

**#75 “LESSONS TO LIVE BY”**  
**Luke 13:1-30**

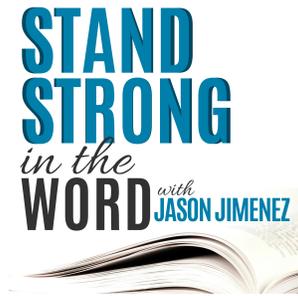
As Jesus remained in the area of Judea, He was invited to dine with a Pharisee (Lk. 11:37-54) who condemned Jesus for not observing ceremonial washing. This led into an open rebuke by Jesus—calling out their religious hypocrisy. Shortly thereafter, Jesus is in the midst of large crowds (Lk. 12:1) and presents five warnings to His disciples and followers (Lk. 12:2-56) and ends by illustrating the need to repent and get right with others and with God (Lk. 12:57-59). This, in turn, provokes the people to engage Jesus on various topics discussed in Luke 13.

**LESSON #1: MOTIVES TO REPENT**  
**Luke 13:1-5**

1. ***There were some present at that very time*** (refers back to Lk. 12) ***who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.*** <sup>2</sup> ***And he answered them, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way?”*** <sup>3</sup> ***No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.*** Continuing the discussion of judgment in Luke 12, Jesus offers up two calamities known by the Jews to drive home the frailty of life and the need to repent. The first illustration Jesus refers to has to do with some Jews murdered at the temple by Pilate (Roman Governor AD 26-36). Pilate was known for his brutality and hatred among the Jews (see Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.60-62) <sup>4</sup> ***Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem?”*** <sup>5</sup> ***No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.*** The second illustration has to do with some Jews who died by a tower falling on them. Jesus stresses that death upon these Jews doesn't mean they were less righteous than those who still live. However, all will die and face judgment. Therefore, Jesus calls the people to repent (in this life) so that they will not perish in the next.

**LESSON #2: PARABLE OF THE FIG TREE**  
**Luke 13:6-9**

1. <sup>6</sup> ***And he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none.*** Jesus now employs a parable of a fig tree



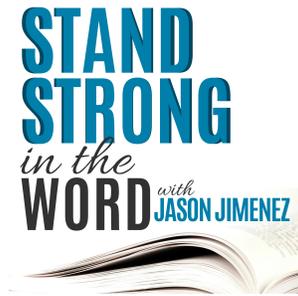
(which often represents Israel (Hosea 9:10) as a way to underscore that God is looking for fruit among His people. Fig trees were very common in Judea and Galilee.

2. <sup>7</sup> **And he said to the vinedresser, ‘Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?’** According to Leviticus 19:23, it was forbidden to take fruit from a tree in the first three years. Making the fig tree six years old and had yet to produce fruit.
  - A. Vineyards would often plant certain fruit trees to provide additional flavor (subtle bouquet) to their wine. So, in this case, this particular fig tree isn’t producing fruit, nor is it adding flavor to the vines. It’s just taking up dead space.
3. <sup>8</sup> **And he answered him, ‘Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. <sup>9</sup> Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’**” What the servant does to the fig tree was not common practice. However, the master agrees—extending further patience (reflective of God’s mercy).
  - A. Jesus will later condemn a fruitless fig tree: Matt. 21:18-22; Mk. 11:12-14, 20-24
  - B. Paul describes the spiritual fruit that should be on display in any life of a Christian (see Gal. 5:22-25).
  - C. At this point of Jesus’ ministry, He was entering His fourth Passover. When you keep in mind this parable of the fig tree, it makes sense what Jesus was saying when considering the previous Passovers. At first Passover, Jesus drove out the moneychangers at the temple (Jn. 2:13-22). The second Passover consisted of the Jews challenging and threatening Jesus: “This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God (Jn. 5:18).” The third Passover (Jn. 6:4) involved Jesus touring the Gentile land and the crowds only interested in Him perform signs that enriched their physical status. Which leads into the final Passover—which represents a time of God’s mercy and grace.

