

REDISCOVER JESUS, PART 69 – “FAITH IN JESUS THE KING”

LUKE 18:31-43

Jackson Crum

Personal Introduction

Hi everyone. If you don't know me, I'm Jeff - one of the pastors at HMCC of Jakarta. And it's my privilege to be preaching the Word of God for us today.

Sermon Series Introduction

We're currently in Part 69 of our sermon series called "Rediscover Jesus," where we're going through the Gospel of Luke together.

So let's get right into today's sermon: "Faith in Jesus the King."

Introduction

Now, a couple of weeks ago was Halloween (and I'm not sure how big it is in Indonesia). But in the US, where I grew up, Halloween is kinda a big thing... you'd have all of these houses and amusement parks decorated in Halloween themes.

And years ago when I was younger, my family and I decided to go to one of these amusement parks. We went to Universal Studios. And we thought that it'd be a good idea for us to walk through one of their attractions called "House of Horrors." (So basically, this is one of those attractions where you'd have to walk through the place, and then people in costumes would jump out of nowhere to surprise you.)

Everyone in my family wanted to do it so I just followed along. But imagine... as soon as I walked in, I saw this dark pathway (and I couldn't see anything - I couldn't see where the path was heading. I couldn't see what's around me). And I'm thinking, "there's no way I'm going through this! I can't see what's ahead! I can't see if something bad is gonna happen!"

And I'm pretty sure that the rest of my family was thinking the same thing. Except for my dad. He was the one - in the front - leading the way. And even though I couldn't see anything, at that moment... I still *followed* my dad. Why? Because I had *faith* in him. I trusted my dad, and I had faith that he's going to take us to the end safely. And in the end, he did. Praise God!

Now that shows that I truly trusted and had *faith* in my dad. Because if I didn't, then there's no way that I was gonna follow him into a dark pathway. I'd turn to follow something else!

<pause>

Now, I feel like having faith in Jesus is kinda like this. There will be times when our faith in him will be tested. So during those times when our lives feel like a dark pathway, and we can't see what's ahead in our lives, and we can't see if something bad is gonna happen or not... in those moments, will we still have faith in Jesus, and follow him? Or will we turn to other things?

Scripture Introduction

- Last week, in the previous passage, we learned that the Kingdom of God belongs to those of us who are "like" a child in the way that we need & seek help from our God.
- And then we're given 1 negative example of someone who does not have child-like faith:
 - We saw a rich ruler who didn't have true faith in God because his trust was in his own capabilities and possessions.
- Today, we'll see two examples of those who do have true faith in the Lord:
 1. We'll see how the 12 disciples were able to continue to follow Jesus despite not understanding everything that Jesus is saying.
 2. We'll see a blind beggar who has faith in Jesus despite what he cannot yet see.

Scripture Reading

Let's read Luke 18:31-43.

³¹ And taking the twelve, he said to them, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. ³² For he will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon. ³³ And after flogging him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise." ³⁴ But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said.

³⁵ As he drew near to Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging. ³⁶ And hearing a crowd going by, he inquired what this meant. ³⁷ They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." ³⁸ And he cried out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" ³⁹ And those who were in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" ⁴⁰ And Jesus stopped and commanded him to be brought to him. And when he came near, he asked him, ⁴¹ "What do you want me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, let me recover my sight." ⁴² And Jesus said to him, "Recover your sight; your faith has made you well." ⁴³ And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

This is God's Word.

The One Thing

***Faith in Jesus means following him
even when we don't understand nor see everything***

Overview

3 lessons about what it means to have faith in Jesus:

- I. Faith in Jesus means trusting the one who understands everything (vv.31-34)
- II. Faith in Jesus means persevering in crying out to Jesus as King (vv.35-42)
- III. Faith in Jesus means choosing to follow him over other things (v.43)

I. Faith in Jesus means trusting the one who understands everything (vv.31-34)

So verse 31 starts with Jesus telling his 12 disciples, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem.”

