

Scripture Reading:

Luke 13:10 “10 Now [Jesus] was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. 11 And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up. 12 But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to her, "Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity." 13 And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, & glorified God. 14 But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, "There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day." 15 The Lord then answered him and said, "Hypocrite!

Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead it away to water it? 16 So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound--think of it--for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?" 17 And when He said these things, all His adversaries were put to shame; and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him. 18 Then [Jesus] said, "What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it? 19 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." 20 And again He said, "To what shall I liken the kingdom of God? 21 It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened." 22 And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem.”

"Rejoicing on the Lord's Day"

I have mentioned several times that our journey through the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts will result in us covering almost one-quarter of the New Testament! You have already listened to over 50 sermons from Luke and I have a long way to go to finish these two books! Then we would still have the other three quarters of the New Testament we could study! But we must also remember, as many moderns Christian forget, that the New Testament is only about a quarter of the Bible so we would still have the other three quarters of the Bible which is the Old Testament: The part that Jesus as well as ALL the Disciples, the Apostle Paul and the early believers used to show that Jesus is the Christ!

- The Bible is God's revelation of Himself to mankind
- In this Book, God tells His great story of redemption

God reveals great mysteries with profound revelation that has been studied and debated for thousands of years...

But at the same time even some of our youngest children can learn its most important and yet simple truths like... “Jesus loves me this I know for the Bible tells me so.”

The story of redemption is what we have before us in our text from Luke this morning: A powerful story of a woman who is healed and a religious leader who is confronted

Luke’s account of one healing and two simple examples by Jesus actually tell the WHOLE story of redemption

- **The great battle between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent that runs from Genesis to Revelation and confirming who wins in the end!**

Luke presents here a story of hope... A story of conquest!

- **Actually, it is THE story of hope which reveals THE victory!**

Through this simple account we are to learn that we must be a people of hope and a people of conquest! It should come as no surprise that this story takes place on the Sabbath: God’s special day... Our Special day to remember God’s deliverance as we see in Deuteronomy chapter 5: “15 And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.”

Back in Luke chapter six there was also a great confrontation on the Sabbath: There we learned that Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath and what that means for how we should regard the Lord’s Day today *[it is on-line]* We learned three important principles we must keep in mind when considering our activities on the Lord’s Day:

- **REST: God calls us to rest one day in seven! Pictured both by the creation account and the deliverance from Egypt.**
- **WORSHIP: God Calls us into His presence to renew His covenant and prepare us for another week of service: Reminding us that Jesus IS the Lord of all creation!**
- **3: VISION: We rest and worship on the Lord’s Day, the first day of the week when Jesus arose from the grave, knowing that His Kingdom will fill the whole earth as we go forth to disciple the nations.**

Jesus and this oppressed woman were where they should have been on the Lord’s Sabbath day:

- **Jesus is still taking the time to attend the service and teach at the Synagogue on this Sabbath, even as he makes His final journey to Jerusalem... *Right priorities!***
- **AND we have a woman who can barely walk making the trip to church... *No excuses!***

Truly an example to us all: It is important to be with the Lord's people on the Lord's Day!

The Old Testament Sabbath was celebrated and set aside to remember God's power in Creation and His great deliverance of His people from Egypt. With the coming of Jesus we now celebrate and set aside the Lord's Day, the first day of the week when Jesus rose from the dead, making all things new and delivering His people from the bondage of sin!

Sunday should be the highpoint of every week, a special day of worshipping and fellowshiping with God's people, resting from our labors, a Day where we celebrate and remember God's salvation!

- As usual, the power of telling a story helps us better understand!

This morning's account is a story of hope and a story of conquest: Jesus the conquering King bringing deliverance & hope to His people! We do not know this woman's name nor her exact ailment but we can clearly see she has a crushing burden... *Try walking around slumped over for just a few minutes, or play twister!*

- We are also told that she had been this way for 18 years... Eighteen years of bondage!

