



STORIES OF LIFE!

The Gospel of Luke

The Story Within!

Luke 17:20-37

Message #51 of 60 – S836

Sermon given on March 24, 2019



Sunday Morning Service

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The Story Within!

Luke 17:20-37

Opening Comments

- Turn to **Luke 17**
- We continue a study through the Gospel of Luke – **The Stories of Life**
- As Christians, we sometimes say things that are strange to non-Christians
- Like calling the God of Heaven our Father
- From a non-Christian's viewpoint – that is hard to understand
- Another one: Jesus is living in my heart
- What would that mean to a non-Christian?
- And maybe you have noticed that some non-Christians are curious about some of those strange things we say, and others aren't – why?
- Something is going on inside of us and them during that interaction
- And the better we understand what, the more effective we will be at communicating with them
- God is writing a story in your life about Jesus
- He wants you to share that story with others
- It is a story they need to hear
- Let's pray and then get into the text for today
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **The Story Within!**
- Every person you interact with has a story
- And the better you understand their story, the more effective you can be at sharing the story of Jesus in your life
- Here in Luke 17, Jesus is nearing the end of His public ministry
- For about 3 years He has been telling the story of the kingdom of God
- To illustrate the story of God, Jesus has performed countless miracles
- Most people struggled with His message or misunderstood it
- That was especially true with the religious people of His time
- **Luke 17:20-21**

- The Pharisees considered themselves experts on the Scriptures and regularly discussed the coming of the Messiah and the setting up of the kingdom of God
- For three years, Jesus has been saying **Mark 1:14-15**
Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."
- The Pharisees were looking for a physical manifestation of the kingdom of God
- In their opinion, that meant Israel would be a blessed nation freed from the oppression of the Romans – who ruled them at that time
- They were looking for a political kingdom
- To them, the kingdom of God was God's people, the Jews, in God's place, the land of Israel, under God's ruler, the Messiah
- But Jesus came to establish a different kind of kingdom
- A kingdom within - What does that mean?
- Simply, it is someone who yields to God's authority, who feels a sense of loyalty to God, and identifies as one of His people through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ by obeying His Word
- When Jesus came the first time, He didn't come to establish a physical kingdom
- That's what everyone wanted, even the disciples
- Then Jesus the disciples something to watch out for
- **Luke 17:22-24**
- In the future, you are going to wish I was here with you, but I'll be gone **John 14:27-28**
Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. You have heard Me say to you, 'I am going away and coming back to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' for My Father is greater than I.
- Jesus told them He was leaving and then would come back again
- But no one is going to have announce the Second Coming – the whole world will know and understand instantly when Jesus comes back
- If someone invites you to come see the Messiah, don't go after them
- The worse this world or life gets for someone, the more they will long to see Jesus – don't be deceived
- But before that happens:

- **Luke 17:25**
- Turn to **Isaiah 53**
- This is one of the reasons the Pharisees had a hard time accepting Jesus as the Messiah – the idea of a Suffering Savior didn't line up with their theology
- They were looking for a conquering King to drive the enemies of God out of Israel
- They didn't understand that God's plan always included Jesus coming twice to this world
- In His Second Coming, He will come as King to establish the kingdom of God on earth
- Isaiah 53 is a prophecy about the coming Messiah
- **Isaiah 53:1-5**
- The whole chapter points to the first coming of Christ to die for the sins of the world
- Turn back to **Luke 17**
- The Pharisees expected a different Messiah
- The Messiah they were looking for was coming, but not until far in the future
- Jesus then gives two illustrations of what the world will be like when He does come back the second time
- **Luke 17:26-30**
- The Bible describes Noah and Lot as righteous men living in a wicked culture
- Both men were delivered by God before He poured out His judgment
- But notice, Jesus doesn't refer to their wickedness
- Instead, Jesus says they were going about their lives doing very ordinary and natural things
- It is not that they were ignorant of what was coming, they were indifferent - they didn't care about God or about He felt about their wicked, sin-filled lives
- Speaking of the Holy Spirit, Jesus said: **John 16:8**
And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment...
- When Jesus comes to establish the physical kingdom of God on this earth, people will be indifferent toward God and His Word and will

