

Chronological Week 44

October 26: Luke 12 and 13

A crowd assembles around Jesus. He warns His disciples about the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. What is said in the dark will be heard in the light. What has been whispered will be proclaimed from the rooftops. We might be able to hide things from other people, but we cannot hide anything from God! Jesus also explains that when they acknowledge Jesus before men, then He will acknowledge them before the angels of God. However, if they deny Him before men, Jesus will do the same. At the end of the day, we must ask ourselves who we would rather please, God or man.

A man approaches Jesus, trying to get his brother to give him his half of his inheritance. Jesus asks why they would ask Him to arbitrate in such a way. The LORD tells the parable of the foolish rich man. This man has a great crop from his field, so much that he does not have enough room to store it all. So, he tears down his barns to build bigger ones so that he can enjoy the rest of his life. However, that very night God demands his life from him. The man hoarded his goods, thinking he could keep it all to himself. At the end of the day, none of it mattered because he died that very day.

Some people come to Jesus concerning the plight of some Galileans. Pilate had taken some of these Galileans and used their blood to mix with sacrifices. Jesus asks if they think these Galileans were more sinful than the other Galileans. He explains that everyone is sinful. Everyone must repent or they will perish.

Pharisees warn Jesus to get out of that region because Herod is looking to kill Him. They are not really looking out for His best interests. Instead, they are trying to shuffle Him along outside of their area so that they do not have to deal with Him.

October 27: Luke 14 and 15

Jesus is at the house of a leading Pharisee on the Sabbath. While He is there, a man afflicted with a swollen body approaches Him for healing. Jesus asks the Pharisees if it is lawful to help on the Sabbath or not. They have no answer for Him. He also asks which one of them would leave their son or their ox in a well instead of immediately pulling him out on the Sabbath. They keep silent because they know that they do not have a proper answer for Him.

Again, great crowds gather around Jesus. They pledge their loyalty to Him, but He warns that if they want to follow Him, they must pick up their own cross daily. As believers, we are called to die to self. Are we picking up our cross daily and following Him?

The tax collectors and sinners approach to listen to Jesus. This draws criticism from the Pharisees and scribes. How would these people learn the need for repentance? This criticism is ridiculous. It is like criticizing a homeless person at a job fair or an obese person at the gym. These Pharisees were expecting these people to clean up their act before coming to Christ.

That's as dumb as taking a bath before taking a shower. Jesus is the One that can forgive them of their sins and create that clean heart within them.

October 28: Luke 16 and 17

Jesus teaches the parable of the dishonest manager. This manager had been charged with squandering his boss's possessions. The manager offers no defense for the loss. The manager knows that he is fired and needs a way to support himself. So, he sets a way to make sure that his former clients will be more hospitable to him. He forgives a lot of their debt. When the manager's boss finds out about it, he praises him for his astuteness.

Our Lord tells the story of the rich man and Lazarus. The rich man enjoyed a great life. He had plenty and feasted lavishly every day. Meanwhile, Lazarus sat at his gate, longing to be filled by the rich man's table scraps. Both men die. The rich man goes to Hades where he is tormented by fire. Lazarus goes to heaven. The rich man looks up and begs Abraham to have Lazarus dip the tip of his finger in water and touch his tongue to relieve him. Abraham denies the request, reminding him that he did not take care of Lazarus while they were on earth. We are often told that life is short so we should enjoy it. However, eternity goes on forever, so we should prepare for it. What are we doing to take care of those in need?

Jesus gives a stark warning about offenses. Offenses will come, it happens, it is part of life. Jesus shows great concern for the "little ones". It would be better for a millstone to be thrown around the offending party's neck and be thrown into the sea rather than to cause a little one to stumble. If their brother sins, they are to rebuke him. If the brother repents, then they are to forgive him. No matter how many times he sins, as long as he repents, they are to forgive him. The fact is that we fall into sin regularly and seek forgiveness. God forgives us our sins when we confess them and repent. Since He is quick to forgive us, we should be quick to forgive as well.

On His way to Jerusalem, Jesus enters a village with 10 men suffering from a serious skin disease. They call to Him, asking for mercy. Jesus tells them to show themselves to the priest. As they go, their skin disease is healed. Only one of the men returned to Jesus to thank Him for healing him.

The disciples ask Jesus when the Kingdom of God is coming to earth. Jesus explains that it will be like in the days of Noah. No one knew that a flood was coming, except for Noah. So, they continued eating, drinking, and giving in marriage. No one knows the day or hour. Rather than look to the sky waiting for Jesus to come back, it's best to set about being His hands and feet in our communities.

October 29: John 11

Lazarus, a friend of Jesus dies in Bethany. The word of his death makes it to Jesus and the disciples. When Jesus finds out about it, He says that the sickness will not end in death, but instead will glorify God. He stayed two more days before departing to Bethany. The disciples push back and remind Jesus that they had tried to kill Him once, why would He go back there again? Jesus will not be deterred and is headed to Bethany whether they will accompany Him or

not. Thomas, who will later become known as “doubting Thomas” makes a fantastic statement of faith to the other disciples. He says, “Let’s go so that we may die with Him.” Thomas knows that even if Jesus is going back there to die, the best place he can be is with Jesus.

