

Grace to Those Who Ridicule

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[0:00] You will be turning to Luke chapter 16. Luke 16. Luke 16. Luke 16.

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 16. Luke is to vindicate ourselves, or to shut their mouths by what we say.

But that response seldom works, and usually is about ourselves. Jesus, in our passage today, will be ridiculed for his teaching.

But his response is not about serving himself, or making them look stupid. Jesus' response is direct. It probably is offensive to them, but it shows grace and love toward them that do not deserve it.

[1:55] He shows them their need of the kingdom of God. Now, the background to this kind of runs through the whole gospel, but the background to this, we see that Luke has shared through his gospel, Jesus' teaching that those who are servants of God are to put their means at God's disposal.

And I'm like, what a shift! But our last passage talked about that. Jesus taught that those who are his are to use their means shrewdly in relation to where they will dwell in the future.

How they use their money is a barometer of their hearts. And we ask the question, what do you use?

Or how do you use your money? What does it show about your heart? And Jesus ended the phrase in the last section, which in our minds we have to keep in mind, he didn't stop at verse 13 like we did.

He preached longer. But he kept going. And he ended that last section and says, you cannot serve God and mammon.

[3:16] And the Pharisees ridiculed that phrase and Jesus for what he'd been saying about money, even what he'd been saying about other things, but they were ridiculing him for what Jesus had been teaching his disciples.

You can picture them standing there thinking, yeah, a man who has no money is telling us what to do with our money in service to the Lord.

You would think Pharisees would be so spiritual that all their money would be at God's disposal. They said that. They'd say, Corban, my money can't be used to take care of you, Dad, when you get old.

But they didn't use it for God. This is the most direct statement, what we'll read in the first verses here, about the Pharisees and their money.

So that was not the case. They were not people who used their money for spiritual things. And as I hinted at earlier, Jesus' response was to do the most loving thing that God could do at that moment.

[4 : 34] It's always his response. To do the best thing for you in that moment, the person he's talking to. And he does with them. He gives them the best response they could have.

He shows them that they're lawbreakers. And that as lawbreakers, they need to repent and trust the Messiah and enter that kingdom.

They're so quick to ridicule. So let's take and read this next section, just a few verses. Luke 16, verses 14 through 18. And then we'll see what Jesus is doing here.

Let me back up to verse 13. I think it'd be good because we want to keep... There was a flow here that needs to keep going. He says, No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other.

You cannot serve God and mammon. The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they ridiculed him. And he said to them, You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts.

[5:46] For what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God. The law and the prophets were until John. Since then, the good news of the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone forces his way into it.

But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one dot of the law to become void.

Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery.

And he who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery. Let's pray together.

Father, I thank you for your word. And Lord, I thank you for the response that you have given here to those who ridicule you.

I pray that you would help us to learn from that. Learn how we should respond. Learn about our own hearts. And I pray that any who don't know you today would be drawn to know you.

We pray that you would be with us in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, Jesus made that statement, you cannot serve God in money.

[7:00] And it's pretty evident that the Pharisees were servants of the wrong master. Luke comes right out and says it. They loved money. Now, there are other peoples of the religious leaders that we might have thought would have been more in line with that.

But Luke is making it clear that the Pharisees loved money. Now, they hid it. They didn't go around looking like, you know, the tax collectors did.

They hid it, though. They were every bit as sinful in relation to money as the tax collectors were.

They hid it because they thought that having money showed that God approved of them and was blessing them.

So they put a holy spin on their riches. Oh, the Lord has so blessed me. I'm so thankful for his blessing.

Now, we need to be thankful for God's blessing. But they weren't really thankful for it. If they were thankful for it, they would have lived differently. As Jesus had just mentioned in the previous section.

[8:17] They were using it as a cover for their own love of money. And here, in return to Jesus talking about what God really expects of how one who follows him uses their money.

Their response is not, amen, brother, preach it. Their response is, who's he to tell us about money?

They ridicule Jesus for saying that you cannot serve God and money. We touched on this last week, but I'm going to ask again, who do you serve?

Who or what does your money show that you serve? Do you dream more of what you can get with your money?

Or how you can use your money for some way to advantage you? Or do you dream more of how you can use what God has given you for the Lord?

[9:26] Are you a person who worries about having enough money to finally get that possession you've always wanted?

Boat? New kitchen? That bathroom remodel that, you know, don't really need, but I've always wanted a marble shower floor?

Now, don't get me wrong. It's not wrong to have things look nice. But who does your money show that you serve?