Now, why is Jesus and the disciples heading to Jerusalem?

- Back in Luke chapter 9, we know that Jesus was actually performing miracles in the region of Galilee, but then he started to head toward Jerusalem because he knew that it was almost time for him to be taken up to Heaven (he knew that it was almost time for his mission on Earth to come to an end).
 - And Jesus knew that it would come to an end in Jerusalem (where he would be crucified on the cross, and die for the sins of man)
 - And Jesus must know that the end is coming very soon now. He and his disciples are getting quite close to Jerusalem (they’re only about 30 km away at this point).

And as they’re getting nearer, Jesus then tells his apostles exactly what they can expect once they finally reach...

Look at verses 31 - Jesus said, “everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished.”

So, when they reach Jerusalem, they can expect that what’s written about *the Son of Man* will be accomplished.

- So here, Jesus is referring to the prophecies written in Scripture by the prophets (in what we now know as the Old Testament).
 - And the Old testament actually has a lot of these prophecies.
- If we look at the book of Daniel (which was written about 500 years before Jesus!), one of Daniel’s visions was that of someone “like the *son of man*” coming down with the clouds of Heaven. And Daniel saw that this “*son of man*” would be the one to rule over all the nations of the world forever (Daniel 7:13-14).
 - And so the title “Son of Man” (that Jesus is using to refer to himself here) is a Messianic title referring to God’s promised King (who’s prophesied by Daniel to rule over the world for eternity).

Now, let's look at verses 32-33. Jesus would continue to clarify how the prophecies regarding the Son of Man would be fulfilled: "For he [the Son of Man] will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon. And after flogging him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise."

If we look at the book of Isaiah - about 700 years before Jesus, the prophet Isaiah prophesied that [the promised King] will be despised and rejected by mankind. And that he will take up our pain and bear our suffering, he will be pierced for our transgressions, and he will be crushed for our iniquities (Isaiah 53:3-5).

- So the promised king of the world (who's prophesied in Daniel) will also be the suffering servant on behalf of mankind; they're the same person.

Now, please note that these are just some examples of what's written about the Son of Man by the prophets. There's many more.

But the important thing about what Jesus is saying here is that all those prophecies will finally be accomplished in Jerusalem.

- Because in Jerusalem - Jesus will be the suffering, servant King - he will be delivered to the Romans, he will be mocked, shamefully treated, spit upon, whipped, and he will die on the cross.
- And on the third day, he will rise.

That's what it means for the writings about the Son of Man (by the prophets) to be accomplished; it means Jesus' death... and resurrection.

<pause>

But as Jesus is telling his 12 disciples all this this, verse 34 says this:

"But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said."

In their minds, the apostles may be thinking, "what?!"

- "What do you mean... you, the Son of Man, will be mocked, spit upon, flogged/whipped, and then killed? And then you'll rise again? What do you mean?"

They completely could not understand what Jesus was talking about.

<pause>

Now, in the present day, we have a fuller picture of God's redemptive plan for mankind - we now know that Jesus Christ will be crucified on the cross, and on the third day, he will be resurrected.

But, at that time, Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection hadn't happened yet. And the disciples could not imagine something like that happening to their promised King.

- Even though this was actually the third time that Jesus had told them about his death.

<pause>

Now, just like the disciples here, many of us may also feel like there's still a lot of things that we don't understand and there's still a lot of questions that we still have about the Bible, about who God is, and about this world that He's created:

- Why is there evil? Why is there pain and suffering? And why do His people go through hardship?
- These are complicated questions, for sure.

This sermon won't be covering those topics, but let me ask a different question:

- What does it tell us about our God - what does it tell us about Jesus - that he knew exactly what will happen to him in Jerusalem (he knew exactly that he'll experience pain, suffering, humiliation, and even death by crucifixion), yet he willingly still headed to Jerusalem?

