

18:1 This was the context in which Jesus told them of **“the need to pray continually and never lose heart”**.

- (NB)
- what Jesus asks for is **consistent and persevering prayer**...
 - without giving up!... because of discouragement

Jesus compares two opposite characters in many of his parables:

e.g. Lk 15	older / younger brother	{ older brother Dives Pharisee	} no love
Lk 16:19-31	Dives and Lazarus		
Lk 18:9-14	Pharisee and Publican		

The Judge : had **“no fear of God”** (ie) unbelieving and irreligious



Prov 1:7 says **“The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom”**

: had **“no respect for people”** (ie) without shame

(ie) no love for God or man - **∴ no justice**. He broke the great commandment to love God and neighbour: Deut 6:4-10; Lev 19:18

The Widow : is poor / helpless / no money or power...
she has nothing except her cries for justice...

Mosaic Covenant: Deut 10:18 : **“It is He (God) who sees justice done for the orphan and widow...”**

- The Covenant demanded the care of the orphan, widow and stranger...

18:3 **The Widow’s Plea**: **“she kept coming to him...”** She persevered so as to wear him down with her pleas... and she did!!

- (NB) **“For a long time he refused”** but she **persevered**. She did not give up. She did **not** take ‘no’ for an answer: she did **not** lose heart...

18:5 But her **persistence paid off** – simply because she was bothering him!

18:6-7 **Lesson**: God will always give justice to the poor / widow...
God will delay – for the period of Church history – before He will bring **FINAL JUSTICE** to the earth.

AFTER the persistent prayer of the Church... the poor widow left alone after Jesus’ death / resurrection

18:8 Jesus wonders if the Church **will** persevere in faith and love and in constant prayer until He comes...
“But when the Son of Man comes will he find any faith on earth?”

The Pharisee and the Publican: 18:9-14

Jesus' parable **to the Pharisees**

This parable stresses a **correct relationship** with God.

We have **two opposite characters again** to make the point for us.

(i) **The Pharisees**: were **consistently** portrayed by Luke as:

- a) "rejecting God's Will" for them (7:30)
- b) "justifying themselves" 10:19; 16:15, etc.

→ They represent all **the Leaders** including lawyers and Scribes... where self-knowledge might lead to repentance.

(ii) **The** { **Tax Collectors**
Publicans } represented all sinners and were **consistently** portrayed in Luke as:

- a) Being open to Jesus, the Prophet
- b) Listening to Him
- c) Converting and joining the K.O.G.

18:11

a) **Their Attitude to God:** **PHARISEES**

"They prided themselves on being virtuous and despised everyone else"

(i) He prayed **to himself**... not God - just his own mental dialogue / **not** prayer

(ii) He prayed with an eye to the publican – congratulating himself!

- this is not prayer! **Pray is "I – Thou"**
- God has to be involved!

(iii) This man is a **WIND-BAG** – congratulating himself.

(iv) This man has "I" trouble! He is in the centre of his **little** world...Lk 6:39-45

(v) Since God has been replaced by himself – **AUTOLATRY!** This is the worship of self...

(vi) The Pharisees' opinion of themselves is elitist and self-congratulatory.

- They compared themselves to **"the rest of mankind"** judging **them** to be **rapacious**

(ie) greedy, insatiable, extortionate, venomous, unjust, adulterers!

No Love of Neighbour... in other words: worthy of Hell Fire!!

What a judgement of others – while glorifying themselves!

- Jesus' opinion of the Pharisees is **the exact opposite!!**

11:39 : *"you are filled with extortion and wickedness!"*

16:14 : They were lovers of money.

16:15 : Jesus said this self-glorification was an abomination in the sight of God.

18:12
than

"I fast and pay tithes of all I get". The Pharisees were more observant of minute rules of the Law the public was

- They claimed to do 'over and above' everyone else... and probably did!

Problem

God was not impressed! God's Will is **clearly** stated in

Amos 6:8: *"this is what the Lord asks of you – only THIS – that you should ACT justly, LOVE TENDERLY and walk HUMBLY with your God"*

- The Pharisees failed on **each** of these points!!



**FRANCES
— HOGAN —**
Spreading the Gospel to the ends of the Earth

18:13

THE TAX COLLECTOR :

Pays no heed to the Pharisee or his unloving judgement of him...
He doesn't judge the Pharisee! **Remember the woman in Lk 7:36-50**

- (i) He is here to speak to **GOD** only –
- (ii) He showed humility in the Presence of the All-Holy God.
 - He stood afar off .: acknowledging his sinner status
 - He kept his eyes lowered – unlike the Pharisee who **stood** and 'looked God in the eye' so-to-speak.
 - He beat his breast as a sign of repentance: (Cf. Lk 23:48)
 - And he simply cried out to God for Mercy, for forgiveness of his sins

18:14

Since God Alone is the Judge of Humanity Jesus declared that **this repentant sinner** was acceptable to God – but the **proud one** merely **INCREASED** his **DEBT** to God! **God alone can make us righteous.**

- (NB) Jesus repeats a statement He made in 14:11: it is the **DIVINE REVERSAL**.
- the world does not appreciate humility or lowliness of heart
- • yet Jesus, Divine Word Incarnate, showed the way here: Cf. **Phil 2**

Entering the Kingdom Now: 18:15-34

Children: 18:15-17: The Pharisees and Lawyers and Scribes found it difficult to enter the Kingdom...

