

LUKE

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Luke chapter 13 as we continue our study through the Word of God. Keep in mind that we are in the final few months of Jesus' earthly ministry as He has set His face to go to Jerusalem, to be put to death for our sins.

Knowing that His time is short He is pouring His heart into His teaching, not holding back but using every opportunity to show people the truths of God instead of the misconceptions they were being taught by the Jewish religious leaders.

So, we have a lot of ground to cover this evening and let's begin reading in verse 1 of Luke chapter 13 and see what the Lord has for us this evening as we study through the Word of God.

LUKE 13**VERSES 1-5**

Keep in mind that the Jews felt if tragedy came upon your life it was because of some sin in your life. Remember in John 9:1-2 where we are told, **“Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’”**

And Jesus corrected their misconception by saying, **“... ‘Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.’”** John 9:3.

Yes, there are times that our sin brings about illness, sickness, trouble, but not all the time. The problem is we live in a world of sin and these bodies are moving towards disorder and decay! And bad things happen in our lives.

Here the people bring up about some Galileans who came to worship God and Pilate killed them! We don't have this incident recorded for us but that truly was Pilate!

A very similar incident occurred before the ministry of Jesus. You see, Pilate wanted to build an aqueduct from the pools of Solomon to the city of Jerusalem. And to pay for this project he demanded money from the Temple treasury, money that had been dedicated to God!

As you can imagine, the priests were not happy and neither were the people. Thus, they sent a delegation to Pilate to ask for this money back. Pilate was aware of what was going on and he sent soldiers into the crowds dressed as common people and when a certain signal was given, these soldiers took out their daggers and attacked these people who were asking for money!

So the crowds here were familiar with this other story that took place as well and they are asking Jesus about this. And the way that Jesus answers the crowd is by saying that they were no worse sinners than any of the other Galileans who were not murdered!

Even today people want to associate affliction, trouble to sin and Jesus is saying that is not always the case. Look at Job's comforters, that is what they were saying, they were blaming Job for hiding his sin as the reason for all the calamity that came upon him. And yet, the book of Job says that was not the case.

Jesus also speaks of 18 people who were killed when a tower in Siloam fell on them and they were no worse sinners than those that were not killed, other Jews living in Jerusalem at that time.

The point is this. All sin and fall short of the glory of God, thus, repent of your sin, come to Jesus before it is too late and you perish. There are no guarantees on how long you will live, don't pass up the opportunity to give your life to Jesus!

You see, the reality is, not why did these people die but what right do we have to live? The death rate is still one per person, it is the common denominator for everyone, and the only differentiating factor is repenting of your sins and asking Jesus to come into your life and then you have eternal life in Him, you can live!

And yet today, we don't like to talk about sin, we don't like to talk about repentance. Maybe you heard the story from the Babylonian Bee about the pastor who had to repent because of mentioning repentance in his sermons. It is a sad story and this is what transpired. We are told,

BATON ROUGE, LA - Many Christian leaders pridefully refuse to publicly repent, so it's always refreshing to hear of a pastor who is willing to admit when he is in the wrong. Such is the case with local pastor Ralph Atkinson, who issued a public statement Monday morning openly repenting of mentioning the biblical concept of repentance in his weekly messages and Bible studies.

According to Atkinson, he began to feel convicted of talking about repentance too much during his Tuesday night Bible study, as he suddenly realized that calling his people to repent of their sins just felt "super awkward."

"It suddenly dawned on me: I needed to repent of talking about repentance so often," a spiritually broken Atkinson told reporters, his head in his hands. "I am turning away from my old way of doing things and casting myself on God's mercy, praying that that He will help me stop making people really uncomfortable by talking about repentance."

Atkinson further stated he plans on “lightening up” when it comes to talking about sin, hell, death, and the Lordship of Christ.

“I only pray God will forgive me for being so faithful in past years,” he said, before adding, “God’s a God of new beginnings, and I know He’ll give me a fresh, repentance-free start.”

