

THIRD YEAR MINISTRY

village of people, simply because they were born on the "wrong side of the tracks." How ceaselessly interesting it is to behold the change in someone through allegiance to Jesus. Bruce's *The Training of the Twelve* shows how Jesus molded and made His followers into new men, not physically, but mentally. Jesus and Satan are ever in conflict for control of the mind—because a man's thinking determines his action. Convince a man he is but an animal, and he will act like one. Get him to believe that he is of a superior race, he may want to destroy a city. The Bible does not speak idly about believing the truth or believing a lie, II Thess. 2:11-12. John changed, and became the apostle of love. Jesus brought about that change—have you tried Him? He never fails, if you are willing.

LATER JUDEAN MINISTRY (about 3 months)

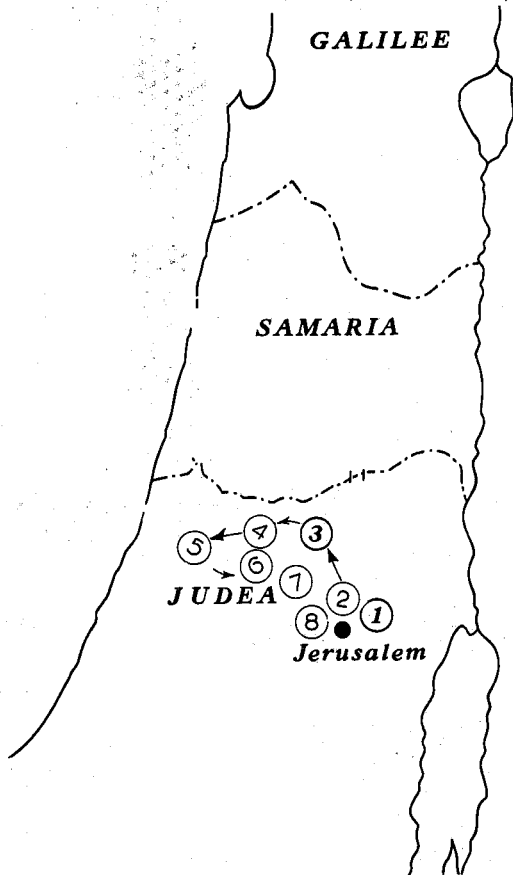
Jerusalem—John 7:10—10:21

(1) and (2). God made man by nature gregarious. Fellowship is thus a major interest in man's thinking and especially of God's people. He gave the Israelites three major feasts to help keep the nation of the Jews aware of each other. Notice how quickly Jeroboam changed feasts and locations when he became king over the ten northern tribes, I Kings 12:25-33. Fellowship and consequent strengthening of ties with those in the south had to go! One can hardly suppose the word "fellowship" in Acts 2:42 speaks of the union all believers had in Christ. There is no point in mentioning such an idea in the context of things believers do, such as prayer. The thing in question was association together, as in the worship and preaching, etc. See Heb. 10:25 for this idea.

The Feast of Tabernacles was held in the fall at the conclusion of the harvest season. It was a feast of thanks-

MAP NO. 5—THIRD YEAR, LATER JUDEAN MINISTRY (about 3 months)

1. Temple; Feast of Tabernacles; Sermons on Light of World; Freedom; Abraham's Children; Man born blind healed; Good Shepherd; 70 sent out to evangelize, Jn. 7-8-9-10 & Lk. 10
2. Bethany; Jesus, Mary & Martha, Lk. 11
3. Place of Prayer; Discourse on Prayer, Lk. 11
4. Place unknown; charged with being in league with Satan, Lk. 11
5. Dining in Pharisee's home; denounces Pharisaism, Lk. 11
6. Before multitudes of 1000's Great evangelistic appeals on Hypocrisy, Anxiety, Covetousness, Lk. 12-13
7. In a Synagogue; heals woman bowed double; ~~controversy~~ controversy over healing on the Sabbath, Lk. 13
8. Feast of Dedication (December); Jews seek to kill Jesus, Jn. 10