- Even a casual look around this world should tell you that we are living in days ‘as it was in the days of Noah and Lot’
- Judgment is coming to this world because of its wickedness and for rejecting Jesus
- And when it does, most of the world will be going about the normal things of life without any regard to God
- It is a little unclear who is being addressed in the next verse
- **Luke 17:31-33**

• This is very similar to what Jesus said in: **Mark 13:14-15**

So when you see the ‘*abomination of desolation*,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not” (let the reader understand), “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let him who is on the housetop not go down into the house, nor enter to take anything out of his house.

- ‘abomination of desolation’ = stature of Antichrist set up in rebuilt Jewish temple at mid-point of the seven-year tribulation – a time of God’s judgment falling on the world
- It is verse 32 that is a challenge to us as modern believers
- When God forcefully saved Lot, his wife, and two daughters from the destruction of Sodom – warned not to look back
- Lot’s wife looked back = pillar of salt
- She couldn’t imagine her life without the things of Sodom
- This a warning to not get too attached to the things of this world
- Peter addresses that very topic **2 Peter 3:10-13**

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of *persons* ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

- Part of me wishes it weren’t so, but judgment is coming to this world
- A question I am asked fairly regularly is how can you tell if someone really is saved?
- My response, I can’t tell, not with absolute certainty – but God knows – that is what the next verses tell us

• **Luke 17:34-37**

- This might be pointing to the Rapture of all true believers

- But the context of this section has been associated with judgment at Christ's Second Coming
- This might be the separation of sheep and goats in Matthew 25
- After Jesus comes, He will sort out all of humanity – the sheep – His people – true believers will enter His kingdom
- The goats – all unbelievers – cast away from God forever
- Notice in all three illustrations two people, in the same place, doing the same thing – looked the same on the outside
- But God knows what is in the human heart God knows those who are His people
- If you have repented of your sins and accepted Christ's sacrifice for your sins – then the kingdom of God is within you
- Only those who have the kingdom of God in them now will be allowed into the eternal kingdom of God – heaven
- Judgment is coming to this world for its sin and for rejecting the Savior, Jesus Christ
- As a believer I don't fear God's judgment
- Jesus took my judgment on the cross
- And just as God delivered Noah and Lot before He judged the world or Sodom, He will deliver me and all other true believers in the Rapture
- The question then is how should we live?
- God is writing a story in your life of Jesus Christ and the kingdom of God
- Would like to end with three quick things
- First one – **Live in the Kingdom of God now!**
- “Remember Lot's wife.” – she couldn't let go of what she had in Sodom and trust God with where He was leading
- Under point one, are three sub-points to live in God's kingdom now
- First one – **God's People** – to live in God's kingdom, you must be one of His people = repented of sins and received Christ
- Second – **God's Place** – Give God His right place in your heart – your highest affection and desire
- Third – **God's Rule** – Turn over the authority of your life to God
- First was – Live in the kingdom now!

- Second thing – **Do God’s will today!**
- The way we prove to the rest of the world that the kingdom of God is real is to do His will, not someday, but today
- Third and finally – **Bring God’s kingdom to others!**
- Judgment is coming to this world, maybe soon
- And most of the world is indifferent to that reality
- God’s people doing God’s will are going to try to shake some from their indifference – we do that through love and good works and sharing the gospel message
- As a believer in Jesus Christ it is very comforting to me that I am already living in the reality of the kingdom of God as we go through this wicked world
- And as my faith grows, I become bolder in sharing that truth with those who are indifferent to the coming judgment
- And my desire is that people would experience the love of God through faith in Jesus rather than experience God’s judgment for rejecting Jesus
- God is writing a story about His kingdom in your life – let’s live that story with passion and boldness
- **Pray!**