There two and only two references to "eighteen years" in the Old Testament: Can you guess what they refer to? They are both in the book of Judges:

Judges 3:12b "So the Lord strengthened Eglon king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the Lord... 14 So the children of Israel served Eglon king of Moab eighteen years."

The children of Israel were in bondage 18 years and then God sent a deliverer:

Judges 3:15 "But when the children of Israel cried out to the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer for them: Ehud the son of Gera, the Benjamite, a left-handed man."

We see it again in Judges 10 when the Philistines and Ammonites put Israel into bondage for 18 years until Jephthah was sent as their deliverer: Jephthah: The unwanted older brother which should remind us of someone in today's account.

The despised oldest Son of Mary, sent as the deliverer of His people is about to deliver this woman who has been under Satan's bondage for 18 long years:

Something else to ponder is that Jesus Himself points out the length of her bondage, saying "think of it – eighteen years" in verse 16:

Jesus had just brought up the 18 killed by the tower of Siloam and could be pointing out that Satan began attacking this woman right after Jesus first appeared in the Temple about 18 years earlier!

BUT it is hard to miss the BIG picture or pattern here:

- **The Moabites oppressed God’s people for 18 years and Ehud is sent as the deliverer**
- **The Ammonites oppress God’s people for 18 years and Jephthah is sent as the deliverer**
- **Now Satan has oppressed this woman for 18 years and Jesus comes as her deliverer**

Now Jesus calls this woman to Him and says, “woman, you are loosed from your infirmity!” Jesus then puts His hand on her and immediately she is able to stand straight

- **What a glorious picture of our redemption!**
- **Jesus calls her, speaks the Word, touches her, and she is made whole!**
- **The woman plays the same role as Lazarus did at his tomb!**

Jesus began His ministry in a Synagogue in Nazareth reading a passage from the Prophet Isaiah: “Luke 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; 19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." Jesus then closed the book, and said "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." Do you remember their reaction?

They were filled with wrath much like the leader today who says in response to this great deliverance:

- **“There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day!”**

Jesus responds by saying “hypocrite!”

On this journey, Jesus has reminded His disciples about how God cares more for people than for the birds and flowers... So I think it is no accident that Jesus rebukes the ruler with this particular example: “Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead it to water? So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound—think of it – for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?”

These religious leaders were not willing to let the animals go a day without water, but 18 years of suffering was not enough to have them think this woman should be loosed on a Sabbath as well...

- **Hypocrites indeed!**

With this the enemies of Christ are put to shame, retreating with hardened hearts to wait for a better day to attack the Messiah. The multitudes rejoice because of all the glorious things being done by Jesus: He has put on quite a show today!

Jesus then takes a moment to reflect on His Kingdom: The Kingdom that He knows will fill the whole earth: He gives them two simple illustrations that show how small beginnings can lead to major impacts:

- **One an external picture and the other internal.**
- **One that is clearly seen the other that happens without being seen.**

We had a interesting debate at Thursday's Bible study on whether the Christian faith should be considered as a religion or a relationship: BOTH concepts have their strengths and weaknesses and should be held in proper balance:

- **Jesus saves each of us as individuals: We repent of our sins, we are forgiven, and we cry Abba Father, knowing Jesus as our personal Savior.**
- **BUT Jesus puts us into His church the community of believers where we have a system of truths to defend, worship services to attend and a world to conquer as Christ's Kingdom fills the whole earth.**

BOTH are pictured in the examples Jesus gives and they should continue to encourage His Saints today: His Kingdom is planted as a small seed which grows into a mighty tree! The 120 followers gathered in the upper room before Pentecost were scared, overwhelmed and I am sure they were still marveling at the command of Christ to go and disciple ALL the nations of the earth!

- **They could not even imagine what lied ahead.**

HOWEVER, we sit here almost two thousand years later and we don't even appreciate what has happened and in many ways are MORE pessimistic than they might have been about Jesus accomplishing what He said He would accomplish!

