

Teen Bible Study Notes: Friday, February 28, 2020

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The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ – Lecture #45

Book and Chapter – Luke Chapters 13 (*verses 18 – all*) & 14

LUKE 13

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

V18 Then He said, “What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it?”

V19 It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and put in his garden; and it grew and became a large tree, and the birds of the air nested in its branches.”

The plant of Jesus’ parables referred to here was the ordinary black mustard plant – *Brassica nigra*. It is an annual herb that grows up rapidly each spring from a tiny seed and reaches a height of up to 10 or 15 feet. The leaves are large, the flowers are yellow, and the small, blackish seeds grow in linear pods. Mustard, was cultivated for its seeds, which were ground up for commercial mustard and also for its oil. Of all the *garden* seeds (seeds that were sown) its seeds were indeed the smallest, and of all garden annuals, the grown mustard plant was the largest!

In the autumn the stems and branches become hard and rigid and have more than enough strength to bear the weight of small birds that are attracted by their fondness for the edible seeds. And this tree-like plant with a stem the size of a man’s arm could justifiably be regarded as a tree.

Jesus compared the growth of God’s kingdom to a tiny *seed* that becomes a *large tree* where many birds can find shelter. This parable shows that the kingdom of God has the smallest of beginnings. Yet that ruling Kingdom will ultimately fill all the earth!

The Parable of the Leaven

V20 And again He said, “To what shall I liken the kingdom of God?”

V21 It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.”

This parable illustrates essentially the same point as the previous one, but by a different analogy. In this illustration the *leaven* is hidden in approximately 50 pounds (22.7 kilograms) of *meal* (or flour). Usually its image is negative (as in **I Corinthians 5:6**) but in this parable it is positive.

Leaven is the substance used to make dough rise by expansion. Most homemakers are familiar with its qualities. A *little* leaven is all that is necessary to leaven the whole lump (**Galatians 5:9**).

So it is with the Kingdom of God. What God has started with a comparative few (the “firstfruits” of His salvation) at this time will ultimately result in the entire earth being blanketed with the knowledge of God.

Isaiah 11:9 “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.”

The Narrow Way

V22 And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem.

V23 Then one said to Him, “Lord, are there few who are saved?” And He said to them

V24 “Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

V25 When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open for us,’ and He will answer and say to you, I do not know you, where you are from,’

V26 Then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and you taught in our streets.’

V27 But He will say, ‘I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.’

Matthew 7:21-23: V21 “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who **does** the will of My Father in heaven.

V22 Many will say to me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’

V23 And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, **you who practice lawlessness!**’”

Titus 1:16 “They profess to know God, but **in works they deny Him**, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.”

I John 2:3-4: 3 “Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.

V4 He who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”

I John 5:3 “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.”

V28 There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out.

V29 They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God.

V30 And indeed there are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last.”

The statement that *the first shall be last and the last shall be first*, has more than one meaning.

One application is that those who are first in status, importance, and the like, in this life will not necessarily have the same standing in God’s Kingdom. God calls the weak of the world (those who are considered by the world to have lesser standing), and it is these individuals who are first in God’s sight and who will have the first or top positions in His Kingdom (**I Corinthians 1:26-29**).

Another application is found here in – **Luke 13:24-30**. The Jews of Christ’s day were the first to be called. Even though God sent His own Son to them, many did not accept Him. When the Gospel was given to the gentiles, however, many of them believed it and became obedient to God. By this example, therefore, we see that some who were first to be shown God’s truth will be the last to enter the Kingdom. On the other hand, some who receive the ‘crumbs from the table’ (**Matthew 15:27**) will be among the first to be made rulers in God’s Family.

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V31 On that very day some Pharisees came, saying to Him, “Get out and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill You.”

Herod wants to kill You – Jesus’ reply seems to take the Pharisees warning at face value.

Fox – The reference here is to Herod’s cunning.

V32 And He said to them, “Go, tell that fox, ‘Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third *day* I shall be perfected.’”

The verb translated *perfected* means “to complete something”, which is why it alludes to Jesus’ resurrection. His resurrection took place after being in a tomb for three days and three nights.

However, leading up to the time He would suffer and die – he still had more work to do - as he would cast out more demons and cure more people on His journey to Jerusalem.

V33 Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the *day* following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.

Jesus would be one more prophet, in a long list of prophets that were executed in the nation’s capital.

Jesus Laments over Jerusalem

V34 “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen *gathers* her brood under *her* wings, but you were not willing!