When God blesses you, is there any thought in your mind that says, what does God want me to do with this? What is the thing that most would glorify?

Maybe it is fixing that bathroom that you're afraid they're going to fall through the floor when they step into the shower. Maybe that's the best and wisest thing. But is it your heart's desire to serve God with your money?

[10:36] Do you wish that you had more to serve the Lord with? Not dishonestly, but honestly. Do you give and wish you had more to give?

Do you have and look for ways to do things for the church or for other people that no one sees?

What does your money show about your heart?

Verse 15, Jesus goes on. And he rebukes them for their ridicule of him. Now, it's not rebuke in that you can't talk to me that way.

I mean, he had every right. He was the God man. But his rebuke was not out of necessarily offense towards himself. His rebuke was because their rebuke showed their heart.

And they needed to know what was in their heart. They needed to know where they stood with God. And so Jesus rebukes their ridicule. And he says to them, you justify yourselves before men, but God knows your heart.

[11:40] You might go around saying, I have because God has blessed me. And if you'd serve God as well as I, God would bless you. They would hide it.

And he's saying they would justify themselves before God. They claim to be keepers of the law. And because they were keepers of the law, that's why they were so rich.

And they kept the law, right? But a law they had modified. They kept God's law on their own terms. And according to their own interpretation.

They claim themselves to be pure. We don't associate with tax collectors and sinners. But Jesus, as quoted in Matthew 23, says they're like whitewashed tombs.

They talk about how good they are. They talk about what good they do. They talk about their righteousness. But inside, they're full of dead men's bones and all putrefaction.

[12:40] They claim themselves to be pure, but they weren't. Again, they claim that their riches were indeed evidence of their being blessed by God.

Or God's blessing on their lives. Is that the kind of response you give sometimes? If somebody asks about what you have?

Oh, well, God has just blessed us so financially. And again, if he blesses, there's nothing wrong with that. Nothing wrong at all. But do you say that to hide that you don't use what you have for him?

Do you say that, that phrase, oh, God has blessed me so, so that no one knows that you don't have any heart for missions.

You don't have any heart for the lost. You don't have any heart for people who are Christians or even non-Christians who are doing without because they just can't make ends meet and suffer.

[13:46] You're hiding your self-righteousness. You're hiding your supposed keeping the law saying, oh, God has blessed us when really you're just hogging it.

You're using it for yourself. And so Jesus turns to them in love and rebukes them.

They're just trying to justify themselves before men. And Jesus says to them, what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

To go around saying, oh, look how God has blessed me. Yes, thank God for his goodness. And to have no heart to serve God with the money that you have or with the means that you have.

God says that's an abomination in his sight. They're defending their righteousness. In quotes. Defending their righteousness before men was vile in God's sight.

[14:53] Their profession of self-righteousness was offensive to God. Now, we're going to get it. He's going to give an example. He's not just saying this. And I'm not just saying this because I like to torment people in talking about money in this way.

Jesus proves it. They think that they're very righteous. And Jesus shows them very plainly that they are not just mild lawbreakers.

They are great lawbreakers. What does God think of you? Does God look at you and see that you're a person who's always trying to make himself look good in front of men?

Does he see one who sees all his confidence in the flesh rather? Not as something to say, oh, I'm so good.

And it's shown by this. But whatever God gives me, I count it but dung. And I want to please Christ. And I'm going to use everything that God gives me.

[16:00] Where are you in this? When God provides for you, when God gives to you, what does how you use that reveal about your heart? Are you one who's set your heart on the things of Christ?

And are willing to use it all, to spend it all, to count it all as nothing for the sake of Christ? Or are you one who sits back and says, yeah, the Lord has blessed us?

And so he says that their self-exaltation is vile in his sight. Jesus goes on in verse 16 to rebuke their trust in the law and calls them to enter the kingdom of God.

Verse 16 says, the law and the prophets were until John. Since then the good news of the kingdom of God is preached and everyone forces his way into it.

This is a very interesting verse. But he uses it to rebuke their trust in the law. The Pharisees had felt that they were saved because they had kept the law.

[17:16] And Jesus tells them that the law and the prophets had their place until John. The law and the prophets were until John. John was the point at which things changed. Now salvation was always by grace through faith.

If you were in the Old Testament, you were looking forward to the one, that seed of the woman who would come and crush the serpent's head. You were always looking forward.

You were never trusting the sacrifices. You were never trusting your keeping in the law. If you were a true child of God, you were looking forward to the one who would come. The law had its place. It was there. Through the law and the prophets. Through the time of the law and the prophets. The law and its ministry had its place until John.