- <http://babylonbee.com/news/pastor-repents-mentioning-repentance-sermons/>

Okay, a little sarcastic, but hopefully it gets the point across. Sin and repentance are to be spoken and Jesus makes that very clear here in Luke chapter 13. And if you think about it, if you don’t see yourself as a sinner you won’t see your need to repent and thus, what is the need for a Savior? The reason is simple, we are sinners separated from God and unless we repent of our sins and ask Jesus to be Lord and Savior of our lives, we will die in our sins and be eternally separated from Him, ultimately in the Lake of Fire!

VERSES 6-9

Now as some read this they see this speaking primarily about bearing fruit in our lives. To a point, that is true but keep in mind that Jesus has just been speaking about **REPENTANCE!** In other words, if you have come to Jesus and repented of your sins you will bear fruit in your life! If you don’t, then you will be barren!

And keep in mind that Jesus is speaking to the Jews and thus, to illustrate His point, Jesus gives them a parable of the fig tree, which speaks of the nation of Israel. Now here is the point. For 3 years Jesus has been ministering to the nation and the religious leaders have rejected Him, they refused to repent of their sins and thus, they bore no fruit and they were going to be cut down. But Jesus intercedes and asks for a little more time to see if any fruit would be born.

Obviously time did not help, for they rejected Jesus, put Him to death and in 70 A. D. the city of Jerusalem saw its destruction with millions of Jews being killed and the rest scattered! They were cut down!

The Lord desires fruit in our lives also. There must be a visible change in our lives showing our faith in Jesus is real or else our faith is empty. You see, the fruit you bring forth shows who you are attached to or abiding in! You can keep resisting Jesus and refuse to repent of your sins, but understand there is coming a day of reckoning, His Judgment if you reject Him!

VERSES 10-13

Think about this for a minute. For eighteen long years this woman has been bent over so much that she could not even lift her head up to see. Not only that but there seems to be some kind of spiritual element to this illness, some demonic element to it.

Spurgeon gives us this insight to what was going on in her life day in and day out for those long eighteen years! He wrote, "For eighteen years she had not gazed upon the sun; for eighteen years no star of night had gladdened her eye; her face was drawn downward towards the dust, and all the light of her life was dim: she walked about as if she were searching for a grave, and I do not doubt she often felt that it would have been gladness to have found one."

And here is Jesus in the synagogue on the Sabbath and as He encounters this woman we see the love and compassion He had for her. He reaches out and heals her. And what does she do? She praises God, brings glory to God!

Now what about us? You see, often our problems have us bent over, bowed down, and Jesus is waiting to lift us up again if we would only reach out to Him.

Imagine the crowds in this synagogue on the Sabbath day and everyone should have been shouting for joy, praising God, but not everyone was. Let's read on and you will see what I mean.

VERSE 14

Instead of rejoicing, this religious leader objected to what Jesus did because it broke his interpretation of the Sabbath law. You see, there were six days to heal if you wanted to, but this Sabbath day was for rest, was his thinking.

And did you notice that this ruler of the synagogue did not speak to Jesus but rebuked this poor woman who was bound for eighteen years and is now free! What a sad picture of religion and think about it. If any time our religious traditions keep us from helping a person in need, our traditions are wrong.

In fact, back in Luke 11:52 we are told, **“Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter in yourselves, and those who were entering in you hindered.”**

You see, by their traditions, they were keeping not only themselves from the kingdom of God, but others they were teaching these things. And think about this, for eighteen years this woman had this infirmity and this religious leader could do nothing, not even on any other day of the week, but Jesus could and did, He freed her! That is our Lord, He wants to free people from the bondage of sin that they are in and so many are trying to keep people from being healed with their traditions!

VERSES 15-17

Jesus nails this guy and all who were siding with him. You see, on the Sabbath they would care for their animals without thinking twice about it, and yet here is this woman in need and they want her to come back another day, wait until the Sabbath is over to be healed. How ridiculous and they realized that and thus, they were silent!

And their silence speaks volumes. Instead of repenting before God, they are silent before Him! You see, like back then they tried to use the Law to make themselves righteous and it won't work, it will only show you how unrighteous you are.

