



Sermon Growth Guide

October 5, 2025

Peace

Luke 18:18-30

Key Verse: Luke 18:27: “Jesus replied, ‘What is impossible with man is possible with God.’”

Big Idea: Peace comes through surrender to Jesus.

Foundations

There’s an old hymn which begins, “All to Jesus I surrender, all to him I freely give.” The rich young ruler asks Jesus, “...what must I do to inherit eternal life?” Instead of giving him something to do, Jesus asks what he is willing to surrender. What Jesus asks of the young man seems impossible. Give up his wealth, status, and power in order to follow Jesus. In fact, the young man walks away sad, because he is not able to surrender his wealth. But Jesus tells his Disciples there is good news. Our English translations miss the real implications of Jesus’ response: “What is impossible with man is possible with God.” We tend to think of something like scientific possibility. But Jesus is actually talking about power. What humans don’t have the power to do (*adynata* in Greek), God does (*dynata*). It’s the Gospel of grace in a nutshell. But the surprise is that God’s power is needed not to help us do something, but to help us surrender. If we want to inherit eternal life, we need to rely on God’s power to help us let go of whatever is holding us back from following Jesus. Instead of looking to wealth, power, youth, or our own righteousness, we trust Jesus with our lives, both now and in the age to come. In our sermon series we are asking the question, how do we satisfy our desire for peace? Peace comes through surrender to Jesus. This might be the hardest thing we are ever asked to do. But don’t worry. What is impossible for us, is possible for God.

Understanding God’s Word

Read Luke 18:18-30 together. Why do you think Jesus challenges the young man when he addresses Jesus as “good”? Consider Matthew 6:24. Does this verse from the Sermon on the Mount shed any light on our story in Luke?

Applying God’s Word

Do you find doing something for God or giving up something for God more challenging? If Jesus were talking with you, is there anything in your life he might ask you to surrender in order to follow him more fully? Is there anything which might be coming between you and the peace of Christ?

Witnessing God’s Word

Jesus was always clear that coming to him involves surrender. In Luke 14:25-33, when great crowds of people are following him, he warns them to “count the cost” before becoming his disciple (Luke 14:28). But as Jesus tells his disciples at the end of our passage for today, it will be worth it, both now and when we receive eternal life in the age to come. (Luke 18:29-30) This can be a challenge for our witness to others. We tend to underplay the cost when we tell others about Jesus. How can both our lives and our words witness to the good news that whatever we surrender in order to follow Jesus will be worth it?

Yes, we are in a sermon series revealing the secrets of How to Get What You Want. How do you get what you want? So far, the answer has been to let Jesus govern your wanting. Go to Jesus with what you want. That might not have been the answer you were looking for! Today in How to Get What You Want, we want Peace. There are at least three ways we want peace. We want world peace. Few of us can do much of anything about that. Pray. Try to elect wise leaders and pray for them. We want outer peace. We want our city, our community, our church, our family and friends and kids to be at peace. Don't we? And we want inner peace. My own heart. My own spirit to be like a quiet lake, so still, reflecting the beauty of the heavens, infinite beauty and peace. How do you get what you want? If you want peace, what you really need is the Prince of Peace. You need Jesus.

Jesus met with a man troubled by money, searching for peace. Few things trouble us as much as money troubles us, you know? Eight out of ten Americans report anxiety about their financial situation. 80%. Most of this room. Money troubles our hearts. Dave Ramsay knew that. That's why he calls his program Financial Peace University. Peace is right in the middle. Jesus knew that. Jesus talked about money almost more than any other subject. It's one of Jesus' most common subjects. Money troubles our hearts. "A certain ruler asked him, 'Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?'" (Luke 18:18) He's looking for peace and assurance that his life is on solid ground, his eternal soul. Jesus gives him a hard time. "Good Teacher" is just a greeting of honor, not a philosophical claim. But Jesus messes with him, "'Why do you call me good?' Jesus answered. 'No one is good—except God alone.'" (Luke 18:19) It's like if you said, "Dr. McConnell," and I replied, "Why do you call me doctor? I'm not a

surgeon. No one heals except God alone." He's messing with him. Jesus immediately challenges the man's settled presuppositions about good, better and best. What exactly is good? What is worthy of being called "good"? The best and highest good? The man's whole ladder might be off.

The answer to gaining entry to the eternal and holy kingdom is clear: do everything right all the time with zero errors. If you intend to fit into the Holy Kingdom, you must be holy. "You know the commandments: 'You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, honor your father and mother.'" (Luke 18:20) "No problem," says the man. "'All these I have kept since I was a boy,' he said." (Luke 18:21) Now, remember, he's talking to Jesus. I'm glad you never killed someone and buried them in the back yard, but have you ever raged at someone and killed them in your spirit? I'm glad you never cheated on your wife or had sex outside of marriage, but have you adulterized another woman with your eyes? Jesus leaves off of that for the moment. The man thinks he is good. So, then, why is the man troubled? Why doesn't he have peace? "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.'" (Luke 18:22) Nowhere does Jesus make this a universal directive. This isn't something Jesus asks of all followers. But this man needed to be challenged. His troubled heart was the product of a troubled relationship with money. Money was on the throne of his heart.