THE SEA OF GALILEE

giving and remembrance, held in a sort of "country fair" style. Jesus, as all other male Jews of age, was required to attend. Upon arrival, one of the most illustrative discussions of Jesus' ministry occurred. Note the different thoughts expressed *about Jesus* during this feast: 7:12 a good man, a seducer, v. 15 puzzlingly knowledgeable, v. 20 deluded and demonized, v. 26, 31 perhaps equal to the Messiah, v. 40 the prophet, v. 41, the Messiah, v. 46 unique; 8:13 self-exalting, v. 49 demonized and a Samaritan, v. 53 not as great as Abraham, v. 59 a blasphemer; 9:11 a man called Jesus, v. 16 some: not from God for a sinning Sabbath breaker, others: if so, how could He do such a miracle, v. 17 a prophet, v. 22 association with Jesus deemed sufficient reason for excommunication, v. 24 a sinner, v. 29 not as great as Moses, and origin unknown, v. 33 obviously from God.

Not less significant are the claims of Jesus *about Himself*. Actually, considering the whole section, He makes more varied and explicit statements concerning His relationship to God and people than in any other public discussion. It is no great wonder that plans to kill Him were brought into action, 7:32, and the reaction to the raising of Lazarus so violent, 11:50, 53, 57, 12:10-11; and the offer of betrayal by Judas so welcome, Lk. 22:3-6. Note too the disconsolate Pharisees in John 12:19, the frenzied efforts of the leaders as in John 19:6, 15, and their insolence, Mt. 27:39-40. The two disciples on the way to Emmaus remark about their actions, Lk. 24:20.

During the Feast of Tabernacles, the priests brought water from Siloam to the temple, and the temple courts were lit at night with torches. Consider how Jesus uses these ideas to teach about Himself, 7:37-39, 8:12ff. and 9:5. He claims God as His teacher 7:16 and 8:28, to have been sent by Him 7:28-29 and 8:42, 56, as a co-witness 8:18, as glorifying Him 8:50, known and loved

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by Him 10:15, 17, returning to Him 7:33, and a Son, 8:36. So obvious should be this relationship that anyone desiring to know it can, 7:17. Ever in the background is the idea of His sacrifice 8:28, 10:11, 15-18; and judgment intrusted to Him 8:26, 9:39. The idea of ultimate destiny based upon accepting or rejecting Him keeps popping up, as in 8:24, 34-36, 51-52, 9:39-41. In this connection, the reference to the evil actions of people and the ultimate source of such is made plain in 8:39ff. Anyone who claims to be a descendent of Abraham will give evidence of it by right living, 8:39. The life of faith does not reject God or His messengers.

The claim in connection with Abraham, 8:56-58, brings to mind the obvious parallel in Exodus 3:13-14. This claim for equality with God is implicit throughout the whole sermon, though, and is thus not surprising.

Chapter ten clearly sums up the whole discussion by presenting the idea that He alone is the true shepherd to be followed, and only those who do so are the "sheep" who will have "pasture" and "shelter."

(3) Chapter nine presents as good a test case about Jesus as any incident in history. The searching inquiries by the Jewish council could hardly be improved upon today. Everything a modern court could do was done, such as examination of the "defendant," and other witnesses who could verify the pertinent facts about him. The facts in the case were readily available, and as the healed man finally concluded, pointed out Jesus as being from God. Admiration is surely due the man for he gave up all that had been important to him for the man rejected by his erstwhile leaders. A complete break with one's past is always required, though, for naught else is acceptable. If honest appraisal is given Jesus, the person so doing will progress down the same road of faith as

did this man, from the man Jesus, v. 12, to God's spokesman v. 17, (triumphantly) to the Lord, v. 38.

His steadfast and growing admiration of Jesus is also seen in the give and take with the council.

The Pharisees had reasoned thusly:

(All who keep the Sabbath are alone from God),
This man does not keep the Sabbath,
(therefore) he is not from God.

But he reasoned that:

(All who can open blinded eyes are at least prophets
of God,
This man opened my blinded eyes,
therefore) he is a prophet of God.

