reality, they serve the Lord for their own selfish purposes and goals, and have no relationship with Him. Despite their claims, they will hear from Christ's own mouth the shocking, frightening pronouncement of their eternal doom: "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness." (Matthew 7:23)

Some will receive rewards from the king while others will receive rejection from Him. Notice the punishment.

#### C. The Punishment – v. 22-27

The king did not admit to being a hard man, but merely repeated the accusation made by the wicked servant. His own words condemned him. What he had was taken from him and given to the one who had increased the mina tenfold. Then he called for those who had rejected Him as king to be brought before Him to receive their punishment. They were killed. Jesus was warning most of the crowd around Him of what awaited them if they rejected Him as king. But they were more interested in political deliverance than spiritual deliverance. In two weeks' time they will chant that they have no king but Caesar and their rejection of this King will bring His retribution on them. Many will remain enemies. Jesus says in John 15:25 "They hated Me without

reason.” They will sneer at the One who came to seek and save them.

This is a sobering message for both Jesus’ followers and those who reject Him. It is sobering for His followers because we need to take action with the gospel we have been entrusted to because there is coming a day when we will be held accountable for what we have done with it. It is also sobering for those who reject the gospel because there will be punishment and that punishment is eternal.

With that I want to close with two final thoughts not found directly in the passage, but certainly insinuated.

### III. A CALL TO ADVANCE THE GOSPEL

#### A. Plan It

When Jesus hung out with sinners He was accused of being a sinner Himself – guilt by association. His response was that those who are healthy don’t need a doctor, only those who are sick. We have to purposely plan to go where unsaved people are. That’s why Jesus gave the admonition to go. If we hide in our comfortable little settings of small groups and weekly church services we are not out engaging with a lost world. We must be purposeful by planning to go where they are.

Matthew 28:19-20 “Go ye therefore and teach all nations...and lo I am with you always.”

How does the Lord want me to enter into their lives to show His love?

#### B. Pray It

II Thessalonians 3:1 “Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you.”

Acts 4:29, 31 “Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your Word with great boldness...After they prayed, the place where

they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.”

Our daily prayer should include two important requests.

1. Pray for others to believe.
2. Pray for openness to be bold.

We need to pray fervently for others by name. David faithfully prays almost every day for President Obama to be saved. Pray it.

#### C. Proclaim It

We all know the Matthew 28:19-20 and Acts 1:8. If you don’t think you have the tools then get busy studying, learning, practicing.

It can be as simple as sharing John 3:16 or the Romans Road.

There are a lot of materials available to help you. From his own experience the late Dr. D. James Kennedy developed *Evangelism Explosion*.

Several years ago a number of us went through the series *Becoming a Contagious Christian*. I would be glad to go through that again with anyone who wants to, just talk to me.

Many of you know the actor Kirk Cameron who starred in the sitcom *Growing Pains* back in the mid to late ‘80’s. He is a very strong and committed Christian. He has teamed up with Ray Comfort for a ministry called Way of the Master. They have a very extensive online evangelism program. You can go to their website to find out more details.

We all witness about some recent experience whether it is about visiting our grandkids or the ball game we watched over the weekend or about the great restaurant we ate at last night. Being a witness for Christ is the same thing – telling others about our experience since trusting Christ.

II Timothy 1:7-8 “God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline. So never be ashamed to tell others about our Lord.”

Psalms 107:2 “Has the Lord redeemed you? Then speak out! Tell others He has redeemed you from your enemies.”

In their book *Discipleship*, Jim Putnam and Bobby Harrington share “As His disciples today, we share our lives with other people, eventually also sharing the gospel – the good news about Jesus and what He has done for us and can do for them.”

Through a Good News Club someone shared the gospel with the boy on the left who is the man on the right. Today he is the acting director of CEF in South Africa.

Let’s be bold and proclaim it.  
Then we need to prove it.

#### D. Prove It

That means we practice it. We live out the gospel. II Corinthians 4:5 “For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake.”

I Thessalonians 1:5 “For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, as you know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.”

The gospel is no good if our life does not line up with the message. Someone has rightly said  
You’re writing a gospel a chapter each day,  
By the deeds that you do and the words that you say.  
Men read what you write whether faithless or true.  
Say, what is the gospel according to you?  
While our King is away and until He returns, we have been given the responsibility of sharing the gospel. Are we faithful? Will we be rewarded?

The parable isn’t only about actively advancing the gospel and accountability to the king, the parable also speaks about anguish.

#### IV. A CALL TO ANGUISH

For those who reject the king, who reject the gospel, Scripture speaks about anguish that will result.

##### A. There Will Be Suffering

This suffering will be more intense than anything imaginable.

There will be intense heat.

There will be intense pain.

There will be intense darkness.

If one can imagine the complete bliss of heaven, think of its complete opposite in hell.

In heaven, it is the best of the best.

In hell, it is the worst of the worse.

And it will be eternal, never ending torment.

##### B. There Will Be Solitude

It has been demonstrated that on a dark night the human eye can see a single candle flame 30 miles away. On judgment day when those who have rejected Christ are given their sentence they will be cast into hell, that bottomless pit where there will be no light, nor any comforting sound of another’s voice, not even the presence of God. Dr. John Barnett describes it as the “most horrible judgment of all ... associated with the hopelessness that the blackness of darkness brings.”

Jesus is the light of the world and He is the One who stands between you and utter, impenetrable, eternal darkness and anguish. Where you spend eternity is your choice.

The king is away for a time and will return to set up His kingdom. At that time you will receive a reward for faithfulness of retribution for being a foe. How will He find you?