### LESSON #3: HEALING OF A CRIPPLED WOMAN

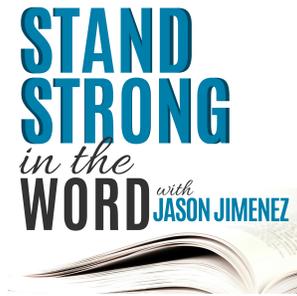
Luke 13:10-21

1. <sup>10</sup> **Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath** (Gk is plural). Despite the opposition Jesus received from the religious leaders, He was still invited to lecture in the synagogues. This is the last recorded incident of Jesus in a synagogue.
2. <sup>11</sup> **And behold, there was a woman who had had a disabling (incapacity) spirit (spirit causing weakness) for eighteen years. She was bent over (doubled up position) and**



**could not fully straighten** (erect) **herself**. It is clear that this woman was suffering from a disability caused by demonic activity.

- A. <sup>12</sup> **When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said to her, “Woman, you are freed** (released from control) **from your disability.”** <sup>13</sup> **And he laid his hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and she glorified God.** Several times Jesus healed people on the Sabbath. He healed the man with the withered hand (Lk. 6:6-11), the paralyzed man (Jn. 5:1-17), and the man with dropsy (Lk. 14:1-6). This particular miracle pointed to the power Jesus had over Satan and the rest that He brings (reflected of the true purpose and meaning of the Sabbath). This healing provided people one more opportunity to repent and believe Jesus is the Messiah.
3. <sup>14</sup> **But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant** (judged to be wrong) **because Jesus had healed** (to serve someone to recovered health) **on the Sabbath, said to the people, “There are six days in which work ought to be done. Come on those days and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day.”** Healing on the Sabbath was the only thing the religious leaders felt they could directly condemn Jesus for.
4. <sup>15</sup> **Then the Lord answered him, “You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it away to water it?”** <sup>16</sup> **And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound** (physical hardship) **for eighteen years, be loosed** (released from control) **from this bond on the Sabbath day?”** The Jews created many exceptions for convenience (Hillel v. Shammai) and Jesus publicly called them out for their inconsistencies on the Sabbath and lack of concern for human life. Thus, it was the Jews (not Jesus) who were in violation of breaking the Sabbath. **Hypocrites**—Jesus started out calling the people hypocrites (12:54-13:21) and exposing their fruitless lives unto God (13:6-9). Rather than see repentance in the hearts of the people; He confirms this again for their lack of interest to obey God and love their fellow neighbor.
5. <sup>17</sup> **As he said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame** (humiliated; disgraced), **and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.**
  - A. “It was Jesus’ mission among the people of the nation to loose them from crippling influences and bring them to uprightness. Here was a graphic example of Jesus’ touch, bringing the woman to a position of uprightness. Jesus healed her by His words (Woman, you are set free from your infirmity) and by touching her. Immediately she straightened up and praised God. This act of praising God was the proper response to the work of Jesus (cf. 2:20;



5:25–26; 7:16; 17:15; 18:43; 23:47). It showed that people were understanding His mission.”<sup>1</sup>

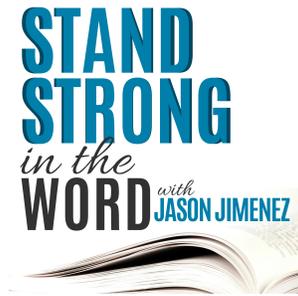
#### LESSON #4: PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM

##### Luke 13:18-21

1. <sup>18</sup> **He said therefore, “What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it?** The way in which Jesus posed the questions was a very common Rabbinic teaching style. Once before, Jesus taught about the kingdom of God being like a grain of mustard seed and leaven (see Matt. 13:31-33; Mk. 4:30-32).
2. <sup>19</sup> **It is like a grain of mustard seed** (outward growth) **that a man took and sowed in his garden, and it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches.”** The image of birds nesting in trees is mentioned in several OT passages (see Ps. 104:12; Ezek. 17:22-24; Dan. 4:10-12).
3. <sup>20</sup> **And again he said, “To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? <sup>21</sup> It is like leaven** (inward growth) **that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour** (feed over 100 people), **until it was all leavened.”** The interpretation of the mustard seed seems straight forward. The mustard seed and leaven (in context) to Jesus’ overarching theme of the expansion of the kingdom of heaven. Referencing Ezek. 17:23; 31:6; Dan. 4:21 that prophesy the kingdom growth of Jews and Gentiles. Revealing the penetrating power of the kingdom in the world despite Satan and the presence of sin. However, another interpretation is that the terms **birds of the air** and **leaven** are used to depict corruption and sin. Therefore, Jesus is describing how there will be bad influences and false teachers who will corrupt the work of God.
  - A. David Guzik, “**Hid in it:** The idea of hiding leaven in **three measures of meal** would have offended any observant Jew. This certainly isn’t a picture of the church gradually influencing the whole world for good. Even as the recent experience in the synagogue showed religious corruption of some sort, Jesus announced that His kingdom community would also be threatened by corruption and impurity.”

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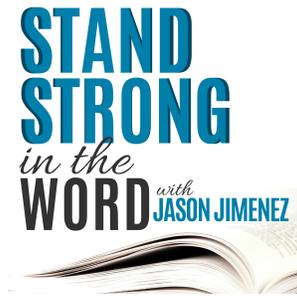
<sup>1</sup> John A. Martin, “[Luke](#),” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 240.



## LESSON #5: The Narrow Gate

Luke 13:22-30

1. <sup>22</sup> **He went on his way through towns and villages, teaching** (formal and informal) **and journeying** (to move a considerable distance) **toward Jerusalem.** The Lukan account makes mention of Jesus moving closer to Jerusalem where He will be crucified.
2. <sup>23</sup> **And someone said to him, “Lord, will those who are saved be few?”** Having just likened the kingdom of God to a mustard seed and leaven (13:18-21)—this individual probably asked the question as a follow up to Jesus’ teachings about His kingdom followers. Perhaps it also sheds some light on the volume of rejection taking place in Jesus’ ministry.
3. **And he said to them,** <sup>24</sup> **“Strive** (make every effort; intensity; struggle) **to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek** (to try without success) **to enter and will not be able.** <sup>25</sup> **When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, open to us,’ then he will answer you, ‘I do not know** (to be acquainted) **where you come from.’** This response of Jesus is directly linked to His teaching on repentance and the five warnings given in Luke 12. He uses a banquet feast to stress there will come a time when people will finally “give God a try,” but it will be too late. The **door** had been open all this time and the invitations handed out (signifying God’s mercy); but they waited to come once the banquet doors were closed.
  - A. <sup>26</sup> **Then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in your presence** (covenant relationship), **and you taught in our streets.’** <sup>27</sup> **But he will say, ‘I tell you, I do not know where you come from. Depart from me, all you workers of evil!’** Notice the disconnect these people have with the master. They argue they “knew” him; and yet he refers to them as evildoers (see Ps. 6:8). **I do not know**—To not know of one’s heritage is a statement of repudiation and rejection.
  - B. <sup>28</sup> **In that place 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 but you yourselves cast out.** The coming judgment upon those unrepented souls is unbearable (see Matt. 8:12; 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30). As hard as it is to mention such punishment, Jesus (in His perfect love and justice), speaks the truth in effort to draw people to repentance. Position as a descendant of the patriarchs does not come with access to God’s kingdom.
  - C. <sup>29</sup> **And people will come from east and west, and from north and south, and recline at table in the kingdom of God.** According to Isaiah 25:6-7, which reads,



“<sup>6</sup> On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined. And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations.” The Jews believed there will be a huge banquet feast for the righteous in God’s kingdom to come.

- D. <sup>30</sup> ***And behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.***” The Jews thought they will be first, but many will be last. That is, they will miss the kingdom.