They replied:

(All Sabbath breakers are not men used of God)
This man is a Sabbath breaker,
(therefore God did not use him to heal you.)

And since this is so,

(All who are healed should give God, who alone can
heal, praise,
You are obviously healed,
therefore) give God praise, (not this (deceiver and)
sinner.)

Undaunted by their "know," he replied, in effect, that he might not have been among those who knew what Jesus was or was not, but he was among those who knew about his own life, and he knew that he was formerly a blind man now able to see. He then presented the argument that a blind man with his cane could see clearly that:

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Only a man in touch with God is capable of opening eyes of people born blind, since no mere man has ever done it,

I, born blind, now see through this man,
hence, he is of God (even if you blind men can not see it!)

Could all of us who consider this marvelous miracle be as willing to ascertain the facts and act upon them as did the man healed.

Perhaps it is worthy of our time to consider the "I ams" of Jesus found in John's gospel, as well as the idea of Jesus' consciousness of time. References to assertions by Jesus in reference to His identity are, besides the I am of 8:58; I am the Messiah 4:26; I am the bread of life 6:35, 48; I am the light of the world 8:12; I am the door of the sheep 10:7, 9; I am the good shepherd 10:11, 14; I am in the Father 10:38; I am the resurrection and the life 11:25; I am the way, the truth, and the life 14:6; I am the true vine 15:1, 5. Note also the several "I ams" of chapter 17.

Jesus was "God-conscious" all of His life, and this is evident many ways. One of those ways is His frequent mention of time in relationship to His life. Consider then the following references to time: Jn. 2:4; 4:23; 5:17, 25; 7:38; 8:20, 56; 9:4; 11:4; 12:23, 27; 13:1, 31; 16:25, 32; 17:1; Mt. 26:45.

Perhaps a brief discussion of the passage contained in some versions, 7:53-8:11, merits our attention. As remarked in the comments on John 5, we are only interested in what has been written by inspired men. The Greek text from which we translate our English New Testaments is a composite of at least the following sources, 1) Greek manuscripts (abbreviated Gr. MSS) which are copies of other Greek MSS and, of course, ultimately of

the original autographs, 2) copies of the Gr. MSS in other languages, such as Latin, Syriac, etc., and 3) quotations in early commentaries and such like by Christian writers (or even non-Christian writers). The reader may peruse the article in the special studies for more details. The lack of evidence for the inclusion of the text in question far exceeds the evidence for it. The question is: did the apostle John record such an event. The best available evidence is that he did not. The exclusion of this text makes no difference to the text, for it makes as good a sense without it as with it. As it stands, one wonders why the men did not bring the male accomplice along with the woman, since the law required both to be stoned, Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22. If the text is not included, no doctrine is lost. If one wishes a text like this from which to preach, there is a similar text in Luke 7. Personally, we think it is much better not to use texts that are of such questionable nature as this one.

(4) John 10:1-21 perhaps is the conclusion to the day's discussion with the man and his religious leaders. We think of the words to the song, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me; I once was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see." How tragic, though, to have seen (or now see) the difference Jesus made in the life of one man, and refuse to allow the same Jesus to work in one's own life—seeing but blind!

Perhaps the reason many were in such state then, and even now, is that they were unaware of the good shepherd, and followed another shepherd, going through the wrong door. Such was the case with the ones who tried the blind man, and were found wanting . . . sheep lost and straying. And the pity of it all is that the shepherd they claimed (Moses) had pointed them to the good shepherd (Jesus) and they refused to follow! It is not a wonder that Israel was sinful so many times, if all their

shepherds were like these men. Ezekiel 34:11-16 condemns men of this sort in any day.