Well, let's take a step back... what would happen if Jesus didn't die on the cross? Humanity will have to take on their own punishment themselves...

- In the passage immediately before this, Jesus just emphasized that no one is good except God!
- The reality is that we're all sinners (because everyone has fallen short of God's glorious standard) (Romans 3:23-34).
- And because of our sin, what we deserve is eternal punishment in Hell - eternal pain and suffering.
 - So then what would happen if Jesus didn't die on the cross?
 - Then we would all go to Hell to receive the punishment that we deserve.
- But, God - by His grace and mercy - chose to take on the punishment Himself.
 - Jesus Christ - the Son of God, our promised King - is to be our suffering servant; our perfect substitute on the cross, taking on the punishment that we deserved - so that our sins may be forgiven.
 - So that those who believe in him - who place their faith in him - will not perish but have eternal life (that's the Good News of Jesus Christ)!
- So then what does it tell us that Jesus knew exactly what's going to happen to him in Jerusalem, yet he still headed there?
 - It shows and proves that God loves us. That he cares for us so much that Jesus would willingly take on our pain and suffering himself, so that we may be saved. That's what it tells us.

And so if there's one thing that we want to make sure that we understand, it's this! It's the Gospel of Jesus Christ - that saves us!

<pause>

Let's let that sink in for a moment. But let me now ask another question... Jesus is telling his disciples about his death before it's happened! Now what does that tell us?

It means Jesus is completely in control and knows everything! He's not surprised by what's to come! God is not surprised! In fact, it's all actually part of God's plan to redeem mankind! It's even been prophesied hundreds of years since before Jesus was born!

Our God is all knowing and knows everything.

And I believe that's why... even though the disciples could not understand everything that Jesus just said to them, they were able to continue to have faith in him and follow him.

Because even though they do not understand everything themselves, they know that Jesus does.

So that means that having faith in Jesus does not mean understanding everything on our own, but it means trusting the one who does understand everything.

<pause>

Now, how about us today? Perhaps it's easy for us to have faith in Jesus when our path seems clear; when everything in life is going according to our plans and expectations.

But then what happens when that path seems to get darker; when something (that's not according to our plans) happens (and when we can't understand what's happening)? What happens then?

- What happens when you're having difficulty getting a job?
- When your career is not progressing?
- When you're not able to find a spouse (or have kids) by a certain age?
- When your financial savings and investments are not doing well?
- When someone you love is going through medical issues?
- And when you're having conflicts with your spouse, children, other family members or friends?

Then would you still be able to remain steadfast in your faith in Jesus?

Brothers and sisters, let's be comforted in knowing that even during the moments when our lives seem to be out of control, God is still in control (He knows what'll happen). And His plans for us is not to harm us, but is for our eternal good.

<pause>

Even at this moment in the text... when the disciples did not understand what Jesus was saying, Jesus was still working for their eternal good.

- Actually, if we look back to verse 34, it says that the meaning of what Jesus was saying was hidden from the disciples.
- So in accordance with God's sovereignty, it was not yet time for them to understand.

But in the right timing - in God's timing - they would come to understand the meaning of what Jesus said. Because later on, after Jesus' death and resurrection, the meaning of what Jesus said would finally be revealed to them. And as they realize that God is truly in control over His plans and that He understands everything perfectly, their faith in Jesus was strengthened all-the-more.

So, first, what does it mean to have faith in Jesus? Faith in Jesus doesn't mean understanding everything, but trusting the one who does. And second...

II. Faith in Jesus means persevering in crying out to Jesus as King (vv.35-42)

Let's look at verse 35 - after telling his disciples about his death, Jesus and his disciples drew near to the city of Jericho, where there was a blind beggar sitting by the roadside.

And during those times, those who were poor, and those with a permanent physical ailment (such as blindness) were seen as the outcasts of society. There was not much welfare made available for them. And so this man was doubly an outcast - he was both poor and blind. And in order to survive, he had to beg for money and food.