It is as Paul said in Galatians 3:23-26, **“But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.”**

Again, the Law was our tutor, it brought us to Jesus. How did it do that? By showing us we are sinners, we have broken the Law and there is no way to rectify that problem on our own. Thus, we must repent of our sins and receive Jesus into our lives by faith. As Paul said in Galatians 2:16, **“knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.”** I think that is very clear!

VERSES 18-19

Now some see this as a positive illustration, that the kingdom of God will grow and grow and birds of the air can find rest in her. I don't think so. I see this as a false growth, that as the church gets more popular, many jump aboard.

In fact, birds in the parables represent messengers of Satan according to Matthew 13:4, 19. And we see that today where ministers promote homosexuality, sexual promiscuity, accepting all religions and-so-on. I am sorry if I offend any of you, but they are birds, messengers of Satan and not of God! Thus, this passage speaks of abnormal church growth as the church tolerates more and more evil.

VERSE 20-21

Some see this in a positive light as well. That the church will spread its influence throughout the world. Sounds lovely but that is not at all what Jesus is saying.

How can I be so sure? Because leaven in the Scripture is not good but evil, it is ***SIN!*** Even leaven itself spreads by puffing up and rotting. Thus, what we see here is the church being puffed up, growing in sin and false doctrine that gives us a picture of corrupt worship for the three measures of meal was the standard grain offering to God and He will not accept this kind of worship.

And look at the hypocrisy in the church today, making allegiances for the sake of unity and peace and tossing the truths of God right out the window! The only true unity is based in the truths of God and not outside of them.

G. Campbell Morgan wrote that the leaven represents “paganizing influences” brought into the church. “The parable of the tree, teaches the growth of the Kingdom into a great power; and the second, the parable of the leaven, its corruption.”

And when you see the Protestants, Catholics, Muslims, Hindus and the like coming together, what Jesus spoke of is happening right before our eyes and it is not a good thing!

VERSES 22-30

Luke tells us that Jesus is getting closer and closer to Jerusalem. In fact, here in Luke’s Gospel Jesus does not arrive in Jerusalem until chapter 19. But just keep in mind that Jesus is making His way to Jerusalem, to the cross of Calvary!

Also, keep in mind that Jesus is going to make it to Jerusalem in time for Passover and the reason is simple. He was going to be the Passover Lamb to take away the sins of the world.

And even as He traveled He continued to teach, going through various cities and villages. And as He does a question is asked, “**Lord, are there few who are saved?**”

That was a question the religious leaders debated. Now the response that Jesus gives is interesting, for He tells us to, **“Strive to enter through the narrow gate.”** The word **“strive”** literally speaks of “agonizing” and the Greek word, according to Bruce, has “the idea of a struggle or prize-fight.”

Now wait a minute, I thought salvation was a free gift that we receive by faith? If that is true, why do we struggle to get in?

First of all, who or what is the narrow gate? Jesus of course, He is the door, He is the gate we enter through. So, we enter into heaven through Him as John 14:6 tells us, **“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’”**

Then why do we strive to enter in? Because there are many other gates out there, many other doors, many other obstacles that are trying to draw us away from Jesus, the narrow gate! You see, it does matter what you believe in, which door you enter through, it must be Jesus for all the other doors are false doors, empty doors that lead to Hell!

If you enter one of those doors, Jesus says you will not enter into heaven, He doesn’t know you, and you will be cast into eternity apart from Him. You see, Jesus is not concerned about how many enter in, but that you would enter in!

Make no mistake about it, these were radical statements by Jesus because the Jews thought by birth they would enter into the kingdom and Jesus is saying that is wrong, only through the new birth, receiving Him into your life will you enter in!

And according to Carson, “The definite articles with ‘weeping’ and ‘gnashing’ (cf. Greek) emphasize the horror of the scene: *the* weeping and *the* gnashing. . . . Weeping suggests suffering and gnashing of teeth despair.”