The impact and growth of the Kingdom up until this point is NOW something we can see and study:

- **There are certainly more than 120 Christians in the world today!**
- **The Gospel has certainly spread outside of Jerusalem and Judea!**
- **We have hospitals and orphanages where once pagans ignored the sick and abandoned unwanted children**
- **Slavery has been driven back into the most backward portions of our world, where once it was common in almost all nations**
- **Woman in many countries are honored, cherished and protected where once they were often treated worse than the slaves and animals.**

-- The impact of the Christian faith on science and the advance of technology provide daily wonders that we NOW take for granted

Start by imagining a world without flush toilets & dentistry... Do we understand AND believe that things like these as well as our modern transportation systems, grocery stores and even refrigeration are a DIRECT result of the advance of Christ's Kingdom in this world!

-- In the civil realm, governments have been established to protect our God-given rights rather than to oppress the people as was the case in EVERY nation at the time of Christ.

-- Real private property and the proper stewardship of God's creation can ONLY exist when Christ the Creator is seen as Lord of Lords and the King of Kings!

I could go on and on, but I think you get the picture...

- **There is much yet to be done to advance the Kingdom of Christ, BUT how can we NOT see that much has been accomplished in the past two thousand years?**

The bottom-line is that it should be MUCH easier for US to believe the illustration that Jesus uses about the Kingdom being a great tree... right?

We should have NO problem believing that Paul spoke the truth to the Corinthians when he said that, "Jesus must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet"... Right?

We should have no problem rejoicing with John where he saw in his vision that Jesus would strike the nations with His Word and rule them with a rod of iron!... Right?

- **Sadly, even after the first two thousand years of conquest, many Christians today are more doubtful than the Apostle Thomas!**
- **Jesus told Thomas to stop doubting and believe and He says the same to us today with this image of His Kingdom**

This great mustard tree is an external picture of the Kingdom growing to fill the earth and the second picture is more personal: It should encourage us when sometimes we think we are not worthy of such a high calling.

- **We have a woman ready to make bread: Lots of bread, enough to feed about 150 people. She takes just a tiny bit of yeast or leaven and places it in the dough: Someone who has not baked bread might think what impact could that little bit have, and yet as Jesus says, soon "it was all leavened."**

Not something we can watch, not something that is easy to understand but something that happens none the less: Just like when God exchanges our hearts of stone with hearts of flesh!

- **We are new creatures in Christ: Jesus has defeated the old man and placed the leaven of new life in a new batch of dough!**

What Jesus is saying to His disciples, and us, is that we should not be discouraged by the opposition from these religious leaders -- Jesus had warned His disciples several times to beware of the evil leaven of the Scribes and Pharisees –

Nor does Jesus want them to be confused by the clamor of the crowds – NO Jesus wants them to trust in HIS work: He wants them to think about the leaven of His Kingdom and how it will leaven ALL of creation!

- **Jesus has come to save His people from their sins, casting out the old man, giving us new hearts**
- **Jesus has placed us into His Church where we can properly grow and mature**
- **Through His church Jesus is taking His Kingdom to the farthest corners of the earth**

All of this is pictured for us in the story of this woman who had been in bondage to Satan for those long 18 years and now is delivered by Jesus! R.C. Ryle commenting on this passage said, “she came sorrowing and went home rejoicing!”

This is something each of us should experience each Lord’s Day as we properly gather to worship God and it is something we must believe is impacting the world as Jesus fills the earth with His Kingdom

This is why we must remember the lessons we have learned about our priorities for the Lord’s Day:

- 1) REST: God calls us to rest one day in seven! Pictured both by the creation account and the deliverance from Egypt, and now should be even more important as we think about ALL the work that needs to be done!**
- 2) WORSHIP: God Calls us into His presence to renew His covenant and prepare us for another week of service: Reminding us that Jesus IS the Lord of the Sabbath and that ALL authority and power reside with Him.**
- 3: VISION: We rest and worship on the Lord’s Day, the first day of the week when Jesus arose from the grave, knowing that His Kingdom will fill the whole earth, as He sends US forth to disciple the nations.**

Our hymn of response is “The Son of God Goes Forth to War” and the question to ask is will we join him?

Communion Meditation:

1 Corinthians 5:7 “Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. 8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”