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What Do You See?

LUKE 13:10-21

Introduction

1. Take a moment and look around the auditorium this morning.
 - a. What do you see?
 - b. What do you not see?
2. Are there people here that you have known for years?
3. Perhaps people with whom you grew up?
4. How well do you know them?
 - a. Do they have physical struggles that you know nothing about?
 - b. Are they carrying a heavy load of sorrow, or guilt or sin which they have kept hidden from you?
5. Are there people here that you have never noticed before?
6. Are they newcomers or just people you haven't come to know?
7. In our text this morning, Luke introduces us to a woman that many had perhaps known for years, but she was no longer at the forefront of their attention.
8. Jesus, however, noticed her on this occasion and that made all the difference.
9. Luke begins by telling us that Jesus "was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath" (Luke 13:10).
 - a. This was Jesus' habit from the beginning of His ministry, both in the regions of Galilee to the north (Matthew 4:23) and Judea to the south (Luke 4:44) .
 - b. The synagogue was the place in their hometown where the Jews went to worship on the Sabbath.
10. However, this is the last time we ever hear of Jesus being in a synagogue.

11. Let's look at what happened in that synagogue on this particular Sabbath and the lessons which Jesus taught from it.

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I. A Woman Set Free

A. WHO WAS THIS WOMAN?

“And there was a woman who for eighteen years had had a sickness caused by a spirit; and she was bent double, and could not straighten up at all.” (Luke 13:11, NASB95)

1. No name is ever given, nor do we know how old she was.
2. But what Luke does tell us reveals much about her.
 - a. This woman suffered from a crippling disease which left her bent double.
 - b. Eighteen years earlier an evil spirit had bound her up in this way.
 - c. Now she walked around with her face always looking downward.
 - d. And yet, in spite of this, her spiritual focus was always upward.
 - e. While it would have been easier for her to stay at home, she found strength and comfort in worship and the Word of God.
3. Though she was apparently a regular worshiper at the synagogue, no one seemed to take notice of her.
 - a. It isn't that they didn't know her name or her condition.
 - b. It was that they had become so accustomed to her presence that they were desensitized to her need.
4. By this time in Jesus' ministry many knew about His ability to heal people of all sorts of diseases and infirmities.
5. On numerous occasions, friends and neighbors had brought people to Jesus and asked Him to heal them:
 - a. They brought them to Him from everywhere in the early part of His ministry (Matthew 4:24).

- b. Many brought were brought to Jesus at Peter's home in Capernaum (Matthew 8:16; Mark 1:32).
 - c. A paralytic was brought to Jesus by four friends (Matthew 9:2; Mark 2:3; Luke 5:18).
6. On other occasions there were requests for Jesus to come heal someone:
- a. Jairus, the synagogue official, pleaded with Jesus to heal his dying daughter (Mark 5:22-23; Luke 8:41-42).
 - b. A Roman centurion in Capernaum sought healing for his servant who was very sick (Matthew 8:5-6; Luke 7:2-3).
 - c. The Canaanite woman pleaded with Jesus to heal her demon-possessed daughter (Matthew 15:22; Mark 7:26).
7. However, there is no indication that anyone brought this woman to Jesus or went to Jesus on her behalf.

Slide 3**B. JESUS NOTICED HER**

"When Jesus saw her, He called her over and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your sickness." And He laid His hands on her; and immediately she was made erect again . . ." (Luke 13:12-13a, NASB95)

1. Not only did Jesus see her, "He called her over" (v. 12).
2. His compassion for those weighed down by Satan's burdens would not allow Him to overlook her.
3. His statement to her was simple and direct: "Woman you are freed from your sickness" (v. 12).
 - a. The perfect tense of the verb indicates a permanent release from her illness.
 - b. No more would Satan be allowed to afflict her in such a way.
4. Though she heard His words, she had been in this state for so long that she did not attempt to straighten up.

5. It wasn't until Jesus laid His hands on her and gently lifted her up that she raised to her full height.

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C. FREE AT LAST !

“... and immediately she ... began glorifying God” (Luke 13:13b, NASB95).

1. This woman who had been set free from an infirmity which had dominated her life for the past eighteen years lifted her voice in praise to God.
2. There was no restraining her, no holding her back, the gratitude came pouring forth.
3. No one in the synagogue missed what had just happened.
4. The important thing for you and I to recognize from this moment is that Jesus sees our need — He sees our deepest deformities.
5. If we could see others as Jesus sees them, we would see individuals who look very much alive on the outside.
6. Inwardly, however, they are oppressed by Satan, weighed down by sin, carrying burdens greater than they can bear.
7. Let us pray that our Lord would give us eyes to see as He sees and hearts to reach out and respond as He would have us to do.