Not a good thing but Jesus wants us to understand the consequences of entering the wrong door! Now there are some who like to say that Hell is temporary or that it doesn't even exist for those who reject Jesus. Is that what the Scriptures tell us? Not at all. Hell is real just as heaven is real and the punishment in Hell is eternal just as our blessings with the Lord is eternal. Listen to what we are told,

It is interesting that a much higher percentage of people believe in the existence of heaven than believe in the existence of hell. According to the Bible, though, hell is just as real as heaven. The Bible clearly and explicitly teaches that hell is a real place to which the wicked/unbelieving are sent after death. We have all sinned against God (Romans 3:23). The just punishment for that sin is death (Romans 6:23). Since all of our sin is ultimately against God (Psalm 51), and since God is an infinite and eternal Being, the punishment for sin, death, must also be infinite and eternal. Hell is this infinite and eternal death which we have earned because of our sin.

The punishment of the wicked dead in hell is described throughout Scripture as “eternal fire” (Matthew 25:41), “unquenchable fire” (Matthew 3:12), “shame and everlasting contempt” (Daniel 12:2), a place where “the fire is not quenched” (Mark 9:44-49), a place of “torment” and “fire” (Luke 16:23-24), “everlasting destruction” (2 Thessalonians 1:9), a place where “the smoke of torment rises forever and ever” (Revelation 14:10-11), and a “lake of burning sulfur” where the wicked are “tormented day and night forever and ever” (Revelation 20:10).

The punishment of the wicked in hell is as never ending as the bliss of the righteous in heaven. Jesus Himself indicates that punishment in hell is just as everlasting as life in heaven (Matthew 25:46). The wicked are forever subject to the fury and the wrath of God. Those in hell will acknowledge the perfect justice of God (Psalm 76:10). Those who are in hell will know that their punishment is just and that they alone are to blame (Deuteronomy 32:3-5). Yes, hell is real. Yes, hell is a place of torment and punishment that lasts forever and ever, with no end. Praise God that, through Jesus, we can escape this eternal fate (John 3:16, 18, 36).

- <https://www.gotquestions.org/hell-real-eternal.html>

I hope that clears that up for you if you had any questions about that issue.

Also, the Jews thought they could and would enter the kingdom, not only by being a Jew but also by keeping the Law, and Jesus is saying that it is by faith in Him and not the Law, not that the Law is bad but we are and could never keep the whole Law.

Paul put it this way in Romans 3:20-24, **“Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”**

Salvation is a free gift of God, don't ignore it or pass it up!

VERSES 31-33

Now please don't get the idea that the Pharisees cared about Jesus and they were warning Him that Herod wanted Him dead, they didn't. In fact, they are the ones who are going to come after Jesus. Then what was the point? They wanted Jesus to get out of their region, to leave town, not to go to Jerusalem!

And as much power as Herod thought he had, he really had none because God was in control! And for these Pharisees, they were just pawns in the hands of Satan to get them to thwart the plan of God, to keep Jesus from completing His mission, going to Jerusalem to die for the sins of the world. But He is not going to let anything stop Him from completing the task, He is on a time-table that will be fulfilled down to the smallest detail and the perfect time.

Now with Jerusalem on His mind, Jesus cries out . . .

VERSES 34-35

Jesus laments over Jerusalem for He sees the power of Rome coming down and destroying her and her only hope is Jesus, whom they have rejected. And in less than 40 years from this cry, in 70 A. D., Rome did come down and destroy the city of Jerusalem, millions dying and the Jews scattered all over the place!

Clarke put it like this, "When the hen sees a beast of prey coming, she makes a noise to assemble her chickens, that she may cover them with her wings from the danger. The Roman *eagle* is about to fall upon the Jewish state – nothing can prevent this but their conversion to God through Christ – Jesus cries throughout the land, publishing the gospel of *reconciliation* – they would not *assemble*, and the *Roman eagle* came and destroyed them."

Now how can we apply this to our own lives? Think about it. I wonder how many times God wants to gather us in under the shelter of His wings and we just run away? May that not be. May we learn the lesson here and submit to our Lord and take shelter under His wings!

Now as you read verse 35 what I believe we see here is the petition of the nation as they call upon the Lord prior to His return at His Second Coming at the end of the Tribulation Period.