Jesus offered abundant pasture, adequate protection and a personal allegiance to His own—seemingly a bargain to anyone. Yet many considered Him “out of his mind” and demonized, though others rightly argued that demons only put eyes out and add to a person’s woes. They might be more excusable then because they were so close to it all and found it hard to see what Jesus actually meant by His words. But we, in historical perspective, can see that He really did love the sheep enough to give His life for them, that He was no hireling who leaves the wolf with a free meal (see the ideas Jesus gives in Jn. 14:18; 15:13; and Mt. 28:20). Such love ought to constrain us to be a part of one flock, following freely the great shepherd of the sheep (Heb. 13:20; I Pet. 5:4) Who knows each by name. It is no wonder that the Father loved Him in consideration of His selfless sacrifice on behalf of the sheep. Jesus did not lose His life—He gave it! It is a marvel that so many of the sheep do not likewise love Him Who was not a victim of circumstances but a victor through love.

(5) The Seventy sent out—Luke 10:1-23. Some eight months prior to the time of our text, Jesus had sent out the twelve, with instructions to go only to the Jews. Their mission apparently was a success, as they utilized the power Jesus gave them to minister to the people. The mission of the seventy was not different in the regard, so the two accounts sound much alike in respect to the instructions Jesus gave them. The need was still the same, for preachers of the message of the kingdom, and for ministry in other respects.

Their mission was not an easy road, v. 3, but Jesus encouraged them to think of their labor as being for the Lord of harvest, v. 2. He would provide if they would

believe. Some would not listen, vv. 10-12, but others would be interested, vv. 6-7, and helpful. So courtesy and service, vv. 8-9, were to be hallmarks of the mission. The urgency of the mission, v. 9b, and the gravity of the message, v. 16, would be motivation enough if they so willed. The kingdom that can not be shaken, Heb. 12:25, and the good news of its king would be the gist of their preaching. Judgment to come would add impetus to every meeting held and conversation shared.

Faithfulness is ever rewarded and often in ways undreamed of. The commission given by Jesus did not include power over demons, at least in the part recorded, but v. 17 indicates the fact was so. If Satan is Lucifer of old, how interesting that his dazzling brilliance was overcome by the Light of the World! Yet, the seventy were not to find a cause of rejoicing in such things, but rather that each of their names was written down in heaven. Perhaps the only reason to rejoice over the fall of Satan is that someone else had been released from his power and another new name written down in glory.

Jesus' prayer in vv. 21-22 perhaps was prompted by the Holy Spirit, or because of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the seventy—but we, with Christ, can rejoice that God is not dependent upon human intellect for that which He does. The religion of the kingdom is a revealed, authoritative religion—and its possession is both a privilege and opportunity, vv. 23-24. So often we who can share fail to really appreciate what we possess (see Heb. 11:40 and I Pet. 1:10).

(6) The question of the lawyer as recorded in our text of Luke 10:25-37 might have been for self-protection or self-justification or even from unbelief, or maybe in response to a statement something like that in v. 24. When Jesus answered his question with one, he quoted Deut. 6:3 and Lev. 19:18, as He did on a later occasion. We

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wonder if he understood that loving God was fulfilled only as he kept the law, Rom. 13:10, or if he realized that the verses he quoted demanded active, not passive, living. The question of v. 29 may indicate that he did not so realize. The basis for all the law and the prophets was and still is the precept: practice (active) for others that which you want them to practice for you. The illustration Jesus gave drives home this point.

Opportunity beckoned to do the law when the thieves left the man yet alive. The thieves were not unlike countless others: they were the ones who hurt others for their own benefit. Parents who fail to rear their children as God wants, dope pushers, self-willed blind men—all such fall into the same category.

The illustration gets closer to home, for the man who was hurt (like many in every generation, unloved, unwanted, mistreated, ignored) could have expected help from the religious people of his day, could he not? But he was doomed to disappointment. Both the priest and the Levite had been to Jerusalem to serve in the temple where they were to teach others what God required of the godly life. Yet religion was but a cloak over hypocritical lives, for they did not translate what they taught into life—and passed by on the other side. Did you find yourself in the picture—the heedless Christian?

One least suspect (by the lawyer) is painted by Jesus within this miniature world of 4 people as being the one who helps, who exemplifies the person keeping the law. The Samaritan was the real lover (and law keeper) as he refused to dodge the living issue before him. He was the neighbor to mimic—willing to put himself out for others unable to help themselves. Prejudices laid aside, duties delayed—but the law observed. So Jesus said, "Go, and so practice."