- But it is simple for children – who have humility – who know their frailty – who know how to persevere in getting things from their parents - who have no possessions
- but who have **tons of love** and openness to others...
 - who do not self-reflect or judge the Human Race!

Luke 8:48: ***“Anyone who welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me”***

Luke 18:16 : ***“Jesus called the children TO Him”***
“Let the little children come to me and DO NOT stop them”

18:17

Jesus says that all of us must accept His teaching about the K.O.G. as simply and humbly as a child accepts divine teaching from its parents.

Lk 11:52 The lawyers prevent people from entering the K.O.G. because they took away the key of Knowledge.

Lk 13:24 ***“Try your best to enter by the narrow door – many will try but not succeed”***: Cf. 18:25

The Rich Aristocrat 18:18-23

Jesus has been discussing how to enter the K.O.G.

18:18 This Rich Man is one of the Leaders – usually shown opposed to Jesus in Luke.
He approaches Jesus in the **same way** as the Lawyer in Lk 10:25

Lk 10:25 // 18:19 **“Master (10:25); Good Master (18:19) what must I do to inherit eternal life?”**

18:19 **Why do you call Me good?** The reader knows that Jesus is the divine/human Son of God.

- If this ruler had acknowledged Jesus’ divine Sonship he could correctly call him **“GOOD”** since God **alone** is good in an absolute sense.
- Without such faith one must question his motivation in addressing Jesus like this.

18:20 When the **lawyer** in **Lk 10** asked Jesus **this same question** Jesus **asked him** to tell Him what the Law said – **but here** – **Jesus tells** the Rich Man what the Law says!

Those Commandments in regard to loving one’s neighbour!

- loving parents: looking after them in old age
- loving wife: not sinning against her in adultery
- loving neighbour: not stealing, killing or bearing false witness against them

18:21 The Rich Man claimed he had done his duty in this regard.
(ie) he was ‘perfect’ regarding the Law ∴ **he must be a Pharisee!**

18:22 Jesus, seeing his sincerity and efforts to do God’s Will **now calls him to discipleship!**

- To love God beyond all things: Deut 6:4-10
- To lose all to find all: 14:33
- Give to the poor everything you own – as Jesus does

(NB) 14:33: “None of you can be my disciples unless you give up all your possessions”

- By comparison Jesus only asked the Pharisees to invite the poor to their banquets (14:13)

THE CALL : **Come, Follow Me!** Grace was calling:

- This demands a higher commitment to God than **just** keeping the Commandments
- It demands leaving relationships and possessions: Lk 5:11, 28
- It demands taking up one’s cross daily: 9:23
- His treasure would be in **Heaven** – eternal 18:23

(NB) This would be **a complete REVERSAL** of this man’s way of life!

18:23

The man became extremely sad **FOR** he was **very rich**.

- He was sad at the prospect of changing from being a 'somebody' to a 'nobody'!!
- He was sad at the prospect of losing wealth, **power**, influence

(NB) **Power** and Possessions keep him closed to the call of God. He is bound to the earth and
∴ under the influence of the "Prince of this world".

THE DANGER OF RICHES: 18:24-27

Jesus points out that wealth is **a huge obstacle** to coming into the Kingdom: you rely on yourself
- not on God.

- The K.O.G. **was in formation** during Jesus' lifetime
→ the sinners – the poor - the little ones were joining Jesus
... but the Rich and Powerful stayed away: Cf. Magificat
- Problem for { the Rich Pharisees: || **Deut 28:1-8** lists all the blessings of the Covenant
the Disciples || for the faithful

So, they considered wealth and possessions to be **a GIFT from God**.

- (NB) • Jesus seemed to be contradicting the Scriptures...
Deut 28 says that God will bless us, our homes, properties **if we remain faithful to him**.

But, they presumed that all the blessings were **terrestrial!**

- Jesus offers spiritual blessings and benefits.

Hence the question: **"who can be saved?"**

Remember Lk 13:23-24 **"Lord, will only a few be saved?"**

Salvation seems even harder as Jesus explains the KOG.

18:27

"Things that are impossible for men ARE possible with God"

Cf. Lk 1:37 Angel Gabriel to Mary: ***"Nothing is impossible with God"***
Gen 18:14 ***"Is anything too hard for the Lord?"***

Luke has made it very clear that **salvation** comes from **God's Power** and is received by faith:
Lk 7:50; 8:12, 48, 50; 9:24, 56; 17:19

PETER'S RESPONSE: 18:28-30

What about us? **We have done** what you said to the Rich Man!

- **What happens now?** Jesus replied that any sacrifice made **for the sake of the kingdom** will be rewarded **many times over**:
 - a) in this world
 - b) in the world to come – eternal life.

(ie) The benefits of being **in** the K.O.G. far outweigh those of the world.
Why? - they are given by God / are eternal.