It is as Paul said in Romans 11:25-27, **“For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: ‘The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; For this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.’”**

Yes, one day they will receive Jesus as Lord and savior, the nation of Israel will be saved!

Again, Clarke put it like this regarding this verse, “Till after the fullness of the Gentiles is brought in, when the word of life shall again be sent unto you; then will ye rejoice, and bless, and *praise him that cometh in the name of the Lord*, with full and final salvation for the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

As we read on into Luke chapter 14 we will see Jesus continue teaching and trying to draw out the faith of these Jewish religious leaders as well as the multitudes of people that were following Him.

LUKE 14**VERSE 1**

This is the third-time Jesus ate at the house of a Pharisee according to Luke. The first time was at Simon's house who neglected to show Jesus any hospitality in Luke 7:36-50.

The second-time was at the house of the Pharisee who complained that Jesus didn't wash His hands according to their traditions in Luke 11:37-54.

And now here in Luke chapter 14 He is invited to another Pharisee's house and Jesus once again is being watched closely to see if He will break the law or should I say their traditions for it was the Sabbath day. In fact, the Greek word for "**watched**" carries with it the idea of scrutiny and not for good!

Now as unfair as this may seem, we need to understand that people are watching us, reading our lives as Christians just as these Pharisees were watching Jesus! Paul put it this way in II Corinthians 3:2-3, "**You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.**"

What are people reading in your life? They should be seeing Jesus!

VERSES 2-4

Here is this man with dropsy at this Pharisee's house. Before we deal with that let me share with you what this dropsy was all about. Dropsy was a painful condition in which a person filled up with fluid in their tissue because of liver failure, or kidney failure or heart failure. The person looked bloated and felt miserable.

Now, why was this man at the Pharisee's house? I believe that they invited him there to see if Jesus would heal him on the Sabbath day and break the Law, or I should say their traditions. You see, it was a set-up and Jesus knew it so He just asks them a simple question, "**Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?**"

Pretty simple question but please understand that in their mind it wasn't lawful to heal on the Sabbath day! But now they were between a rock and a hard place, really, what could they say when here stood a man in need.

And please understand that they knew the love and compassion that Jesus had for people and that He could not just ignore this man, so they kept silent and Jesus healed this man, set him free.

And at this point I'm sure they were thinking they have got Him now, He broke the Law, but Jesus gives them another question to think about. Let's read on and see what Jesus has to say to these Jewish religious leaders.

VERSES 5-6

Again, this was true of how they lived out their lives. If one of their animals fell into a pit they would rescue that animal even on the Sabbath. Thus, if they would take care of their animal that had fallen into a pit on the Sabbath day, then why couldn't this man be released from his disease on the Sabbath? And of course, they had nothing to say, what could they say? And please understand that it was not that they could not answer either of these questions by Jesus, but they chose not to answer them because it would have exposed their evil hearts!

As one writer put it, “If they said no, they would reveal themselves for what they really were – inhumane religious leaders. If they said yes, they would be breaking their own laws governing the Sabbath.” (Pate)

VERSE 7

As these religious men were being seated, the seating arrangement at a dinner showed a definite order of prestige or honor. The most honored person sat in a particular seat, the next most honored person in another seat, and so on down the line. It was more honorable they felt. So as Jesus observed this He gave them this parable to think about.

VERSES 8-11

In other words, don't go rushing to sit in the place of honor for another may come and bump you down to a lower seat, a lower position. Jesus is not teaching good manners here, but a lifestyle to live by, as Paul said in Philippians 2:3-4, “**Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.**”

That is the parable, now for the principle, which we read in verse 11, “**For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.**”

If you want to exalt yourself in this life, you will be brought down. If you humble yourself, God will lift you up! It is as James 4:6 says, “**But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: ‘God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.’**”

Also, in James 4:10, “**Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.**”

What we are not to do is seen in III John 9-11, **“I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us. Therefore, if I come, I will call to mind his deeds which he does, prating against us with malicious words. And not content with that, he himself does not receive the brethren, and forbids those who wish to, putting them out of the church. Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God.”**

Thus, humble yourself before God and man because you are not special, He is and He wants to lift you up, if you would only humble yourself before Him.

