



STORIES OF LIFE!

The Gospel of Luke

A Story about Sacrifice!

Luke 18:18-34

Message #54 of 60 – S842

Sermon given on May 5, 2019



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

A Story about Sacrifice!

Luke 18:18-34

Opening Comments

- Turn to **Luke 18**
- We continue a study through the Gospel of Luke – **The Stories of Life**
- If you get an email from me, at the bottom you will see the Scripture **John 15:13**

Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

- As a former military man, I was familiar with the concept of sacrifice
- But because I served during peace time on a nuclear-powered submarine, there was little chance I was going to be called upon to make the ultimate sacrifice
- Every day in the military and with our first responders, men and women are placing themselves in harm's way
- And some of them will put their lives on the line to protect or save others

Sacrifice: the surrender or destruction of something prized or desirable for the sake of something considered as having a higher or more pressing claim.

- The basic idea of sacrifice is giving up something of value for something of real or perceived higher value
- In this morning's text, we find three stories of sacrifice
- Let's pray and then get into the text for today
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **A Story about Sacrifice!**
- Sacrifice is important in the life of a Christian
- We are called to be like Jesus – He lived a life of sacrifice
- If we want to grow up to be like Him, we need to be willing to live a life of sacrifice **Kathleen Norris**

Perfection, in a Christian sense, means becoming mature enough to give ourselves to others.

- Sacrifice is an expression of selflessness that glorifies God, blesses others and grows faith
- The problem is that selflessness is not natural for most people

- Our first story of sacrifice – **Sacrifice Denied**
- **Luke 18:18**
- This account is found also in Matthew and Mark
- There are a lot of positive things to say about this rich, young ruler
- It is interesting that this account follows immediately after Jesus told His disciples that ‘whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it’
- The rich, young ruler was the exact opposite of the helpless, humble child in the previous text
- His question to Jesus seems to be sincere
- Jesus responds first, not to the question or his sincerity, but about his faith
- **Luke 18:19**
- The Jews held to the belief that only God is good **1 Chronicles 16:34**
Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.
- Jesus knows who He is – He is the promised Messiah – God the Son in human flesh
- Jesus is asking, if what you see in Me is true goodness and only God is good, then who am I?
- **Luke 18:20-21**
- Jesus refers to five of the Ten Commandments from Exodus 20
- All of the ones that deal with other people, except for the last one – Do not covet!
- Jesus is about to shine a light on a dark spot in this sincere man’s heart
- **Luke 18:22-23**
- Mark records something that is important for us to better understand what Jesus is saying here **Mark 10:21a**
Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “One thing you lack...
- What Jesus told this man to do was an expression of love
- Not for the poor, though Jesus does love the poor
- This is an expression of Christ’s love for the rich, young ruler
- Something was standing in the way of this man experiencing eternal life
- And it was not his riches – it was his attitude toward those riches

- He was unwilling to sacrifice his riches so that he could inherit eternal life – his riches had a higher value in his heart than did eternal life
- God can and does bless His people with riches – not all of them, but some of them
- Paul warns us that riches are dangerous – **1 Timothy 6:10**
For the love of money is a root of all *kinds of evil*, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.
- In my own experience I have met more people who have a ‘love of money’ who don’t have any money, than those who do have money
- The issue here is not money or riches – it is what stands between you and God’s will for your life
- What are you unwilling to sacrifice to go deeper with God?
- ‘he became very sorrowful’ – Holy Spirit was working on his heart
- Did he respond later? Don’t know, but I hope so.
- **Luke 18:24-25**
- The camel was the largest animal in Israel – the Babylonians had a similar saying but used an elephant – figure of speech = impossible
- The rich tend to trust in themselves or in their riches – not child-like faith
- This shocked the disciples because it was a common belief that riches were a sign of God’s approval, favor, and blessing on your life
- **Luke 18:26-27**
- Salvation is always a miracle – no one going to heaven on their own efforts
- Before I was saved, I trusted in myself for just about everything
- The longer I am a Christian, the more I understand just how miraculous it was that Jesus saved me – my response is love, rejoicing, and service to Him
- The rich young ruler denied an opportunity to sacrifice something of temporal value for something of eternal value
- Peter then speaks up and says, we did make that sacrifice
- Second story of sacrifice – **Sacrifice Rewarded**
- **Luke 18:28-30**

