

Title: WHO GETS TO ENTER? LUKE 18:9 – 19:10
(Chatham, NJ; 10/27/13, AM) [E – Narrative Analysis]

Theme: As Jesus advances toward the consummation of his work and the establishment of the Kingdom, his stories and encounters with different people illuminate what it takes to enter.

Purpose: To clarify what it takes to enter the Kingdom of God and to present the Gospel message.

Introduction:

1. Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem; he knows he will be killed; he knows this will bring about the Kingdom of God.
2. We begin with a story about who is acceptable to God.
3. This part of the narrative examines a number of people who are eligible to enter the Kingdom.

The Pharisee and the Tax Collector (9-14)

- Pharisee: I've done everything right
- Tax Collector: I've done everything wrong
- Pharisee: See my righteous acts
- Tax Collector: I got nothing
- Pharisee: I'm better than others, like this tax collector (Be careful of saying, "I'm glad I'm not like the Pharisees.")
- Tax Collector: "Have mercy on me, a sinner"
- Conclusion: "Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

The Children (15-17)

- People wanted Jesus to touch their infants presumably to confer a blessing
- Luke leaves out Jesus' indignation at the disciples
- Is it the children's transparency that Jesus loves?
- Children haven't learned to be anything but themselves
- They haven't developed any hidden agendas yet
- The Kingdom belongs to such as these, 16
- You must become like a child: not be dependent on others, not be immature, but be without deceit
- Whereas the Pharisees assumed a false image of self-righteousness, the tax collector had no reason to assume he was anything but a sinner

The Rich Ruler (18-30)

- A good man still lacking, 22
- Keeping the commandments versus "Come, follow me"
- This wasn't just about money; it was about worldly attachments
- He had to give up power and prestige
- Though not in a hypocritical way like the Pharisee, he still had a standing to uphold
- An image and way of life that he would have to relinquish
- "Who can be saved?" was the disciples' response to the fact that he was a good man
- Those who leave the world behind and follow Jesus are the ones who will be rewarded, 29-30, not those who merely obey the Law (the apostles could explain this later)

Jesus Foretells His Death (31-34)

- This is something like an interlude in the midst of these events
- Jesus explains that the world will reject him
- His death will represent the same transformation that the lives of the disciples must undergo in order to live in the Kingdom

The Blind Beggar (35-43)

- Mark calls him Bartimaeus
- Unlike the Pharisee and the Rich Ruler, he has nothing to lose
- He “sees” Jesus, “Son of David” and cries out despite the crowd
- Far from being offended, Jesus heals him
- He becomes part of the troupe that enters Jerusalem

Zacchaeus (19:1-10)

- Salvation has come, 9
- The crowd grumbled, 7
- Zacchaeus repented, 8
- How could they be mad about this?
- He demonstrates repentance by making genuine, concrete changes
- The Son of Man came for this very purpose, 10

Conclusions:

1. The humble receive God's acceptance; the proud are rejected.
2. Jesus calls us to leave our worldly ways behind.
3. It is God who restores us through the death of Christ; it is not by our effort.
4. The Gospel demands that we change (repent) our sinful ways.
5. Salvation is bestowed on those who do this.
6. Receive his death, reject our sin, live the life of the Kingdom.
7. Christ calls us to this.