VERSES 12-14

Now don't come to the conclusion that we are not to invite family or friends over. That is not the point. What Jesus is saying is don't do things for your own benefit but reach out to others in need, minister to them, not looking to be paid back. He wants us to freely give as you have freely received from God and He will reward you at the Judgment Seat of Christ where our crowns will be given!

VERSE 15

Here we see another Pharisee most likely, say, **“Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.”** Amen to that! Nothing wrong with that and keep in mind that feasts were joyous celebrations and the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, where the family of God is gathered together, will be a blessed occasion.

It is as Revelation 19:7-9 says, **“Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.’ And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, Write: ‘Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’ And he said to me, ‘These are the true sayings of God.’”**

Now I think maybe this guy was trying to break the silence and the awkwardness of the moment by saying this. And if you were to ask him what he meant, I am not sure he could give you a good answer. But Jesus is going to expose their hearts once again showing all the excuses that people come up with for not coming to the feast, and really, for not coming to God!

VERSES 16-24

It is amazing the number of excuses that people can come up with to avoid doing something. Benjamin Franklin said, “A man who is good at making excuses is seldom good for anything else!” How true that is!

Remember that what Jesus is speaking of here is based off of what that Pharisee said, **“Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.”** And here we see the Lord calling those He invited into the feast but they had some very lame excuses why they couldn’t come. Everything is ready except for the people!

The first said he bought a piece of land and he needs to go and see it. Give me a break. Who buys land without first seeing it?

The second lame excuse dealt with some oxen a man bought and he needs to test drive them, so he can’t come. Come on, who would buy a car without first test driving it?

The third lame excuse is even better, a man is married and he blames his wife, she wouldn't let him go to the feast!

Listen carefully to what we are told in Isaiah 55:6-7, **“Seek the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.”** People do the same today and tragically many will miss the call!

Now here's the thing. Just because some have refused to come doesn't mean the Lord is not going to have a feast. The Jewish religious leaders rejected the invitation and so the command now is to go out and bring all the lame, the hurting into the feast, those redeemed sinners, both Jew and Gentile! Why compel? Because it is hard to believe God would invite me, invite you to His banquet. But He has if we receive His Son Jesus Christ into our lives!

Here is the application in verse 24, **“For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.”**

Keep in mind that Jesus is speaking to the Jewish religious leaders and they thought they were going to the feast but Jesus says that they are not, even though they were invited. You see, they rejected Jesus and thus, they will die in their sins.

And really, for that matter, no Jew or Gentile who rejects Jesus will enter into the marriage supper of the Lamb, they will not enter into the Kingdom Age!

VERSES 25-26

Jesus is now speaking to the multitudes who were following Him and He is explaining to them what it cost to be a disciple of Jesus. Your life! You see, when Jesus speaks of hating family and loving God He is not speaking, necessarily, of opposing words, but comparative.

That is, if you want to follow Jesus, and your parents or spouse say to you, “You are not welcomed in this house any longer if you continue with all that Jesus garbage!” what are you going to do? You have to love God more than family.

You see, Jesus boldly said that the true disciple comes to Him without reservation, setting Jesus first. Other relationships are definitely of lower priority than faithfulness and obedience to Jesus. It is not that we are to hate family and friends but we are to love Jesus more!

It is as Jesus said in Matthew 10:35-37, **“For I have come to ‘set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law’; and ‘a man’s enemies will be those of his own household.’ He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.”** Again, your love for Jesus must be supreme, over family and friends. You see, it will cost you something.

Napoleon understood this principle when he said, “I know men; and I tell you that Jesus Christ is no mere man. Between him and every other person in the world there is no possible term of comparison. Alexander [the Great], Caesar, Charlemagne, and I have founded empires. But on what did we rest the creations of our genius? Upon force. Jesus Christ founded his empire upon love; and this hour millions of men would die for him.”