And so he does so at a strategic location - near the entrance to the city, where many Jews from different regions would be passing by, as they make their way to Jerusalem around this time for Passover.

But then, all of a sudden, this blind beggar starts to hear more and more footsteps, and these footsteps are going faster and faster, and he starts hearing more and more people chattering among themselves. He can't see what's going on but he knows that a crowd (bigger than usual) is going by, but he doesn't know why that's happening. So he asks the crowd what's happening.

Look at verse 37 - the crowd told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by."

- So the noises that he heard were people rushing to see Jesus as he passes their city. So that means that these people knew exactly who Jesus was - they must've heard news of his teachings and miracles. And they're rushing to see this person.

And this blind beggar also knows who Jesus is because he then cried out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

But notice what the blind beggar calls Jesus - *Son of David*. To him Jesus was no ordinary person or teacher or healer.

- The other citizens called him "Jesus of Nazareth." And that's a common title such as "Jeff from California."
- But calling him "Son of David"... now that actually means something.

And that's because "Son of David" is another Messianic title from Old Testament Scripture (from the book of 2 Samuel), which prophesies that the promised King will come from the line of king David.

- So this blind beggar has heard of Jesus and he believes that Jesus is the promised King whom he's been waiting for.
- So he's crying out to his King for mercy!

But then look at verse 39 - the people who were there rebuked him, they told him to be silent.

But then that didn't stop him. And he perseveres, and cries out even louder, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

So again, he repeats, "Son of David!" / "My King, have mercy on me!"

So even though there were people trying to get him to stop. He persevered, and continued to cry out to Jesus.

Now, let's imagine... he's sitting by the roadside, and there's many people standing around him and towering above him; all probably shouting at him and telling him to be quiet.

- If I'm him, I'd be tempted to just be quiet.

But then why didn't he just stop? Why did he persevere to keep going?

He repeats - 2 times - that Jesus is the Son of David. And he continues to cry out to him. He's persevering... and I believe that he's able to persevere because he's confident that Jesus is truly who he believes he is.

So how did this blind beggar even come to know Jesus as King?

- Well, maybe he overheard multiple people talk about Jesus' teachings, and he slowly got to know who this Jesus is.
- And then maybe he overheard more and more people talk about Jesus' miracles - about him feeding 5,000 people with 5 loaves and 2 fish, casting out demons, and healing lepers.
- And maybe he listened to the reading of Scripture at the synagogue.
 - And he starts to connect the pieces together - that this Jesus is the promised King whom the prophets were writing about.

So that means that his faith is not blind faith in a random person, and he's not just putting his faith in someone he doesn't know anything about. But his faith is specifically in the person of Jesus Christ. He knows exactly who he's putting his faith in.

Now look at verse 40 - As the blind man continued to persevere and cry out to Jesus for mercy... Jesus heard him, and he stopped. And he sees the blind beggar and he has mercy upon him. He then commanded him to be brought to him.

And when the blind beggar was brought near to him, Jesus asked, "what do you want me to do for you?"

And the blind beggar said, "Lord, let me recover my sight."

- Notice how he calls Jesus "Lord."

- And what he's asking from Jesus is different from the money or food he'd usually ask other people passing by. He knows this is no ordinary man, this is the promised King! And so he asks for something that only Jesus can do - he asks for his eyesight to be recovered.

Verse 42 then says: "And Jesus said to him, "Recover your sight; your faith has made you well."

And then immediately, the blind beggar recovered his sight (Imagine... him opening his eyes to finally see his King face-to-face; and he can finally see the crowd of people that's surrounding him). Imagine the emotions this man must be feeling.

As he personally experienced Jesus' mercy, whatever amount of confidence he had in Jesus, must've grown!

<pause>

We can actually learn something from this blind man. Because he's able to persevere in his faith through hostile conditions because of his confidence in who Jesus is.