V35 See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see me until *the time* comes when you say, ‘*Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!*’”

Jerusalem, Jerusalem – The double address indicates Jesus’ deep sorrow. The city had executed many of God’s messengers.

I wanted to gather – He compared His desire to gather the nation to a hen sheltering and protecting her young. Sadly, the nation was not willing to be gathered.

LUKE 14

A Man with Dropsy Healed on the Sabbath

V1 Now it happened, as He went into the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath, that they watched Him closely.

The word used for ***watched*** has the meaning of “sinister espionage”. Jesus was under scrutiny.

V2 And behold, there was a certain man before Him who had dropsy.

Dropsy – A disease produced by the accumulation of water in various parts of the body; very distressing. The word for dropsy used here comes from the Greek words for “water” and “face” or “countenance” because the disease often made a person look bloated in their face. The disease was a deadly one, and was considered utterly incurable by human means.

V3 And Jesus, answering, spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?”

He broke “their” law regarding what could and what could not be done on the Sabbath. They considered His healings to be work. Obedience to the Law, at least their interpretation of it, became a source of pride for the Pharisees.

Christ Himself is lord of the Sabbath. And it is His right – not man’s – to instruct us on just how that law is to be observed. Jesus made it clear. It is NOT wrong ***to heal on the Sabbath!***

V4 But they kept silent. And He took *him* and healed him, and let him go.

V5 Then He answered them, saying, “Which of you, having a donkey or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?”

V6 And they could not answer Him regarding these things.

The principle of the ox in the ditch applies to genuine emergencies like personal injuries, burning houses, power failures, accidents and other occurrences (e.g., natural disasters – tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, etc.) which would entail injury or loss of life or of personal property.

This principle does not apply to those who “push their own ox into the ditch” by acquiring or keeping a job where they know they will be required to work on the Sabbath each week, or by putting off work which should have been done during the week. Nor does it include harvesting or plowing on the Sabbath – even if there has been bad weather or machinery breakdowns during the week.

God says, “Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; in plowing time and in harvest you shall rest” (**Exodus 34:21**).

Each individual must exercise wisdom and judgment in meeting a difficult problem or situation.

The Pharisees should have rejoiced that the man who had dropsy was healed. They should have marveled at Jesus’ power over illness.

Take the Lowly Place

V7 So He told a parable to those who were invited, when He noted how they chose the best places, saying to them:

V8 When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place, lest one more honorable than you be invited by him;

V9 And he who invited you and him come and say to you, ‘Give place to this man,’ and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place.

V10 But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, ‘Friend, go up higher.’ Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you.

V11 For whoever exalts himself will be abased, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Jesus took real-life situations familiar to all, and used them to teach the truth. ***He noted how they chose the best places.*** In His day, the seating arrangement at dinner showed definite order of prestige or honor. And, ***a wedding feast*** was among the most important social occasions in Jewish life at that time.

Shame often comes with self-exaltation. Jesus wasn’t merely teaching good manners, but a lifestyle that in lowliness of mind esteems other better than himself (**Philippians 2:3**).

V12 Then He also said to him who invited Him, “When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor *your* rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid.

V13 But when you give a feast, invite *the* poor, *the* maimed, *the* lame, *the* blind.

V14 And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.”

When you give a dinner or a supper – It isn’t wrong to ever invite your friends, your family, and so on; but it is wrong to exclude others and to only invite such people. It is easy for us to limit our friends to a few comfortable, easy people, instead of reaching out to others.

Invite you back – We should not associate with people only on the basis of what they can do for us. That is self-centered.

There is something about GIVING a gift that can never be repaid that is hard to explain. That’s why it says in – **Acts 20:35** – that it is more blessed to give than to receive. This kind of living will cost us something; yet it will ***be repaid at the resurrection of the just!***

God does not overlook what we do to help and serve others.

The Parable of the Great Supper

V15 Now when one of those who sat at the table with Him heard these things, he said to Him, “Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!”

Those in attendance at the Pharisees’ home thought they’d be among those who would ***eat bread in the kingdom of God.*** Jesus did not miss this opportunity to make an important point.

V16 Then He said to him, “A certain man gave a great supper and invited many,

In this parable, a man planned a large banquet and sent out invitations. When the banquet was ready, he sent his servant to contact each of the invited guests, telling them that all was ready and the meal was about to start.

The ***master of the house*** – is God.