Bethany—Luke 10:38-42

This small village of today (about 1,000 pop.) located SE of Jerusalem about $1\frac{5}{8}$ miles and situated on the eastern slope of Mt. Olivet is a familiar name to Bible students. Jesus stayed here often, especially during the last week. It does not appear on the pages of the O.T., unless the reference in Neh. 11:32 to Ananiah be its former name. The derivation of the name is uncertain, and may possibly mean the house of Ananiah, or maybe the house of the poor (or afflicted). The prefix "beth" means 'house of' in names such as this one.

Several incidents in the gospels other than our text are memorialized by various religious groups within or around the town of Bethany, including one for Lazarus. The Muslim inhabitants have identified a spot as the crypt of Lazarus, calling it el-'Aziriyeh. Whether we could identify with any accuracy such spots is very doubtful now, though the events and people themselves were very real. Other than our text, the events of John 11; the anointing of Jesus by Mary, Matt. 26, Mark 14, Jn. 12; the beginning of the triumphal entry; and the ascension was near here, Luke 24, Acts 1.

A song writer has captured the spirit of the relationship described in our text by the words, "a home Jesus loved." He also loved those in the home. Jesus may have often found rest and encouragement here, and perhaps even the food necessary for sustaining physical life as well.

Martha might have been aware of this physical need because she was busy with the provision for such needs. She allowed priorities to get out of line though, and became troubled and distracted. The thing Jesus forbid, Math. 6, became a part of her life. She went to Jesus and rather insistently asked Him to have her sister Mary

“take hold” with her (Rom. 8:26 uses this same Greek word for the help of the Holy Spirit). Eternal things must be first, Jesus replied, and Mary’s attitude was therefore the correct one. The preparation for physical needs was not wrong—but the attitude about it might be, and Martha’s was. She was indeed “over-occupied” about less important things, and sincerely mistaken. May we all learn the lesson she learned. We honor Christ only when we put first things first. The world and all that is in it passes away as it is used, but the one doing God’s will remains forever, I John 2:17. May God grant to each of us the opportunities to show that we believe it.

Place of Prayer—Luke 11:1-13

Jesus was doubtless asked many things, but the request of the disciples surely was welcomed for the opportunity to teach about prayer. Why the disciples asked for such, though, is thought-provoking. Was it because they did not know how to pray at all? Or because they wanted a new method of prayer? Many O.T. examples of prayer and prayerful people were available to them, such as many of the Psalms, Moses and Elijah, or I Chronicles 1, and 6. John’s disciples apparently prayed, Luke 5:33.

The answer given by Jesus may indicate some things. For instance, there is little that is really Jewish about it, yet it centers about the disciple’s relationship to God as reflected in his daily life. It was intended to show that disciples that a holy life is the best answer to such a prayer, though such life is often better caught than taught. Jesus’ example in prayer seemingly was the starter for the request.

The prayer itself, whether used as a pattern or actually uttered as given, did not indicate any specific time

to pray. "When" was vague in this respect: anytime, anyplace!

"Father" was non-Jewish for certain. Most Jews so revered the name (and person) of God that they would not utter it. The word "lord" became a substitute for the Hebrew names of God (note then the use of the word by Thomas, Paul, Peter, and others, for Jesus with this idea in mind). Jesus taught that the disciple was to have a personal relationship with God and though God and His name which represents Him (Psalms 9:10) was to be honored and held in respect (Psalms 111:9) yet they were to consider that He was not unlike their earthly father—interested, and approachable, and that willingly so. To "hallow" God then would be to treat Him as He desired, and let each life display the same sort of character as His life. Consider Lev. 19:2; Col. 1:22; Tit. 1:8; I Pet. 1:15 and Rev. 22:11 in this light.