So then how can we do the same? How can we persevere in our faith? How can we grow in our confidence in Jesus? Well, it's by personally knowing who Jesus is - by personally knowing the one who we're placing our faith in.

<pause>

Now, when I look back at my own life, this was also how my confidence in Jesus grew; it was by knowing him more personally.

- The more time I spent in God's Word (which I'd encourage us to do), the more I got to know God's goodness. And then the more I realize that I've been experiencing His goodness all along, and He's been with me (guiding me) all my life.
- Even during the moments when I couldn't see anything but darkness:
 - Even when I started to question God's existence and stopped reading the Bible back in university.
 - Even when I was burnt out from studying, and I decided to not pursue my dream of becoming a physician.
 - Even when I didn't get accepted into schools as a physician assistant.
 - Even when I moved to Indonesia to work with my extended family, only for me to leave the family business.
 - And even when the relationships in my life were then breaking apart.

Those were dark times for me. I couldn't see how things would get better. I didn't know who I could cry out to. But even then, I see now that God was with me. During that time when I felt hopeless in Indonesia, that's when God actually led me back to His church.

- And when I listened to the preaching of God's Word... that's when I realized that I've been blind to the truth my whole life. My eyes were finally opened to see the Truth.

- That I'm a sinner in need of God's mercy.
- And now I see that God has been leading me back to Him.
- And even when I've abandoned him, He hasn't abandoned me.
- And as I've now personally experienced His grace and mercy, I learned that He's the one I can always cry out to (in prayer), and He'll always hear me.

Since then, I've seen with my eyes how God has been working, not only in my life, but in other people's lives. I see others being led to see that Jesus is King. And as I continue to see other people's hearts transformed and people growing, that continues to help me grow in my confidence in my faith: that God is real, Jesus is truly King, and all the Bible says is true.

So in order to grow in our confidence in Christ, we can get to know him more personally through spending more time in God's Word (the Bible), and we can also live out our faith together as a church because as we see that we're not alone, and see others are living out their faith, then we can help one another grow in our confidence in Jesus...

And when our confidence in our faith grows, then our faith is able to persevere. And again, we can do that together as a church.

<pause>

But it's ironic. This blind man was blind most - or all - of his life, but he had spiritual sight. But me... I've had my physical sight all my life, but I was once spiritually blind.

And I'm afraid that some of you here today are also spiritually blind (like I once was).

- You may be able to see me right now standing here, and you may be able to see all the people in this room, but you may be having difficulties seeing who Jesus truly is.
- But I'm not saying this to discourage you, but to encourage you...

If you do not yet know who Jesus is, and have not yet put your faith in him. I encourage you to get to know him... our Savior King who died on the cross for our sins, so that we may be saved.

- Please talk to me or anyone around you after our service.

<pause>

Now notice - in verse 42 - what Jesus says to this man, "your faith has made you well." Or in the original language, this could also be translated as "your faith has saved you."

What Jesus is talking about here is more than just the saving of his eyesight, he's talking about the saving of his soul - salvation; eternal life.

So this man, even when he was still blind, he already had spiritual sight - he could already see very clearly that Jesus is King! And he had true faith in his King, Jesus. And was able to persevere in his faith. And this faith in Jesus is what will save us from eternal punishment in Hell, and will lead us to the Kingdom of God.

So, again, faith in Jesus means persevering in crying out to Jesus as King.

III. Faith in Jesus means choosing to follow him over other things (v.43)

Let's look at verse 43 - after he recovered his eyesight, this once-blind man chose to follow Jesus, glorifying God.

Let's imagine that we're this blind man who just received his eyesight...

- You've spent most - if not all - of your life in darkness.
- So once you receive your eyesight, what would you want to do?
 - Perhaps visit your family and friends and see how they look? Perhaps travel the world, sightseeing?

For this man, I imagine that there also must've been hundreds of things that this man wanted to see. Things that he wanted to do and experience that he couldn't before.

