

Achieving Citizenship (Luke 13:22-30)

I. Introduction

A. *This Week in Clear Living*

1. Citizenship in the kingdom of God has stringent requirement.
2. Citizenship in the kingdom of God requires a faith relationship with Jesus.
3. My citizenship in the kingdom is secured because of the Sovereign Ruler.
4. Citizenship in the kingdom of God requires the credentials of a personal relationship with Christ.
5. God gives an open invitation to whosoever will enter the kingdom.

Question: Why did Jesus tell a parable about the fig tree? In that parable, Who is the Vinedresser?

- B. In Luke 13, Jesus is continuing His message probably to the same people as in Luke 12. However, in Luke 13:10, He is teaching in a synagogue which would have indicated a different location and a different crowd.
1. Once again, the crowd is enormous.
 2. In verses 1-5, Jesus wanted the people to understand that gruesome death did not always mean gruesome death and that everyone needs to repent.
 - a. Some people told Him about Galilaeans that had been butchered by Pilate and offered with sacrifices.
 - b. He reminded them that the tower of Siloam had fallen and killed eighteen others.
 - c. People then and people now many times think that horrible deaths and horrible events happen ONLY to horrible people.
 - 1) Jesus wanted them to know that that was not always true.
 - 2) He turned the conversation back on them and told them that they needed to repent.
 4. In verses 6-9, Jesus taught a parable about a fig tree to illustrate that message.
 - a. The fig tree without fruit was symbolic of Israel with no spiritual fruit.
 - b. In the parable, an owner had planted a fig tree that did not produce fruit.
 - 1) He was going to cut it down and get rid of it, but the vinedresser talked him into giving it one more year.
 - 2) In real life, Jesus is the Vinedresser, and He pictured Himself as trying to buy Israel more time.
 - c. The nation had not repented. They thought that they were better because of their good works, but Jesus told them that a repentant heart towards the Lord would produce good fruit instead of phony fruit.
 5. In verses 10-21, Jesus healed a woman that had had an infirmity for eighteen years. When He did that, the ruler of the synagogue was upset, but Jesus quickly responded in His usual way of pointing the people to a higher truth.

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Question: Are there few that be saved? What keeps people from being saved? What kept you from being saved for so long? How can we be positive influences for the Lord when we are around the unsaved?

- II. In Luke 13:22-30, Jesus taught about heaven and how to be saved.
- A. In verses 22-23, He was traveling towards Jerusalem and teaching the people along the way.
1. Some one asked Him if many people would be saved.
 2. Saved (sozo) - to deliver from the penalties of the Messianic judgment
 - a. Matthew 1:21 says, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."
 - b. Romans 10:9 says, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."
 - 1) Believe (pisteuo) - to trust in Jesus or God as able to aid either in obtaining or in doing something: saving faith
 - 2) Such confession must be heart knowledge based on experience, not head knowledge.
 - c. Romans 5:9 says, "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be *saved from wrath* through him."
- B. In verse 24, Jesus makes salvation sound difficult.
1. Matthew 7:13-14 says, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."
 2. Strait (stenos) - narrow.
 3. Why does the wide gate lead to destruction? What keeps people from being saved?
 - a. Salvation does not cost money, but it is not free.
 - b. Salvation requires that a person turn from his or her former way of doing things and turn to the Lord.
 - 1) Matthew 4:17 says, "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
 - 2) Mark 2:17 says, "When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."
 - 3) Luke 13:3 says, "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."
 - c. *It is not difficult to be saved, but you must want forgiveness from your sins and a relationship with Christ to be saved. You MUST REPENT.*

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- d. Most people, that do not get saved, choose to stay in their lifestyle rather than come to Jesus. When you come to the Lord, He will change you through the indwelling Holy Spirit.
- e. Some people think that salvation means that they must change their lifestyle to be saved, but that is not correct. **What they must do is let the Holy Spirit change them from the inside out. It is a matter of being obedient.**
 - 1) In Matthew 8:27, the winds obeyed Jesus.
 - 2) In Mark 1:27, the demons obeyed Jesus.
 - 3) In Acts 5:29, Peter and John confessed their conscious choice to obey God.
 - 4) Romans 6:16 says, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"
 - 5) Hebrews 5:9 says, "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;"
- 4. **Having a heart that is obedient to the Lord brings the blessings of salvation. Not having such a heart of obedience brings the curses of condemnation.**
- 5. The extent of an individual's obedience is determined by how much they have been conformed to the image of Christ by the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:29). As we become more like Him, our desire to live a life pleasing to Him increases.

Question: Verse 28 suggests that the lost will be in heaven with the saints until they are tossed out. How can we reconcile this verse?

- C. In verses 25-28, Jesus indicated an urgency to making a decision for Him.
 - 1. We do not know how many chances we will have to come to Him. John 6:44 says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."
 - 2. We do not know when our life will end. Hebrews 3:7-8 says, "Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:"
 - 3. Doing nothing equates to being lost. Being saved requires a decision by the one seeking salvation.
 - a. Verse 25 warns that a time will come when it is too late.
 - b. A missed sale at your favorite store means a missed sale. You cannot get it back. A life not surrendered to Christ will mean a life not surrendered to Christ.
 - 4. Iniquity (adikia) - unrighteousness of heart and life. Jesus called people workers of iniquity or unrighteous of heart and life because they rejected Him when they had a chance to come to Him.

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5. Workers (*ergates*) - laborers.
 6. Verse 28 is problematic. The verse suggests that the lost will be in heaven with the saints for a little while until they are tossed out. Is this true or false?
 - a. Romans 14:10 and II Corinthians 5:10, written to Christians, say that all Christians will be judged at the judgment seat of Christ.
 - b. Revelation 20:11 places the unsaved at the white throne judgment.
 - c. How do we reconcile this verse?
 - 1) Dr. J. Vernon McGee wrote that Jesus was trying to emphasize the importance of being sure about one's salvation rather than trying to give a direct theological teaching.
 - 2) Dr. Walter L. Liefeld wrote that Jesus was trying to emphasize that salvation was not determined by Jewish heritage and that Jesus was trying to show that many of His Jewish listeners would be excluded from future blessings if their confidence remained in their Jewish fathers.
 - 3) Seen (*optanomai*) - to look at, behold, to appear
 - 4) Thrust (*ekballo*) - to expel a person from a society, to banish from a family
 - D. In verses 29-30, Jesus indicated that there will be some surprises.
 1. Coming from the east, west, north, and south meant that everyone or anyone can come, even if not Jewish.
 2. Many of those that we hold in high esteem will not be held as highly by the Lord, and many that we look down on will be lifted up by the Lord.
 3. Notice Matthew 7:22-27. The wise man builds his house on a rock.
- III. Jesus concluded His remarks with two important statements.
- A. In verses 31-33, a Pharisee warned Him of potential danger.
 1. Jesus was not intimidated.
 2. He also made reference to His resurrection.
 - B. In verses 34-35, He expressed His love for Israel.
 1. They had killed their prophets.
 2. They would kill Him.
 3. Yet He still loved them as a mother hen.
- VI. Next week's lesson: "Do You Need to be Committed" (Luke 14:25-35).