The word "kingdom" carried various ideas to different people. To the initial hearers of this expression, perhaps the mental image of a great procession with trumpets blowing and banners waving, rich trappings and golden crowns came to mind. But the word also implied the principle of ruler and ruled, of king over subjects, of laws and obedience. It may be that your mental image is helped by Jesus' statement in Luke 17:21 that the kingdom is "among" (or within, as translated in Matt. 23:26) rather than outward and external. Yet, Jesus never specifically defined the word, and we can not quote any verse that specifically tells us how the Master intended for either His hearers or us to understand it. Considering the pictures drawn by Revelation, and other passages, the concepts of king, subjects, and rule are likely in mind, though other facts and ideas absent may need to be considered.

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The Bible always insists that God will provide every need as He views the disciple's individual situation. If the disciple would trust God to do this, then the request about bread for each day was quite appropo. The bread for tomorrow was not needed, Jesus implied, and the disciples did not need bread for yesterday, either. Daily provision should be considered all that is needed, then. But God's idea of need, not that of the disciples', was what determined His answer to each prayer. Jesus taught daily prayer for daily bread if for naught else than to remind each disciple to depend on God. Trust was the key to life, for in a very real way the righteous by trust lived.

Forgiveness is so much needed by every human, psychologically, or any other way, for the anguish that inhabits the soul which is unforgiven is devastating. No greater affliction nor sweeter balm than the lack of or possession of forgiveness from God: could each disciple but recognize the truthfulness of this fact! Psalms 32 is a good testimonial to this thought. God may bless all in many ways, Matt. 5:45, and this blessing is one of those ways, but unlike some of the others, only available to those who petition God for it.

Arguments over conditional forgiveness are brought to mind by this prayer. Perhaps the idea of repentance carries with it the aspect of righted wrongs. Certainly the person who asks God for forgiveness ought to desire to be godlike. If such is to be the case, then each disciple must stand ready to forgive in respect to relationships with others. Why is it, though, that God is expected to forgive any and all sin, but many persons consider themselves better than God since some people will not forgive sin in others, even when it is asked? Many people are like Peter in this regard, Matt. 18:21ff.

"Lead us . . ." should be the constant request to God, whether it be away from sin or into righteousness. Perhaps this petition is a bit difficult in connection with James 1:13 but an effort must be made to understand both in respect to each other. Perhaps a daily dependence on God is the end product of such a phrase, together with a request to God for the wisdom that will enable the "way out" to be seen which God has promised to provide. That God will lead wherever He deems best, keeping each disciple safe from harm and providing strength in every test so that the trusting soul may come forth as gold, Prov. 23:10b, is the idea.

The noun and the verb translated "temptation" occur often in the New Testament. Matt. 16:1; 19:3; 22:18, 35; Luke 4:13; 8:13; 22:28; Acts 15:10; 20:19; I Cor. 7:5; 10:13; I Thess. 3:5; Heb. 2:18; 3:8; 4:15; James 1:12; I Peter 1:6 and 4:12 are examples of its appearance, and provide help in understanding more exactly the idea it has.

Jesus taught that the disciple must not be ashamed to state a need, or even to ask for the best gift of all: God's spirit! Vv. 5-13 present the idea that constant prayer, to a Father Who is better than any we have known, should be present at each prayer time. Shameless requests to God are expected and no need to be afraid that useless or dangerous gifts would be given is to be felt. To ask, seek, and knock develops faith, makes each disciple do his own part, as well as examine why and what is being asked.

Place Unknown—Luke 11:14-36

"You are a wicked generation!" No wonder Jesus made this remark as we consider our text. Wonder turns into amazement and then to contempt as the scene in

our text impresses itself on our senses. Once again Jesus had performed a good deed, relieving a man of a demon and making it possible for him to lead a normal life. Yet some were so hardhearted that they asserted Jesus' power came from somewhere else than God. How frightening is the thought that we can become as willfully blind as these!

Again Jesus warned of the consequences of such a mind condition, and painted the awful picture of such persons. And when His mother was praised for His birth, He pointed out that blessedness was actually a reality only for doers of God's will. All others, though seemingly blessed, were anything but. One could not be neutral in life, even if one tried.