The ***great banquet*** – represents the kingdom.

The ***invited guests*** picture those to whom Jesus was teaching and preaching to in his day. And, by extension all those who have been “called” or “invited; summoned” by God – to understand the truth and be a part of His Kingdom.

John 1:11:12: 11 “He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

V12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God...”

V17 And sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, ‘Come, for all things are now ready.’

V18 But they all with one *accord* began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.’

V19 And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.’

V20 Still another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’

One after another the guests gave their pathetic excuses for not attending. The general point Jesus was making is that those who were invited regarded their own affairs as more important than the attending the banquet. They did not value the invitation, or calling.

V21 So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here *the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.*’

The master of the house was *angry* when he heard these weak excuses. So his second invitation extended the scope of the offer to include those who were generally rejected by society – *the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind.*

V22 And the servant said, ‘Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.’

V23 Then the master said to the servant, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled.

Next, the master told his servant to extend the invitation beyond the city limits, encouraging even more people to come to the feast. This may have included Gentiles. The master is not satisfied with a partially full banquet hall; he wants every place at the table to be filled!

V24 For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.’”

Jesus ends the parable by relating the master’s determination that *none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.* Those who choose to reject Him, and their calling or *invitation*, will not be in God’s Kingdom!

Leaving All to Follow Christ

V25 And great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them,

V26 If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.

Question: What did Jesus mean when He said, “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple”?

Answer: This verse must be understood in its context. Jesus charged His disciples, “But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you...” (**Luke 6:27**). He also said, “And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise. But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them” (**Luke 6:31-32**).

In other words, Jesus clearly commands us not only to love those who love us – which should include our relatives – but also to love our enemies.

The Bible does not contradict itself. “The scripture cannot be broken” (**John 10:35**). Then what did Jesus mean when He said “hate” in – **Luke 14:26**?

The Greek word for “hate” in this verse is *miseo*. Its root can mean “to detest” or, especially, “to persecute.” By extension, this root can mean “to love less, to postpone in love or esteem, to slight.”

The essence of discipleship is giving God first place. To “hate” one’s family and even one’s life is rhetorical. It refers to desiring something less than something else.

What Jesus said, then, is that anyone who truly follows Him must love Him *more* than family, relatives, or even his own life. We ought to love Jesus Christ – the One who died for us, our Savior and Redeemer – more than anyone else. The love we have for our relatives must be less by comparison.

Jesus said that the second great commandment is “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (**Matthew 22:39**). But, what is the first great commandment? “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind” (**Matthew 22:37-38**).

One who has such love for God and God’s way of life will not compromise. He will not put any human relationship first.

We should love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength and love our neighbors as ourselves – yes, we must even love our enemies. But, what Jesus meant in **Luke 14:26** is that we must not put the demands and desires of our relatives and friends above our obedience to God Almighty.

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V27 And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.

V28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has *enough* to finish *it* –

V29 Lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish *it*, all who see *it* begin to mock him,

V30 Saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’

He was not able to finish – Their mocking centers on the dishonor that results from an inability to complete the task.

Albert Einstein once said – “You never fail until you stop trying.” He had that right.

Following Christ calls for total commitment! Nothing less. We must not quit or give up – we must never stop trying to live a godly life developing Godly character. Once we are “called and chosen” we must remain “faithful”! We must endure to the end!

V31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand?

V32 Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace.

The picture here is of a **king** assessing his ability to do battle with another more powerful king. The king **sends a delegation** only after appreciating the weight and consequences of his decision. Jesus wanted people to think about what it would mean to follow Him, and not to take it lightly. He wants us to count the cost – before we make the biggest commitment we will ever make – to follow Him!

V33 So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.

Tasteless Salt Is Worthless

V34 Salt *is* good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned?

V35 It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, *but* men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

A final warning closes the exhortation.

Salt in the ancient world was used in several ways: as a catalyst for burning fuel such as cattle dung, as a seasoning, as a preservative, and as fertilizer. In each case the presence of salt facilitated some function. Salt is good as long as it is salty. But if salt has grown insipid how can its saltiness be restored to it?

Once salt ceases to perform its role – once it loses its flavor – once it loses its saltiness – it is good for nothing.

A mere profession of religion is fit for nothing. It does no good, and is fit only to be cast out and rejected!

Luke 9:62 “But Jesus said to him, “No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”

II Peter 1:10-11: V10 “Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;

V11 For so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”