VERSE 27

What does it mean to “*bear our cross*”? Some say “My mother in-law is my cross to bear!” Or “My wife is my cross to bear!” or whatever. That is wrong! The cross meant total submission to God, there was no turning back, it is a life committed to Him. This is hard but if you refuse to love Him and submit to Him, you can’t be His disciple.

And please understand that carrying a cross always led to death on a cross. No one carried a cross for fun. The first hearers of Jesus didn’t need an explanation of the cross; they knew it was an unrelenting instrument of torture, death, and humiliation. If someone took up his cross, he never came back. It was a one-way journey.

Thus, death to the old life, following Jesus, no turning back!

Now Jesus is going to illustrate the foolishness of coming to Him without first counting the cost, ready to give your all to Him. Know what it is going to cost you to be a disciple of Jesus!

VERSES 28-33

First of all, Jesus talks about a building project and before you begin building you need to make sure you have the funds to finish the project. Obviously, to begin a project and not able to complete it because you don’t have enough resources would be foolish. What good would half a tower be? It would be good for nothing! The idea here is this. Can you afford to follow Jesus? I’m not talking about finances, or other resources but your life.

Next, we see Jesus speak of not going into battle until you first know that you can win. And I think the idea here is that you can’t afford to reject Jesus, you need to see you can’t fight and win against Him. Thus, it is far better to be on His side than against Him!

The bottom line is this. Are you willing to lay down your life and follow Jesus because if you are not ready to do that, then don't follow at all! Sounds harsh but it is a reality. How many of you are willing to go into battle with another soldier who is not willing to be prepared, give his all for you as you are ready to give your all for him? His mind is on other things, and you are alert, watching for the enemy. None of us would want a partner like that. God is asking no less from us, count the cost!

And then, in verse 33 we see the application, "**So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.**" This is the application, and it is tough.

If you are not willing to say goodbye, forsake all you have for Him, then you "***cannot be [His] disciple.***" Notice it doesn't say you "may not be [His] disciple."

In other words, your love for Jesus must be greater than your love for family, for friends, for possessions, for your job, for your sports activities, or whatever. You need to count the cost and make the decision. You see, where your treasure is at, what is valuable to you, is where your heart will be also! May it be Jesus, may He be the treasure of your heart!

VERSES 34-35

Modern salt is pure and doesn't lose its flavor like it could back then when it was mixed with other things, it wasn't pure.

Thus, Jesus is saying that if you have lost your preserving abilities, your influence, if you are not standing up for righteousness, what good are you?

He is also saying if you have lost your tang, if you don't add flavor to people's lives, what good are you?

If you don't make people thirsty for Jesus, what good are you?

And the only way you will have these qualities is by having the nature of Jesus and the only way you can have the nature of Jesus is by abiding in Him!

Listen to these words from one commentator. He wrote,

There is shown the danger of what begins well turning out ill. What is there in the world so useless as salt when it has lost the one property for which it is valued? It is worse than useless for any other purpose. So with the disciple who ceases to be Christ's disciple. He is not suited for the world's purposes, and he has forsaken God's. He has too much light or knowledge for entering into the vanities and sins of the world, and he has no enjoyment of grace and truth to keep him in the path of Christ. . . . Savorless salt becomes an object of contempt and judgment.

- Source Unknown

Tough sayings by Jesus and He closes this section by saying "**He who has ears to hear, let him hear!**" May we not only hear, but apply these things into our lives as God has desired! It is as James said, "**But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.**" James 1:22. May we do that!

Now I can't just end here, I want to share this with you and then I will close. Jesus invited all to come to the feast. He said some tough things regarding being a disciple of His. And listen to the response of what Jesus said in Luke 15:1-2, "**Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, 'This Man receives sinners and eats with them.'**"

The tax collectors and sinners knew they needed a Savior, they were without hope apart from Jesus. So they freely come to Him, they counted the cost and it was more than worth it for them!

But, the religious leaders did not see themselves as sinners and complained that Jesus not only receives sinners but He eats with them! They were lost in their sin. And praise God that Jesus not only receives us sinners but one day we will sit down and dine with Him!