Signs and Judgment of This Generation

Sign seekers and unbelievers abounded as the text in 11:29-36 shows. But with such states of mind as were evident, no sign would do the job. The people here in Judea were not measurably different than those in Galilee, John 6 or Matt. 16. He reminded them of the familiar Old Testament notables and indicated that He was more to be sought and the cause for repentance than either Solomon or Jonah.

What the candle (light) is to a room and the eye to the body, is the mind to the spirit and spiritual. But if the mind is filled only by darkness, how tragic is the state of the spirit! The disciples needed to "look for" and "see" the right things in order to avoid this result, as He had pointed out in John 7:24. Note the sad state of affairs in the lives of some Gentiles because of this very thing in Eph. 4:17-19. To the one whose mind is set on following Jesus, his life can be full of light, John 8:12.

Pharisee's House—Luke 11:37-54

Perhaps it was a trap in waiting, or a mark of social status, or a good conversation piece—we know not, but despite the oft expressed attitude of Jesus about Pharisees in general, one yet asked Him to dine. But Jesus did not perform the usual rite of bathing (immersing) Himself before the meal to remove any possible defilement, and the Pharisee did the wrong thing—he allowed himself to consider such an act, and conclude it was a bad omission.

Jesus picked up the cue and revealed the real defilement that was to be feared: that of the soul. Practice and pretense were two different things, as the Pharisee well knew. Jesus taught those present that motives make the real difference. Though actions may be hiding something from others part of the time; the true self will ultimately "out." But many will be the worse for a chance meeting with such a person, for defilement is almost inevitable.

Translated into our life, it means this: we cannot fail to influence those around us, even if they are influencing us at the same time. If we are not daily conscious of our inner self, maintaining a "clean container," we will defile others, even if they are initially unaware of it. You see, graves were a means of defilement, as the law stated that whatever was touched by a dead person was also defiling in the same way the dead person was. The grave was one of those things. The living relatives or friends were supposed to mark the grave in some way so that unsuspecting persons might not be defiled by it. But a container of a spiritually dead person is harder to spot, and this was the issue about which Jesus warned.

When one of the listeners protested, He enlarged the idea, and described just how they defiled others. Jesus

knew some would think He was "insulting" (the meaning of the Greek term), but they needed a rude awakening, because they were standing under the judgment of God. Those whom Jesus described evidenced the same sort of attitude that their fathers had, who had killed others who were God's messengers. Jesus revealed that He knew of God's plan to test the generation then living, even as those before them (Abel to Zechariah probably represented the major portion of history, stretching from Gen. 4 through II Chron. 24), and the decreed punishment that was coming. And it did! He would warn of it again in Luke 19:41-44 and Matt. 23:37-39, and the Roman army would ultimately carry out the sentence in A.D. 68-70. The last verses, 53-54, penned by Luke clearly show the state of the men's hearts—no marvel that Jesus said what He did in verse 52.

Before a Multitude of Thousands—Luke 12, 13

A houseful—and then some! And time to warn about the influence of such as the Pharisees as well as to challenge those in earshot about trust in God. This great sermon which Luke records might be considered this way: 1-12, live for God; 13-34, and the right things; 35-53, and the right way; 54-59 now choose!

Living for God rather than men was a general appeal made specific by mention of the Pharisee's leaven, the knowledge of God and the issue of Himself.

One can but question why Jesus mentioned the leaven—was it because of the Pharisees' law-keeping? Their attitude? What did it do that caused Jesus to bring it up again (cf. Mt. 16:1 ff.)? Perhaps it was the fact that the practice and theory of the Pharisees differed and everything produces after its kind.

A judgment was coming in which all would be re-

vealed. The people needed to be ready for such an occasion. The self-righteous attitude must be avoided, as the inner/outer differences the hypocritical leaders had.

Fear of God must override fear of men. The man in John 9 is evidence that some feared God more than men and Jn. 12:42-43 shows the opposite. People must decide that it was better to be put out of the synagogue than heaven!

