

# Luke 18:1-17

## Practice Child-like Faith

**Scripture:** Luke 18:1-17

**Memory Verse:** Luke 18:17 *“Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.”*

**Lesson Focus:** This passage of Scripture has three independent lessons that all seem to come together in Jesus’s challenge to practice child-like faith in v. 17. We will walk through each lesson and then bring them together at the end encouraging the kids to continue in child-like faith all of their lives!

**Activities and Crafts:** Memory Verse coloring picture, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Bring it Home Discussion for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>.  
Craft for 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: Grow in Christ

**Starter Activity:** Tricky Trios

Consider getting the lesson going with a little quiz to get the kids minds moving. There are many things that come in trios or groups of three. See the list of things below and for each one, ask the kids what the object has three of. Don’t hesitate to add your own ideas or even asking the kids to think of some more while you play: \*

Tricycle: Three wheels

Triangle: Three sides

Traffic Signal: Three lights (red, yellow, green)

Hockey Game: Three periods

Season: Three months

An Atom: Three parts (proton, neutron, electron)

Uncle Donald Duck: Three nephews (Huey, Duey, and Luey)

Hat Trick: Three goals

American Flag: Three colors (Red, White, and Blue)

Sleeping Beauty: Three fairies (Flora, Fauna, and Merryweather)

Bowling Ball: Three holes

Yardstick: Three feet

Big Bad Wolf: Three little pigs \*

God: Three Persons in one God

- (**Teachers:** Consider spending a few moments teaching the Trinity, that God is one God in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. See [here](#) for some ideas.)

As we continue in the gospel of Luke guess what Jesus, the Son of God (and second Person of the Trinity), has for us today? **Three lessons!** Let’s open our Bibles and get ready to learn!

## Bible Study:

**Luke 18:1:** Jesus is about to speak another parable to the disciples, His close followers. Remember, that a parable is a story that teaches a lesson.

Q: What was the lesson that Jesus wanted them to learn from this parable?

A: That His followers are to pray, pray, pray so that they don't "lose heart". \*

**Luke 18:2:** The first character in the story is a judge.

Q: Does this guy sound like a good guy or a bad guy? A: Bad guy! A judge is someone put in charge to administer justice and fairness. Therefore, a judge must be upright and honest. But this guy is corrupt. He doesn't care about God or man, just himself!

**Luke 18:3:** The second character is a widow who is seeking justice.

Q: What is a widow? A: A woman whose husband has died. \* Back in Jesus's day, women were much more vulnerable, especially if their husbands had passed away. We aren't told what happened to her, but she is pleading with the judge for justice (maybe she was robbed?). \*

**Luke 18:4-5:** As expected, at first the judge just ignored her, because there was nothing in it for him. But eventually he changed his mind.

Q: What made him change his mind? A: Her persistence! She wanted justice and she was not going to give up or "lose heart" until she got it! (**Teachers:** Consider having a couple of volunteers act this out. Have the widow come up and ask the other volunteer for justice multiple times with the judge dismissing her each time until the judge finally gives in and does his job!) \*

**Luke 18:6-8a:** Now Jesus draws the lesson out of the story. Jesus is not saying God is like the unrighteous judge. Rather, He is saying that if even a **bad** judge is able to give this poor widow the justice she needed, **how much more** should we expect the one perfectly **good** Judge and God over all things to give His people what they need who persist in their asking and praying to Him? \* (see **Matthew 7:11**)

But what about those times when you have prayed and it seemed God didn't respond? Perhaps it is because you have not persisted! \* Don't lose heart! Prayer is not magic we recite to control God to give us what we want. Rather, prayer is pouring out our hearts to God in relationship. He NEVER tires of us drawing near to Him and asking Him!

**Luke 18:8b:** Jesus ends our first of three lessons with a challenging question to spur His followers on to pray in faith. **Lesson #1: Persistently Practice Prayer!** \*

**Luke 18:9:** Now we move onto our second of three lessons with another parable.

Q: Who did Jesus speak this parable to? A: The self-righteous who trusted in their own goodness for salvation (rather than God's) and therefore proudly looked down on others.

**Luke 18:10:** This story has two characters approaching the temple to pray.

Q: Who are they? A Pharisee (religious person) and a tax collector (worst of sinners).

**Luke 18:11-12:** First Jesus describes the religious celebrity's prayer. His "prayer" is hardly an attempt to draw near to God in relationship, but more of a private award ceremony. He was just bragging to God and everyone else over how good he was. \*

**Luke 18:13:** But then Jesus tells us about the tax collector's prayer. Remember that tax collectors were among the worst of sinners back in Jesus's day. Notice how very different his prayer was! (**Teachers:** Again, consider having a couple of volunteers act this out. Have the Pharisee draw attention to himself in the middle of the room while the tax collector stands afar off with his head down praying fervently) \*

**Luke 18:14a:** This was definitely not what His listeners were expecting! \*

Q: Which of the two was justified or "saved"? \* A: The tax collector! Understanding God's lovingkindness, He had truly repented, turned from His sin, and turned to God in faith. The Pharisee may have done many great religious things, but his pride blinded him to his own sin problem! \*

**Luke 18:14b:** Jesus concludes our second of three lessons with a challenge to lower ourselves before God. Like the tax collector we must rely on His grace alone for salvation and no amount of good works we do changes that. **Lesson #2: Practice Humility!** \*

**Luke 18:15a:** We move onto our final lesson with one of the most precious passages of the whole Bible! Q: Who were they bringing to Jesus? A: Infants, little children.

**Luke 18:15b:** But notice what the disciples did! They "shoo'd" them away! The disciples must have thought Jesus was too busy or important to spend time with "just" little kids.

**Luke 18:16a:** In the gospel of Mark it adds that Jesus was GREATLY displeased (**Mark 10:14**)! He corrects the disciples and says to them, "*Don't you DARE prevent them from coming to Me!*" (**Teachers:** Again, consider acting this out with a few volunteers. You can be Jesus pretending to be busy. Have another leader be the "grumpy" disciple and have a few kids try to approach you. After the other leader tells the kids to "shoo", swoop in and receive those kids correcting that leader!) Kids matter to Jesus! \*

**Luke 18:16b-17:** Jesus looks at His disciple and tells them that they have some lessons to learn from kids! Kids have a child-like faith and trust in God. \* Just like you kids trust in your parents to take care of you, we all are to trust in our heavenly Father.

**Lesson #3: Practice Child-like Faith in God!**

**Key Point:** Let's bring our three lessons together. Practicing prayer and humility are all a part of practicing child-like faith in God! \*

Read **1 John 3:1a**. This verse captures the child-like wonder of God's love. Jesus's death and resurrection made a way for us to be saved. When we grasp the greatness of God's love we **will** seek Him in prayer, we **will** come before Him humbly, and we **will** trust in Him just like the tax collector did. Practice your child-like faith in God this week!

If you don't have that child-like faith in God, put your faith and trust in Jesus today and become a child of God!

# BRING IT HOME

Read Luke 18:1  
Why does praying help us not "lose heart"?

Parent Signature:  
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Parent Challenge:  
What does it mean to have child-like faith?  
(Luke 18:17)

Read Luke 18:10-14  
How can "church kids" be just like the Pharisee?

