



DON'T LOSE HEART

Luke 18:1-8

Don't Lose Heart

- Have you ever read or heard a news report that caused you to question its accuracy?
 - It just seemed that the material was lifted out of context or maybe left out important details and lost its connection to reality
 - Today we call that “*fake news*” and it causes mistrust and disillusionment
 - Disillusionment = a deep feeling of disappointment resulting from the discovery that something is not as good as one believed it to be

Don't Lose Heart

- The Kingdom of God is subject to the same type of “*fake news*” and disillusionment, and Jesus warns us about it
 - **Matthew 7:15 NIV**, “Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.”
 - In other words, they want to tear your faith apart from the truth and reality of Scripture
 - First record of this is **Genesis 3:1 NIV**, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’”
 - **John 10:10 NIV**, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.”

Don't Lose Heart

- The Kingdom of God is subject to the same type of “*fake news*” and disillusionment, and Jesus warns us about it
 - **Matthew 7:21-23 NIV**, 21 “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ 23 Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’”

Don't Lose Heart

- Their chief tool is misinterpreting or misrepresenting God's Word
 - Les Crawford, "When reading Bible verses, applications are many, but interpretations are not."
 - Right application can only be determined once the correct interpretation has been discovered. Skipping the first step is a recipe for misapplication and possibly spiritual harm."

The coming Kingdom

- In **Luke 17** Jesus was being grilled by the Pharisees about the timing of the Kingdom of God coming
 - **Vs. 20 NIV**, Once, on being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come – What are they asking?
 - **Vs. 22-24 MSG**, “22-24 He went on to say to his disciples, “The days are coming when you are going to be desperately homesick for just a glimpse of one of the days of the Son of Man, and you won’t see a thing. And they’ll say to you, ‘Look over there!’ or, ‘Look here!’ Don’t fall for any of that nonsense. The arrival of the Son of Man is not something you go out to see. He simply comes.”

The coming Kingdom

- In **Luke 17** Jesus was being grilled by the Pharisees about the timing of the Kingdom of God coming
 - **Vs. 26-27 MSG**, “26-27 “The time of the Son of Man will be just like the time of Noah—everyone carrying on as usual, having a good time right up to the day Noah boarded the ship. They suspected nothing until the flood hit and swept everything away.”

The coming Kingdom

- In **Luke 17** Jesus was being grilled by the Pharisees about the timing of the Kingdom of God coming
 - Jesus knew the days coming would be difficult for His followers
 - Not just hard days but faith breaking days without the hope of His return
 - Jesus follows this up with a parable to teach his disciples never to give up, never to lose heart
 - The importance of persistence and resilience
 - He knows that life involves disappointment, loss, injustice, and persecution—all very good reasons to give up and lose hope

Scripture – Luke 18:1-8 NIV

- **Luke 18:1-8 NIV**, 1 Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. 2 He said: “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. 3 And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, ‘Grant me justice against my adversary.’
 - **MSG**, ‘My rights are being violated. Protect me!’
 - Here was a judge who had all the authority and a woman who had none
 - It was his job to protect her being a widow
 - She kept persistently appearing before the judge pleading

Scripture – Luke 18:1-8 NIV

- Luke 18:4-5 NIV, 4 “For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or care what people think, 5 yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won’t eventually come and attack me!’”
 - MSG, “I’d better do something and see that she gets justice— otherwise I’m going to end up beaten black-and-blue by her pounding.”

Scripture – Luke 18:1-8 NIV

- **Luke 18:6-8 NIV**, 6 And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. 7 And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? 8 I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”
 - **MSG**, “So what makes you think God won’t step in and work justice for his chosen people, who continue to cry out for help?”
 - Jesus is drawing a contrast between a judge who doesn’t care and a God who loves tremendously
 - **MSG**, “But how much of that kind of persistent faith will the Son of Man find on the earth when he returns?”

We are planted in a dark, faithless, unjust world, but don't lose heart

- Some faithful, God-fearing Jews were forced into exile when Israel was carried away into Babylon because of Israel's sinfulness
 - They were in Israel but not of the current ways of Israel
 - This doesn't seem right or just, but they were caught up in the world they lived in
 - Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were four of them
- We as born-again children of God are like them, living in an unjust world, so dark events can come into our lives that appear unjust
 - We live in a sinful world that should hate us

We are planted in a dark, faithless, unjust world, but don't lose heart

- Jesus is telling us that we should, “always pray and not give up”
 - Not give up what?
 - Jesus will return
 - God will bring justice to this hopeless unjust world
 - Your faith in the truth of God's Word
 - Your security as believer
 - Your persistent faith
- Vietnam Experience

Persistent faith rests upon persistent prayer

- Hear Jesus' words, "always pray" or you risk giving up
 - Paul said to, "*Pray without ceasing*" or be in a constant mind of prayer
- Prayer is much more than asking God for something
 - In prayer we fellowship with God
 - Search our hearts
 - Give thanks
 - Worship God's majesty
 - Repent of our sins
 - Submit to God's will and timing

Persistent faith rests upon persistent prayer

- But a part of prayer is making requests of God
 - We have the privilege of inviting God to intervene in our broken world and bring his Kingdom in
 - **Matthew 6:10 NIV**, “your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven”
 - The wisdom of God
 - The strength and power of your kingdom
 - The glory of God be seen
 - The only way this world gets fixed is for Jesus to return and return He will

God's kingdom, justice will come and come suddenly

- The phrase that trips so many up is, *“he will see that they get justice, and quickly”*
 - When we reduce this promise to a single event, we miss what Jesus is saying
 - We know of churches destroyed in other countries without justice seeming to come
 - We read about pastors in prison because of proclaiming Jesus, where is the justice in that
- The judgement of God may begin in a way and time we cannot perceive but it is moving in that direction

God's kingdom, justice will come and come suddenly

- Our enemy will whisper in our hearts, *“Where is your God’s quick justice promised? You see you can’t really trust Him.”*
 - **2nd Peter 3:3-4 MSG**, “3-4 First off, you need to know that in the last days, mockers are going to have a heyday. Reducing everything to the level of their petty feelings, they’ll mock, “So what’s happened to the promise of his Coming? Our ancestors are dead and buried, and everything’s going on just as it has from the first day of creation. Nothing’s changed.”

God's kingdom, justice will come and come suddenly

- Then our enemy will say, *“Where is God’s quick justice promised? You see you can’t trust Him.”*
 - **Luke 17:26-27 NIV**, “26 “Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. 27 People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all.”
 - Noah worked up to 120 years to build the arc and during that time he witnessed to the people (**2nd Peter 2:5**)
 - Suddenly God sealed the door to the arc, sent rains from above, sent floods from below, and God’s judgement came as proclaimed

God's kingdom, justice will come and come suddenly

- When Jesus returns it will be just as sudden without the time to make decisions
 - No counting to three like we do with children
 - **Luke 17:34-35 NIV**, “34 I tell you, on that night two people will be in one bed; one will be taken and the other left. 35 Two women will be grinding grain together; one will be taken and the other left.”
 - This will happen just as Jesus said

Don't lose heart

- Jesus is coming back just like He said
- Here is Jesus' question to you, "*when the Son of Man comes, will he find present, persistent faith in you?*"
 - Will you be the one left in bed or in the field?
 - Will you be left or taken?
 - Will you rise in newness of life God had prepared for you?
 - Larry Norman, "I Wish We'd All Been Ready"



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