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II. Trouble In The Synagogue

A. “YOU ARE VIOLATING THE SABBATH LAW!”

“But the synagogue official, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, began saying to the crowd in response, “There are six days in which work should be done; so come during them and get healed, and not on the Sabbath day.”” (Luke 13:14, NASB95)

1. The synagogue official was quick to respond.
2. He had no sympathy for the poor woman's plight, no compassion.
3. He had lost sight of the individual (Cf. Hosea 6:6; Matthew 9:13; 12:7).

“For I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice, and in the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.” (Hosea 6:6, NASB95)

[Jesus utilized it in response to the Pharisees who complained about his eating with tax collectors and sinners] “But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire compassion, and not sacrifice,’ for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.” (Matthew 9:13, NASB95)

4. This synagogue official was unable to rejoice at her deliverance — he was deaf to her praise.
5. All he could see was a supposed violation of the Sabbath law:

“Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.” (Exodus 20:9–11, NASB95)

6. He saw himself as the protector of the law and as such, he was determined to address the violation.
7. Though he addressed the crowd, the synagogue official was in reality speaking to Jesus and in essence saying, “How can you break our Sabbath law? You know that we cannot work on the Sabbath, and the teachers of the law established long ago that healing is a work!”
8. To the people he was saying, “Quit bringing people here to be healed on the Sabbath! You have six days in which to be healed. Come to Jesus then.”

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B. “YOU HYPOCRITES!”

“But the Lord answered him and said, “You hypocrites, does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the stall and lead him away to

water him? And this woman, a daughter of Abraham as she is, whom Satan has bound for eighteen long years, should she not have been released from this bond on the Sabbath day?" (Luke 13:15–16, NASB95)

1. In response, Jesus called the synagogue official and all who agreed with him "hypocrites."
2. In their professed zeal for the law they objected to a deed which fulfilled both the spirit and the purpose of the law.
3. They were as Jesus would say on another occasion, "straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel" (Matthew 23:24).
4. Jesus illustrated their hypocrisy by pointing out that they saw nothing wrong with taking care of the physical needs of their animals on the Sabbath (cf. Luke 14:5).
5. He said to them, "Every Sabbath you take your ox or your donkey, untie it from the feed trough and lead it out to get some water. This woman, a daughter of Abraham, one of our own, is a victim of Satan who has kept her bound up like this for eighteen years. Do I not have as much right to release her from her affliction? Is she any less important than your animals?"
6. The total hypocrisy and foolishness of such thinking was obvious to all.
 - a. The synagogue official and those who agreed with him were humiliated.
 - b. However, "the entire crowd was rejoicing" not that Jesus had humiliated the religious leaders, but at the "glorious things He was doing" (HCSB).

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III. "What Is The Kingdom of God Like?"

A. "IT IS LIKE A MUSTARD SEED"

"It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and threw into his own garden; and it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air nested in its branches."

(Luke 13:19, NASB95)

1. Jesus utilized this parable to show that the opposition of the synagogue official and those who agreed with him would not prevent the kingdom of God from achieving its purpose.
2. He compared the kingdom of God to a mustard seed, which is barely visible on a person's finger.
3. What He was saying is, "the kingdom of God may look small, even insignificant to you now, "like a mustard seed," but it will grow beyond your wildest imagination."
4. The kingdom of God has grown to have a tremendous impact on the world, and it will continue to do so until our Lord returns.

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B. "IT IS LIKE LEAVEN"

"It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of flour until it was all leavened."" (Luke 13:21, NASB95)

1. The kingdom of God has transforming power.
2. A peck or measure (Gr. *saton*) was the equivalent of almost 2.5 gallons.
3. Thus three pecks would have been over seven gallons of flour.
4. Though this woman "hid" the her leaven in all this flour, she ended up with something she could not hide.
5. Jesus point: You can no more stop kingdom growth than you can keep yeast from making dough rise and expand.

Conclusion

1. As we conclude this morning, I would like for you to consider two points concerning the kingdom of God and how it like leaven affects our lives.

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2. First, the kingdom of God *works from the inside*.

- a. As long as leaven is on the outside of the dough, it is powerless to help — it must get on the inside.
- b. It is the task of the Gospel to get on the inside and make us new.
- c. Once God creates new men and women, through the power of the Gospel, a new world will surely follow.

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- 3. Second, the power of the kingdom *comes from the outside*.
 - a. The dough has no power to change itself, neither have we.
 - b. We have tried and failed.
 - c. To change life we need a power outside and beyond ourselves.
 - d. We need Jesus, the master of life, who is ever waiting to give us abundant life.
- 4. Will you come to Him today?