

Luke

Carefully Investigating the Gospel ... Together

SSBC Luke Bible Study #68

Take this Bible Study home and use it to guide your exploration of the scripture passage that next Sunday's sermon will be focused on.

Passage: Luke 18:18-30

Sermon Date: Jan 14, 2007

What Must I Do to Inherit Eternal Life?

Good friends, we have an important question facing us.

But first, why do I call you 'good' friends? I may not even know you. However, you and I are connected because you are reading this, and in so doing you are seeking or at least open to knowing Christ better. That is good, and it unifies us. It's good to be with you this way.

Now, what must we do to inherit eternal life? Can we earn it? Can we perform and meet God's perfect standards? Will He let us into His heaven if we score high enough on his Ten Commandments test? Or on His top-two list? Love God with all my heart, mind, soul, and strength. Love my neighbor as myself? How'm I doing?

So, as the rich young man in this week's passage did, we each need to turn to Jesus and ask "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" And then listen very closely to his answer. You can find much of His answer to your question in Luke 18:18-30. Before you turn the page to begin this study, first turn your heart toward the God who wrote this for you and to you, remembering who He is, and asking for His help in understanding His Word.

These studies are produced by South Shore Baptist Church in conjunction with our weekly sermon series. Studies are distributed one week prior to the sermon as inserts in the church bulletin and are also posted at <http://sermonhouse.com/SSBC>. Sermons are also recorded and can be listened to later by visiting that same website. Have feedback or questions? Contact studieditor@southshorebaptist.com

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Bible Study:

1. Read this week’s Bible passage and use the chart below to note your observations and any questions you have.

Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p>¹⁸ A certain ruler asked him, “Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”</p> <p>¹⁹ “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone. ²⁰ You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not give false testimony, honor your father and mother.’”</p> <p>²¹ “All these I have kept since I was a boy,” he said.</p> <p>²² When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”</p> <p>²³ When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was a man of great wealth. ²⁴ Jesus looked at him and said, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!</p> <p>²⁵ Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”</p> <p>²⁶ Those who heard this asked, “Who then can be saved?”</p>	

Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p>²⁷ Jesus replied, “What is impossible with men is possible with God.”</p> <p>²⁸ Peter said to him, “We have left all we had to follow you!”</p> <p>²⁹ “I tell you the truth,” Jesus said to them, “no one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God ³⁰ will fail to receive many times as much in this age and, in the age to come, eternal life.”</p>	

2. Read also the parallel passages in Matthew and Mark and note the differences and additional insights you gain about this incident.

Matthew 19:16-30

Mark 10:17-31

3. Based on the three gospel accounts, summarize what you know about the man who comes to Jesus.

4. Next, use this chart to **interpret some key observations**.

a. Select a few of your observations & questions from pages 2-3 that you find most interesting or important. Rewrite these below, and interpret and apply them using the columns to the right.

b. For each observation, begin to interpret by asking yourself these kinds of questions:

- What does it mean?
- Why is this important?
- What does this tell me about the Father? Jesus? The Holy Spirit?
- Are there other scriptures that could help me understand this?

Observation What does it say?	Interpretation What does it mean?

5. Now consider how you can **apply** the Word to your life. Look for:

- **S**ins to avoid
- **P**romises to believe
- **E**xamples to follow (remember "SPECK")
- **C**ommands to obey
- **K**nowledge to share

Don't just write things to write them – listen carefully to God's Word and what he seems to be teaching you, and look for relevant things that you're truly stirred to do. Then as you do them, God will help you learn, grow, and help others grow.

Application How do I apply what it means?

Look Closer:

6. Why do you think Jesus responded to the man by first challenging his use of the word “good”? Hint: Back then, only God was called “good”, based on the scriptures that refer to him that way (1 Chr 16:34, Ps 34:8).

7. What do the commandments Jesus noted in verse 20 have in common? (Mt 19:18-19 provides a helpful addition.) Why might Jesus have chosen to list these particular ones for this man?

8. What does the man’s response in verse 21 reveal about his spiritual condition, his understanding of sin and the way to eternal life?

9. What did the man do as a first response to Jesus’ challenge to him to sell everything and give the proceeds to the poor? (Look at Matthew or Mark’s account.) Why did Jesus let him respond this way, rather than trying harder to win him over?

10. Is it possible that he later did sell his possessions, give the money away, and follow Jesus?

11. Which of the following statements do you agree with, and why?

This passage means that we must each sell all our possessions and give the proceeds to the poor.

God is telling each of us to look at how much we do to help the poor.

God is telling those who hold too tightly to their possessions to give them away.

12. Jesus pinpoints this man’s primary spiritual obstacle – that which is separating him from God.

a. What is your primary spiritual obstacle these days?

b. What do you think Jesus would ask you to do in order to get past this obstacle?

13. If someone asked you right now, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” – how would you respond?

14. Jesus challenged the rich young ruler to let go of his abundant possessions. He similarly challenges each of us to surrender fully to him whatever we might be holding onto tighter than we hold onto God.
- a. Have you ever surrendered everything (your life, your possessions, your relationships, your career, etc.) to God? If not, what is keeping you from doing that right now? (If you'd like to do that, you may find the sample prayer of surrender below helpful.)
- b. Is there anything you need to do in order to tangibly surrender something specific to God?

Prayer of Surrender

“Father, everything I have, everything I am able to do, even everything I am – it is all from you. You made me, you provide all that I have, and you are in complete control. In light of this, I surrender to you and yield whatever control I have pretended to have. My possessions, my career, my family & friends, my future – these are all yours. Your will be done, Lord.”

But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead. (Philippians 3:7-11)