They arrive at Bethany and Jesus is met by Martha. She knows that if Jesus had come earlier then her brother would not have died. Jesus responds that Lazarus will rise again. Martha responds with an affirmation in the belief of the end time resurrection. Martha goes to Mary and tells her that Jesus is looking for her. Mary echoes the same sentiment from Martha, her brother would not have died if Jesus had been there. The LORD asks where Lazarus has been buried. They lead Him to the grave, and He cries. Jesus knows that Lazarus is coming back, but He still mourns at the fact that His friend has died. We know that our brothers and sisters in Christ will rise again, but that does not take away the sadness of death. When we lose someone we love, it is okay and normal to feel sorrow over it.

Jesus orders that the stone covering the grave be removed. Martha argues, stating that Lazarus is already decaying. The stone is removed, Jesus approaches the tomb and says, “Lazarus, come out!” Lazarus came out of the tomb wrapped in burial cloth.

October 30: Luke 18

Jesus tells the parable of the tax collector and the Pharisee. A tax collector goes to pray. He is so ashamed that he doesn’t even look to heaven. Instead, he beats his chest and asks that God turn His wrath from him, a sinner. Meanwhile, the Pharisee takes his stand, looks to heaven and prays to God thanking Him that he is not like other people, greedy, unrighteous, and adulterous. Jesus explains that the tax collector is the one that was justified. As believers, we are not better than anyone else. We are still sinful, and we should never exalt ourselves over those that do not know Jesus. Instead, we should remain humble and thankful that God does turn His wrath from us.

October 31: Matthew 19 and Mark 10

The LORD teaches about divorce. In those days, people were just handing divorce certificates over to their spouses for whatever reason. (Kind of like we see today). Moses allowed them to do this because of the hardness of their hearts. Jesus explains that they should stay with their spouses. However, He does give some guidelines on when it is okay to break the vows, sexual immorality being one of them. God does not expect us to stay in a marriage where we are being abused or taken advantage of. What He is warning about is the flippant breaking of the marriage vows because they have little differences.

A rich young man approaches Jesus and asks Him what he must do to have eternal life. Jesus tells him to obey the law. The young man says that he has done all of that. Jesus explains he still lacks one thing. He must sell his things and give to the poor and then he can follow Jesus. The man walks away sad because he had a lot of possessions. The man wants to follow Jesus, but the things of the world hold him down and prevent him from giving his life to Christ. I hope and pray that the things of this world do not keep us away from The LORD.

Jesus and the disciples head to Jericho. As they were leaving, a blind beggar cries out to Jesus, asking that He have mercy on him. Jesus has the man brought to Him and asks what he wants. When he responds that he wants to see, Jesus tells him to go his way, his faith has healed him.

November 1: Matthew 20 and 21

Jesus tells the parable of the vineyard workers. Ultimately, this parable is about people that come to faith late in the game. The vineyard owner agrees to pay laborers one denarius at the beginning of the day. A few hours later, the man sees some other men standing in the marketplace doing nothing. The owner offers them a denarius to work in his vineyard. He does this throughout the day. No matter what time the man agrees to go work, the pay remains the same, one denarius. The men that began working earlier in the day get mad that these guys are getting paid the same as the ones that did less work. The owner reminds them that they agreed on one denarius. It is his money and his business so he can do as he chooses. Some of us have been walking with God a long time. Others have come to know Him very recently. Ultimately, we all receive the same pay, eternity with Him.

James and John's mother approach Jesus asking that her sons sit at His right and left side when He reigns. It was not just the disciples that were jockeying for position. Even some parents were trying to put their kids on top. Jesus informs her that she does not know what she is asking. He is going to suffer and die, are they ready?

Jesus approaches Jerusalem by the Mount of Olives. He tells two disciples to go into the village and get a donkey that has never been ridden before. If the owner asks what they are doing, they are just to simply say "The LORD needs it".

Jesus enters Jerusalem riding on the donkey. The people spread their coats and palm fronds before Him as He goes. They proclaim Jesus as the Son of David. He comes in the name of The LORD. This same crowd that is cheering Him on today will be the same crowd demanding His blood later that week.

The LORD tells another parable of a vineyard owner. This speaks to what is about to happen to Jesus. The vineyard owner plants a vineyard, puts up a fence, and digs a wine press and watch tower. He leased it to the tenant farmers. When the grape harvest drew near, he sent his servants to collect the fruit. They beat one, killed another, and stoned the third. The owner then sends his son, thinking that they will respect him and give him the fruit. The tenants do not. Instead, they take the owner's son and kill him to take his inheritance. The chief priests and the Pharisees hear Christ parables and begin to plot His arrest.

November 2: Luke 19

Zacchaeus, a chief tax collector in Jericho, is trying to get a view of Jesus when He comes to town. Unfortunately, he is so short that he cannot see over the crowd. He climbs a tree and when Jesus sees him, He tells him to hurry and come down because He must stay at Zacchaeus's house. The crowd complains because tax collectors were considered the worst of the worst.

Zacchaeus pledges to give half of his possessions to the poor and pay back four times anyone that he might have extorted money from.

We read about Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. As He is entering the city, the crowd praises Him joyfully. Some of the Pharisees tell Him to rebuke His disciples. Jesus refuses, explaining that if the crowd is silent, then the rocks would cry out praising Him. Jesus weeps over Jerusalem. He sees a rough future for this great city where it is surrounded by enemies on all sides. Their enemies will crush them and will not leave one stone on another.

Later, Jesus goes to teach in the temple complex. While there, the chief priests, scribes, and elders ask Him by what authority He teaches. Jesus answers their question with another question. "Was the baptism of John from heaven or from men?" The group discusses it amongst themselves. If they say that it was from God, then they will be asked why they did not believe John. If they say from man, then the crowd will stone them because the crowd believed John was a prophet. They remain silent, so Jesus refuses to answer their question.