



Lesson Six – June 30, 2020

How Jesus Dealt with Sinners

The Woman Caught in Adultery

John 8:3 – 11

The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst they said to him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus stood up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more."

How does Jesus deal with her sin?

C. S. Lewis: "Prostitutes are in no danger of finding their present life so satisfactory that they cannot turn to God: the proud, the avaricious, the self-righteous, are in that danger."

If you know that you are a sinner, if you fully recognize that you fall far short of God's ideals, if you are aware that your heart can be and often is a dark place of sinful thoughts and passions and desires—be encouraged. You are far more likely to fall onto God's grace than those who cannot see their need.

Matthew 21:31:

Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you.

The Rich Young Ruler

Mark 10:17 – 31

As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him.

"Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

¹⁸ "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone. You know the commandments: 'You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother.'"

²⁰ "Teacher," he declared, "all these I have kept since I was a boy."

²¹ Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

²² At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.

²³ Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!"

²⁴ The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."

²⁶ The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, "Who then can be saved?"

²⁷ Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God."

²⁸ Then Peter spoke up, "We have left everything to follow you!"

29 Truly I tell you,” Jesus replied, “no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel³⁰ will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—along with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life.³¹ But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”

What is Jesus saying to this man by saying that “no one is good except God alone”?

Jesus launches into a recitation of some of the commandments, specifically:

- Don't murder
- Don't commit adultery
- Don't steal
- Don't lie
- Don't defraud anyone
- Honor your parents

What is Jesus' purpose in reminding the man of these laws?

The man claims he observed all those commands from his youth. Is he lying? Self-deceived? Or does he believe he is really telling the truth? Paul claimed to be blameless with respect to righteousness under the law.

Philippians 3:6: as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.

Was Paul saved by keeping the law? Can anyone be saved by keeping the law?

Jesus says he lacks one thing and tells him, “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

What one thing does he lack?

Jesus had put his finger on the one area in his life where he was not willing to obey the commandments – to put no other gods before him. Never before had he considered his

wealth to be the thing that came between him and eternal life—knowing God. Indeed, having wealth was considered to be a great advantage, as is evidenced by the disciples' reaction to what Jesus said: "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!"

Let's go back to the rich man's question that initiated this whole incident: "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" What can anyone *do* in order to *inherit* anything?

Finally, keep in mind that for an inheritance to be given and experienced, someone has to die. How can this be? Thanks be to Jesus, the good teacher, that all things are possible with God!

Zacchaeus

Luke 19:1 – 10

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. ² A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. ³ He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. ⁴ So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. ⁵ When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." ⁶ So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. ⁷ All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner." ⁸ But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount." ⁹ Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰ For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

In the case of the rich ruler, Jesus leaves the door ajar. It is difficult for rich people to be saved, but God can save them. But here we see Zacchaeus, a rich man who finds salvation. What's the difference in the two?

Jesus conveys a divine purpose when he says that he “must” stay at Zacchaeus’ house. He must do so “today,” conveying a sense of urgency. Jesus did not come to Jericho by happenstance. He came to save Zacchaeus.

Just as Zacchaeus exposed himself to ridicule by climbing a tree, so Jesus exposes himself to criticism by visiting Zacchaeus’ house.

Jesus asked the rich ruler to sell his possessions and to give them to the poor. He asks nothing but hospitality of Zacchaeus, but Zacchaeus volunteers to give half of his wealth to the poor and to make fourfold restitution to anyone whom he has defrauded. He is not trying to win salvation, but is instead responding to the presence of the Savior. He is bearing “fruits worthy of repentance”.

Jesus does not save Zacchaeus in isolation, but declares, “salvation has come to this house.” Zacchaeus’ salvation benefits his whole family. It also benefits the entire community as he gives money to the poor and restitution to those whom he has defrauded.

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). Never judge any person hopeless. Whether murderers, terrorists, racists, or rapists, Christ seeks to save us all.