How do I know? Because when faced with losing wealth and gaining Jesus the man kept the money and turned away from his Savior. "When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was very wealthy." (Luke 18:23) He left extremely sad. He

walked away deeply disturbed. Peace, which for a second hovered over his house like a hawk, did not come down and land but flew off forever. Trouble remained, with the money. The same can happen to you. Jesus is not giving financial advice here; Jesus is reordering the man's loves, Jesus is reordering the man's priorities. Money is on the throne. Kick it out and let Jesus sit there! Or, remain disturbed, troubled, worried, anxious, defensive, protective, jealous, covetous, and without peace. It's hard. "Jesus looked at him and said, 'How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.'" (Luke 18:24-25) The Eye of the Needle was the name of a passage just large enough for a person to pass through to enter the walls of Jerusalem after hours when the gates were locked shut.

Jesus meant it is really hard. Money takes the first place in our lives too much. We will start talking about giving to the church over the next few weeks, making commitments to invest in what God is doing here for 2026. That's a way to slay the dragon. Give it away. It's hard. Peter wanted to know he was on the right side of the game. "Hey, we gave everything, remember?" "Peter said to him, 'We have left all we had to follow you!'" (Luke 18:28) Yes, Peter. And here is the truth: you can't outgive God. You can't outgive God. "'Truly I tell you,' Jesus said to them, 'no one who has left home or wife or brothers or sisters or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much in this age, and in the age to come eternal life.'" (Luke 18:29-30) You can't outgive God.

This is not financial advice. This is a question of what is on the top of your heart. Will you find peace with an idol, a

false god, at the top of your heart? No. No way. Money is never enough. Alexis de Tocqueville wrote of the young American nation, "In America I have seen the freest and best educated of men in circumstances the happiest to be found in the world; yet it seemed to me that a cloud habitually hung on their brow, and they seemed serious and almost sad even in their pleasure. The chief reason for this is that... [they] never stop thinking of the good things they have not got." There is always more to want with money. It cannot be a first thing. Only God can be first. Only Jesus can be first if you are to have peace. C. S. Lewis said, "Put first things first and we get second things thrown in: put second things first and we lose both first and second things." Do you want peace? Put Jesus first. That's what Jesus was offering this man. Take your wealth and toss it out. Give it all. This man knows money. There can be more money down the line. This young man knows how to make value. He's not going to starve. Toss it all out the window, into the hands of those who need it. And, do what? "Then come, follow me." Jesus in first place.

Because he refused to put Jesus in first place, he walked away from peace. He walked away very sad, very disturbed, very troubled, very unsettled, back into the dark clouds of a disordered heart. What's first? What's at the top? "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" (Luke 10:27) Disordered hearts created disordered worlds, disordered people who create disordered societies, and disordered societies do not know peace. Want peace? How do you get what you want?

Imagine it was your job to bring peace to this world. What strategy would you employ? I want world peace. I want societies of peace. I want inner peace. Maybe that's the start. If there were enough people of inner peace to infiltrate the disordered societies of no peace, disturbed lack of peace, maybe they could be a positive influence. In a city like Colorado Springs, what if we just sent out 1,000? Just a room like this, just this group right here. And we said, "Now look. You are peace people. You are peace warriors. You might be warriors; you might be Soldiers; you might be Police Officers and business leaders and teachers and parents...you may have some conflictual conversations out there. But inside, in your heart, you are as peaceful as a mountain lake reflecting the glory of the heavens. When you go out, go out in peace." Would that make a difference? Would that be a good strategy? This is exactly what God is doing. You are, if you are in Christ, you are an emissary of the peaceable Kingdom of God. What do you need to do? You need to toss out whatever is up on the throne of your heart and replace it with Jesus and be kept in perfect peace. Isaiah says, "You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you." (Isaiah 26:3) In the old language, "Thou dost keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusts in thee." (Isaiah 26:3 RSV) You keep, Lord, you keep in perfect peace the one who is stayed on thee. Keep your mind on Jesus. Turn your mind on Jesus. Jesus first. Jesus above all. God over all. And in the middle of a twisting, tumultuous, terrorized world – you, you will be a haven, a still place, a settled place, a shelter of peace.

Action. Application. What to do with all of this. Turn to Jesus. Do you want peace? Then you want Jesus. Do you want world peace? Then you want Jesus, Lord of Nations, King of Kings. "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father,

Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end." (Isaiah 9:6-7) You want Jesus. Do you want outer peace? Peace all around you in your city, in your church, in your community, in your family. You want Jesus. You need Jesus. He is the only one who can be in the top place. He is the only one who can restore, heal, reunite... "brothers or sisters or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God...many times over in this age, and in the age to come eternal life." Only Jesus. Do you want inner peace? You want Jesus. You must have Jesus. "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." (Matthew 11:28-29) Come to me, says Jesus. Come to me. Take the rest and chuck it out the window! Come and follow me. You will never regret it. You will never be sorry you did. Do you want peace? Come to Jesus.