

Study Guide  
Series: The Gospel of the Nobodies  
“The Thin Space Between Heaven and Earth”

**Monday** - Luke 17:1-37

On his way to Jerusalem, somewhere near the border between Galilee and Samaria, Jesus met the ten lepers. After Jesus healed and delivered them all, only a Samaritan praised God. Are there any experiences or obstacles that make it harder for you to have a more grateful spirit? Are there things you have forgotten or neglected to thank and praise God for? In 17:21, Luke used the words Jesus used could mean either that God’s kingdom is “among you” or “within you” or, perhaps, both. What different emphases and meanings do you find in the two possible meanings? Sometimes we want to ask, “When is your kingdom coming?” Ask God to help you worry less about the future, and to recognize the signs of God’s kingdom around you and within you.

**Tuesday** - Luke 18:1-30

In 18:1-8 Jesus used a common rabbinic teaching method: “If even an unjust judge will do justice, if pressed hard enough,” he asked, “how much more can we trust God to do justice?” Then he asked if he will find faithfulness on earth. In other words, can we keep trusting God to do justice even in the face of disappointments, delays, and unfair circumstances? How are you answering Jesus’ question about faith? Most people in Jesus’ day thought material riches meant God’s favor. When the wealthy young ruler turned away, Jesus said that it was very hard for the wealthy to enter God’s kingdom. His hearers, reflecting their belief, replied, “Then who can be saved?” What are you placing your trust and sense of security in? Are you confident that, whether you are a somebody or a nobody, your salvation is “possible for God”?

**Wednesday** - Luke 18:31-19:10

Jesus asked the blind man, “What do you want me to do for you?” The man promptly and clearly identified the need he felt. If Jesus had asked wealthy, healthy Zacchaeus the same question as he sat in that sycamore tree, do you think he could have answered as clearly? Now imagine Jesus asking you that question. What need(s) do you sense most clearly that you’d like to ask Jesus’ help for? After three years the disciples still didn’t “get” the meaning of Jesus’ words about dying and rising. Yet 19:8 suggested that in one day Zacchaeus’ values and actions changed radically as he died to his old self and was reborn as a new person. Has God ever changed any part of your life quickly or dramatically? In what areas are you in need of God’s help for change?

**Thursday** - Luke 19:11-28

Jesus used a story about a king and his servants to teach a lesson about faithful service. This story praised the servants who went all out to serve their master, but it cautioned against playing it too safe, as it told of the king rebuking the “worthless servant” who was too afraid to risk anything. How has God gifted you? In what ways do those gifts point to the task God has given you? Are you ever tempted to play it safe and keep your gifts in a “scarf,” rather than using them to do God’s work in the world? Jesus knew what was going to happen when he went to Jerusalem. He knew the risks, but he didn’t play it safe. What might it look like for you to trust God and take risks? Where might God be calling you take a risk for God’s sake today?

**Friday** - Luke 19:29-20:19

The long journey that began in Luke 9:51 ends as Jesus entered Jerusalem. He deliberately entered in a way that echoed history (1 Kings 1:32-39) and prophecy (Zechariah 9:9-10), making a clear claim to peaceful kingship. Yet, notice who sang and praised Jesus (verses 37-39). Who found his entrance into the holy city offensive? Would you more likely have been with “the establishment” who didn’t want the orderly status quo disrupted, or with the upstart rabbi from Galilee? Luke 19:47 and 20:19 show the hatred that surrounded Jesus during his last week. We, like the Jerusalem leaders, can be so invested in our agendas and resistant to new perspectives, that we are blind to what God is trying to do. Is there anything God’s spirit is nudging you to face honestly in your life? Do you have the courage to be a part of “the things that lead to peace”?

**Saturday** - Luke 20:20-21:4

Jesus’ enemies, the “somebodies” all, tried to create a cause for his death. But neither their trick questions nor their great outward show of piety fooled Jesus. Jesus described the pious frauds in verses 46-47 as those: “In long robes ... who love being greeted with honor ... places of honor ... cheat widows out of their homes ... to show off they say long prayers.” Why do people like that often achieve prominence, even when many people “see through them”? What inner choices do you need to make to avoid being like that? The Sadducees didn’t believe in resurrection, and they tried to make the idea sound ridiculous. What made absolute trust that death was not the end, that “the worst thing is never the last thing,” of crucial importance to Jesus? Do you share his confidence? If so, in what ways does it shape your day-to-day life for the better?

*(Adapted from COR)*