- Getting to heaven on our own is impossible, and that impossibility is intensified by wealth – Christ’s sacrifice on our behalf makes it possible
- The rich young ruler was unwilling to sacrifice his wealth to follow Jesus
- Peter says we have sacrificed everything to follow you
- Jesus says, ‘Assuredly’ = literally ‘amen’ – This is a promise!
- Your sacrifice to follow Christ will not go unrewarded
- Luke’s gospel says ‘many times more’ – that’s good, but I think I like Matthew and Mark’s multiplier better **Matthew 19:29b**
...shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.

- Hundredfold = 10,000% return

- And notice in verse 30, this is not just a future promise of blessing in heaven – there is a now component to it also – ‘in this present time’
John 10:10b

I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.

- And while this could refer to money, there is much more to life than just money – much, much more
- The more we mature in our faith, the more we recognize how the things that God gives us are tools and resources He provides so that we can glorify Him more, bless others better, and grow faith deeper
- And if we will be faithful with a little, He will entrust us with more
- The rich young ruler denied the opportunity to sacrifice and therefore the reward
- The disciples had sacrificed and were promised rewards in this life and eternal life
- This text with the prediction of the ultimate sacrifice – **Sacrifice Foretold**

- **Luke 18:31-34**

- Jesus had come to this world to do something that only He could do **1 Timothy 1:15**

This *is* a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners...

- To save sinners, there was going to have to be a sacrifice
- Something precious was going to have to be sacrificed so that something of value to God could be saved – you and me

- On the night that I met Kelly, we were both at a party
- There was a theme for the party that included play money on all the tables
- As I was talking with her, I grabbed a couple of bills off the table and asked how much it would cost to get a dance – ‘A lot more than that!’
- I wanted to dance with this cute girl, so I went to every table at that party and picked every last bill – ‘Is this enough?’ rest is history
- God wants to save every one of His creation – He wants to save you
- If silver, gold, or precious stones could have done it – He would have done it that way
- If the whole earth could be valued and if it was enough, God would have given it
- If all the created universe was enough, He would have done it that way
- There was only one way
- Jesus made that clear in the Garden of Gethsemane right before He was betrayed **Matthew 26:39**

He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.”

- If there was any other way to save any one of us, God would have done it
- But there is only one way – Jesus had to die for our sins
- Only Christ’s sacrifice was enough to redeem us all from our sins
- The disciples struggled to understand what Jesus was talking about
- It was only after Jesus died and was raised to life again on the third day that they started to understand
- Jesus came to world to offer Himself as a sacrifice to save us all
- He, and God the Father, who sent Him expect us to respond to that reality
- Three quick responses of sacrificial Christians – first – **Release**
- The rich young ruler clung to his riches
- Sacrificial Christians hold all that they possess with open hands
- Offering it all to God – asking God to remove anything that gets in the way of the intimate fellowship communion that He desires with us
- Second response of sacrificial Christian – **Receive**

- Jesus promised rewards for faithful, sacrificial service to Him
- Accept that whatever He gives you as the reward you should receive
- Be content with whatever He puts into your hand and trust that your eternal reward is awaiting you
- Turn to **Ephesians 3**
- The third and final response of sacrificial Christians – **Remember**
- The better we understand what Jesus did for us, the easier it becomes to respond to Him sacrificially
- Paul speaks powerfully about this very thing
- **Ephesians 3:7-11**
- There is nothing in this world that I want more than to thank God for saving my soul
- There is nothing I wouldn't sacrifice to glorify Him more, bless others better, and grow faith deeper
- I believe that is precisely what Paul was saying in **Romans 12:1**
I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your reasonable service.*
- Release your grip on the stuff of this life – let God take away those things that will get in the way of growing your faith
- Receive anything He gives you with the contentment of a loving child of God
- Remember what Jesus did for you – let your life be a living sacrifice to Him
- The story God is trying to write in your life is a good story – it is the story of Jesus – it a story of glorious sacrifice
- **Pray!**