Hebrews chapter 10 verses 1 through 4 says. For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come. Instead of the true form of these realities.

[18:16] It can never by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year. Make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered.

Since the worshipers having once been cleansed. Would no longer have any consciousness of sin. But in these sacrifices, there is a reminder of sins every year.

For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. One of the things. The scribes and Pharisees. They were looking forward to a Messiah. But the kind of Messiah they had interpreted for themselves out of scripture.

The kind of Messiah that was coming. That was in front of them. Was not their kind of Messiah. The Messiah that was in front of them. Was the one who would give himself.

He would be bruised by the serpent. But he would crush that serpent's head. His heel would be bruised. He was the one coming to give victory.

[19:19] He was the one who was providing salvation. Going on verse 3. But in these sacrifices, there is a reminder of sins every year.

For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. And as these scribes and Pharisees were trusting in keeping the law.

They were totally ignoring the fact. That doing those sacrifices. Wasn't helping them. It was to be done in obedience.

But it was looking forward to something. And that nothing they could do. They could not keep the law. Its purpose was never for the sake of earning salvation.

After man fell, there was no keeping the law. The law and the prophets did not dictate a way to be ultimately right with God.

[20:21] But rather pointed to the coming Messiah. We can see that in this passage in Hebrews as it continues. It quotes Psalm 40 verses 68. 6 through 8.

And the writer of Hebrews continues in chapter 10 verses 5 through 7. Consequently. What? What consequently? Consequently because the sacrifices could not cleanse sin.

They only pointed forward. Consequently, when Christ came into the world. He said, sacrifices and offerings you have not desired. But a body you have prepared for me.

In burnt offerings and sinner offerings. You have taken no pleasure. Then I said, behold, I have come to do your will. Oh God. As it is written to me in the scroll of the book.

Jesus pointing to them saying. Yes, the law and the prophets had their part. Until John. They could never earn your salvation. And they never were meant to.

[21:23] They meant. They were meant to point to Christ. And when Christ came. He came taking out a body. To die. In our place. He says that was up until John.

But now. Jesus says. The good news of the kingdom is preached. Christ has come. To be the sacrifice. That will all actually take away.

Our sins. He's come to be the sacrifice. That is pleasing to God. That is effective. And actually. Atones for our sins.

He's come to be the sacrifice. Christ. So that all who call on his name. Will be saved. Even the Pharisees. Now he's not done.

Rebuking them yet. But he's already held out the gospel. He's already pointed them to the fact. That the law. And the prophets. And the commandments that were there.

[22:20] Couldn't save them. They all pointed to Christ. And he's saying to them. As he talks about the kingdom of God. Has come upon them. He's saying. I'm here. I'm here to do.

He's presenting them with the gospel. And he says. The kingdom of God is preached. He's preaching it. John has preached it.

The apostles will preach it. And many thousands of others will preach it. And then he says this interesting phrase. The phrase.

Many. Let me read it from. And everyone forces his way into it. Most translations that you look at say.

Exactly that. They force their way into this kingdom. Those who see themselves as sinners.

[23:20] And their need of salvation. Let me back up and just say this. This word that's here.

That's translated. Forces their way in. Can be translated two ways. Most translations say.

Force his way in. And what he's getting at. When he. If you interpret it that way. Both translations of this word. I think are very viable.

Those who see themselves as sinners. And their need of salvation. To be so great. They've heard the gospel. They heard that they're sinners. And they are saying.

What are we to do? They see their need so great. That they pursue. Entrance into the kingdom. And it's not just a half-hearted. Yeah I think I've heard that I might need to be saved.

They're like the four who brought the paralytic to Jesus. This man needs Jesus. And they broke through the roof. And they made their way in.

[24:19] Now this phrase isn't referring to them literally. Forcing their way through the roof. But it was the idea that. That these people who see their need. Need Christ. And are willing to go.

And do what it takes. This also is illustrated. The woman. To the crowd. To touch. The hem of Jesus. Guardian. If I can only. But touch his garment. She saw her need.

She knew that Jesus. Was the answer to that need. Now. Now. Hers. She was thinking physical. But spiritual. Took place. Because she was seeking him. And she touched.

The hem of his garment. And he was made whole. And her whole thing was. I don't care about the crowd. I don't care about anything else. I don't need to talk to him. I just need. To get to him. And touch his garment. They forced their way.

To Christ. It's. It's not literally that. You know. It's. But it's. I'm determined. I have a need. And there's only one. Who can fit it. Fill it. And I'm going to pursue it. The tax collectors.