- But... what did he decide to do as soon as he received his sight?
- He decided to follow Jesus!

Well, if it wasn't clear before, this proves that this man's faith in Jesus is true and real.

Because this blind man could've just been crying out with his mouth, "Jesus is the Son of David! Jesus is the promised King!" But then after he's healed, he goes off on his own, not glorifying God but thinking about himself, living and enjoying his own life. But that's not what he did. He actually followed Jesus.

Now, in contrast... if we look back at the passage immediately before this (about the rich ruler).

- The rich ruler verbally said that he's followed all of God's commandments since his youth. But then when he was told to sell his possession, give them to the poor, and follow Jesus... he became very sad.
- So his faith in God was not real. His true faith was in himself - in his capabilities to do good and his security was in his own possessions.

<pause>

Now, if you call yourself Christian, are you following Jesus? Look at the rich ruler and look at the 12 apostles and the blind beggar.

- There's a difference between someone who says they're Christian and that they have faith in Christ, and those who actually do. And how can you tell the difference? Look at what they're truly following? Are they following Jesus or something else?
- Are you following Jesus or something else?

We've all received blessings from God (perhaps even that one thing that we've asked God for). But after receiving what we've asked for, do we continue to worship the giver or do we start to forget about who He is and start worshipping the gift instead?

- Whether it's our eyesight, or career, relationship, health, or financial blessings.
- What do we end up following?

And if someone were to look into how you lived the past week (including the times you thought no one was looking), would they see someone who is following Jesus? Or would they see someone who's living a life that's no different than someone who doesn't profess faith in Christ?

<pause>

I hope that when others see our lives, it's clear to them that our faith is in Jesus:

- That when they see us going through difficult circumstances that we can't fully understand nor see clearly, that they may see that our trust is still in Jesus, as we continue to live confidently.
- And that when our faith is tested, they see us persevering - crying out to our God in prayer.
- And when they see what we value and worship, it's clear that there's something different about us because we follow Jesus.

<pause>

Now, I'm thinking about this once-blind man following Jesus. And I'm thinking - What will he see if he follows Jesus all the way to Jerusalem?

- He will see Jesus (his promised King, his healer) mocked, shamefully treated, spit upon, flogged/whipped, and killed. His King crucified as the suffering servant.
 - And that's what this man would see not too long after receiving his sight.

But, remember what Jesus says in verse 33 - it's not going to end with Jesus' death - "on the third day he will rise."

- Perhaps this blind man was one of the disciples that Jesus appeared to after his resurrection. How amazing that would've been for this man as he sees his resurrected, glorified King.

And as we follow Jesus through the ups and downs, the things that we see and experience may be difficult at times (just like the things this man might've seen), but how amazing will it be when we get to the end. When we get to see Jesus face-to-face, and he welcomes us to Heaven, saying, "well done good and *faithful* (full of faith) servant."

<pause>

I pray that we may have faith in Jesus even when we don't understand nor see everything (at this time). And let's be reminded again:

- Faith in Jesus doesn't mean understanding everything, but trusting the one who does.

- Because God is the one in control. And this God is not only sovereign, but He loves us deeply. And His plans for us is for our eternal good.
- Faith in Jesus means persevering in crying out to Jesus as King.
- And true faith in Jesus is proven by following him over other things.

To help us with our next steps, here are a couple of life applications...

Life Application

1. Spend time in God's Word - personally get to know our Lord.
 - Spend time to personally get to know our God - our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Spend time to get to know who we're placing our faith in.
 - Christianity is not blind faith. We know exactly who we're placing our faith in.
2. Cry out to Jesus - pray for God to help us grow in our faith as we spend more time in His Word.
 - As we spend more time in His Word, pray that God will help us grow in our confidence in Him so that we may persevere to the end (even when we may not currently understand everything that's going on in our lives).

The One Thing

***Faith in Jesus means following him
even when we don't understand nor see everything***

Let's pray.