[25:18] And sinners. That Jesus had been. Sitting with. And eating with. Were in this situation. Everybody hated them. They were despised.

They suffered. Because of who they were. And they knew. That there was no hope. For them. But when they heard. The gospel. And that it applied. To them. They were.

Willing to pursue. Christ. No matter the cost. No matter. If the Pharisees. And scribes. Made fun of them. No matter. If the crowds. Looked at them. With that crooked eye.

And wished that they would. Just go away. They knew. There was no hope. Anywhere. But the gospel. And they were willing.

To pursue. Or force their way in. Now. They're not making. Christ do something. He doesn't want. He's doing. They're doing. The very thing. Christ does want.

[26:13] They want. He wants them. To pursue them. And those. Who really see. Their need. That's the exact case.

Of all who know. Who know. Their real need. They will pursue. This one. That they find. Can meet their need. And they won't stop. Until they have it.

Now. I said. There were two translations. If you have an ESV. You'll see. A little footnote. Number there. And that footnote.

Will say. Also could mean. Strongly urged to come. That word. Can be interpreted. Both ways. According to context. One is a middle voice. One is a passive voice. If you're into Greek.

And so. It can be urged. It can be translated. Strongly urged to come. And that was true. Of the kingdom of God. Also. Not only would.

[27:11] Those who see. That the kingdom of God. Can meet their need. Now they were willing. To force their way in. To pursue it. With all their heart. There was also. The idea. That the kingdom of God.

Is urged. Upon everyone. Everyone is urged. To come into the kingdom. John the Baptist. Preaching the kingdom of. Of God. Urged people. To prepare. To prepare. The way of the Lord.

To repent. And to seek his face. Jesus has proclaimed. Been proclaiming. The kingdom of God. All through his ministry. And urging people. To come. And repent.

Either situation. Fits. Either translation. Fits the situation. Those who see. Their need. Will sell. All they have. To buy that pearl.

Of great price. And those. Who are hearing. The good news. Of the kingdom of God. Are also. Strongly. Urged. To enter. That kingdom. And.

[28:10] You know. You think about that. I think. Both. Were in play here. As Jesus. Has been ridiculed. His response. Is not. Lightning. His response.

Was not. Oh. Get out of here. I don't want to have you around. His response. Was. Let me tell you. The truth. About your need. Need. And in this verse.

16. He's been saying. The law. And the prophets. Pointed to. What would fulfill. Your need. But keeping the law. And doing the sacrifices.

Wasn't it. It was always Christ. And. And if you see that. You're going to do. Whatever it takes. To know Christ. Not that you can earn it. But you're going to want it.

And Jesus is saying. Also. As I'm speaking to you. Of the kingdom of God. I'm urging you. Strongly. Urging you. Come to the kingdom of God. Come. To me.

[29:06] All you are weary. And you will find rest. Verse 17. And 18. Go on. Even though the law. Could not save. It doesn't become useless.

It continues to point out sin. In fact. That's exactly. What Jesus does. In this situation. And I don't believe. He's doing it. As an Old Testament prophet. He is the Messiah.

He is in the New Covenant. He's coming. And he's using the law. For one of its rightful purposes. To point out sin. And so Jesus uses the law.

Even here. To point out. That those who were seeking. To justify their divorce. Before men. Were guilty of the sin. Of adultery. In marriage. After divorce.

Or when they were divorced. Back up. You're sitting there thinking. Wait a minute. He hasn't been talking about divorce. All of a sudden. Jesus begins talking about divorce. And he's not.

[30:09] You know. Skirting the issue. He's. Here's. Here's the law. Why did he go from. Talking about the kingdom. To. Describing this thing. About divorce.

Well. It's because. These Pharisees. And other. Of the religious leaders. Had made light. Of divorce. Some say. They were. Serial.

Divorcers. If I'm saying that right. I found a prettier one. Sorry. You're gone. And go marry the prettier one. You burnt my toast.

Sorry. You're gone. And go get a better cook. Now. Not all of them were like that. But.

Divorce had been something. That had been. Become prominent. And here. Were the scribes and Pharisees. They were involved in it. And they were justifying it. And. Moses said we could.

[31:06] Moses said. Let's give a. Bill of divorcement. And so. Jesus brings this verse up. To point to the fact. That they are not. Keeping the law. As they think they were.

They thought they were getting to heaven. Because they had kept the law. But again. They were interpreting the law. In the ways. That they were able to keep. And so. Jesus brings up. This seventh commandment.

To show that they were. Transgressing the law. And just. Brief. They would have totally understood this. So. I'm going to. Just kind of bring up to speed. On their thinking. In Genesis 2. 24.

The one flesh union of marriage. Assumes. Permanence. We can see that in. Janet. Jesus' statement. In Matthew 19. 6. So they are no longer.

Two. But one flesh. What therefore God has joined together. Let man. Man not separate. And their view of divorce is. This. I'll just give her a piece of paper.

[32:01] And she's gone. And I'm free to remarry. For whatever reason. Now I'm not getting. This morning. Into. Into the issue. Of the exception clause. It's valid.

And. But we don't have time. To go through all that today. There are. Thinkings. People. Saying that yes. Divorce is valid. In some instances. We'll leave that.

For another day. But Jesus' teaching. Based on the. Genesis 2. Passage. That. Marriage is only broken by death.

It can't be set aside. By a piece of paper. And they were guilty of doing that. And Jesus shows. That since the marriage is permanent. And can't be set aside by a piece of paper. Again. We're sidestepping all the issues. About the exception clause. And abandonment.

[32:57] We can talk about that at another time. But they. Had said. Piece of paper is good. I can go marry someone else. Jesus says no. Your marriage was permanent.

You may have a piece of paper. But in God's eyes. You're still one flesh. He's doing that to point out.

That they're lawbreakers. That they had twisted the law. To make it okay. For them to live.

According to their flesh. We are lawbreakers.

Maybe we do the same thing. Certainly there's the idea of lust. And adultery. Jesus speaks about that in Matthew. There are all kinds of things where.

As Jesus applies the law of God. Properly. It points to the fact. That we're sinners. And Jesus. As he's listening to these people.

[33:59] Rebuke him. He shows abundant grace. To these people rebuking him. For he shows. Lawbreakers.

Who they really are. If he hadn't showed. That they were lawbreakers. They would continue in their sin. Thinking they were going on. To heaven. And that God was pleased.

But because God shows. That they are lawbreakers. They now have the. The opportunity. To repent. And trust. This one. Who's come to die for them.

In love. He's shown. Where they really stand. Before God. But he's also shown. That God has made provision. For that need.

He said. The kingdom of God is here. Jesus. Was making his way. To die. To provide. For. The forgiveness. And payment.

[34:59] Of sins. Even adultery. And he's offering that. To them. I just love the fact. That in the midst.

Of this circumstance. Jesus. Had the presence. Of mind. And the heart. Of grace. To. Not just brush them off.

Because they were. Hypocrites. But he had the grace. To say. He. He wouldn't have said brother. But. Friend.

In the most loving way. You're really. A sinner. And what you say. Before men. Doesn't mean anything. Before God.

You need. To come into the kingdom. If you see your need. You'll want it. With all of your heart. And you're willing. To do anything. To get it.

[35:55] If you don't see your need. I'm urging you. Come to the kingdom. Come. There is provision. Made for your sin.

So. In thinking about all this. What do you do. With your law breaking. None of us.

Don't do it. None of us. Are in a category. Where we're. Okay. In that area. What do you do. With your law breaking. You need.

To trust the work. Of the one. Who has kept the law. For sinners. You need. To trust the one. Who has died. In the place. Of sinners. You need.

To run to him. As it were. Force your way. Into the kingdom. Because God. Has strongly. Urged you. To come. Now.

[36:57] I've said that. In such a way. That it sounds like. It's just. For those. Who don't know Christ. But we. Who know Christ. Still break the law.

What do we do. As lawbreakers. We run to the one. Who's kept the law. For us. We run to the one. Who has given his life. To make us. Pure. And clean. And acceptable. And even righteous. Before the father. And we rest in that.

Let's pray. Father. Thank you for your word. Thank you for your grace. Towards these people. And Lord. I think about. My own life.

And I think about. As a 12 year old. Hearing the gospel. Having heard it. For a couple years. How I thought. I was righteous. How I thought. I was good enough. And I'm so thankful.

[37:59] Father. That you were willing. To push through. And show me. My sin. Lord. As we stand before you today. We are thankful. That you are God.

Who's gracious. Who does not give up. On religious hypocrites. Who does not give up. On those. Who rebuke. And revile you. But instead. Points.

To their need. Points them. To how they have. Failed. In keeping the law. And shows grace. And has come. To bring the kingdom of God. Dying in. Our place.

Living in our place. I pray that you would. Help us to be people. Who run. To our king. To our savior.
And help us to live there. And we pray in Jesus name.
Amen. Let's take our hymnals. And turn to 472. Amen. Amen.