Awareness that God is a "God of little things" would fortify such a decision, so Jesus provided such by mentioning the insignificant sparrows, and the unnumbered hair on one's head. The physical body may seem mighty real when danger of death is present, but Jesus warned that eternal hell is the reality to consider! And the confession in life of one's allegiance to Jesus or men would be the crucial issue with God. Read the similar passage and identical import in Matt. 10:32-33. These passages did not pertain to a verbal confession before baptism but to a vivid profession in life, all of life. They encompassed not only what one said, but what one did—all day, every day. We too need such a challenge, that men cannot really harm us, but God has such power. Hence we matter to Him (I Peter 5:7) more than many unimportant sparrows, and with the mediation of Jesus and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we have every reason to decide for God. Note the connection between verse 10 and 12. If one, speaking by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, was rejected as to his message, then the offer of forgiveness by means of Christ was likewise refused, since the Holy Spirit came to testify of Christ; John 16:13-14.

Living for the right things came next, and the question of the man highlighted the issue. The man really did not ask for any arbitration, but for a decision in his favor. Life did not "hang together" by what one possessed was the lesson for him . . . and us, verse 15. Covetous-

ness was both foolish and hurtful, I Timothy 6:9-10, 17-19, and would blind eyes to the real treasure of God's favor. The rich fool had many things in his favor, for God was prospering him, but he was unthankful and disrespectful—and eternally sorrowful. God's idea of ownership and his did not "jibe"—to his eternal doom. He might have been successful, honorable, upright, virtuous, and many other things. But he knew death was coming for it then, as now, was 100% effective for all. Things were for him like drinking seawater—the more he had, the more he wanted. God reminded him that he had only prepared things and did not really possess them—timely, eh?

So Jesus warned again about anxious people who needed to substitute peace at the expense of material things. The rich fool could not add one bit to his life, v. 25, nor can we. Contentment with raiment and food is probably conspicuous by its absence in most of the lives of those who read this, but Paul reminds us that such should be our mental state, I Tim. 6:8, and that as we came into this world, so we shall depart, I Tim. 6:7. Most of the world then was not so minded, verse 30, and so it is today. The exhortation in Romans 12:2 is ever timely, is it not?

Verses 31-34 then encouraged the listeners to let their faith lead them, and eliminate everything that stood between them and God. Life was really a case of attraction—love would come if they would!

Therefore, living in the right attitude was a must, verses 35-53. Vigilance about the Lord's coming, both certain and uncertain, was to be the consuming passion of life. Jesus will come, His reward with Him, expecting to find every person with task finished, at peace with others and Him. Happiness was the possession of those who are ever ready for such a time. As ever, the time

of His return was cloaked in secrecy, the more to motivate watchfulness.

Peter's question really did not change the course of the sermon, and Jesus simply drew another picture to allow Peter (and us) to find himself in it. He, like others, must see that though the reckoning might be postponed, it was yet sure, and that God's time schedule was not identical with man's. Accountability was according to responsibility, verse 48, and all were punished accordingly! Though the verses in 49-53 present problems, the sum total is probably this: Jesus' life, as His coming, meant decisions must be made, for at His next coming, divisions will occur. It may then be the better part of wisdom to choose Him here, even if it causes division. His statement in verse 50 is enigmatic, and may mean that His life kindled a fire, as it were; the next act was impending, and anticipation on His part was present.

Decide now! To live for God regardless of men, material or mission. So Jesus concluded the sermon, urging people to realize they could decide (as evidenced by daily choices) and the issue was both plain enough and important enough to merit, yea, demand, an immediate, affirmative decision. Men at best had a "bad" case, and with a "storm" coming, should be urgently endeavoring to settle the issue while the time was right. If too late, there was no possible way to pay. Punishment was inevitable and in full (the Greek term mentioned was the smallest unit of money used, and equaled $1/16$ of $1/8$ of a day's wage. See Luke 21). He who has ears to hear, let him be listening!

As if some who read the sermon might wonder what decision needs to be made, Luke records the incident as found in 13:1-9. Repentance is the right decision, and thank God for the "gospel of the second chance."

Many of Jesus' day, as Job's friends, thought that

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calamities in life bespoke of sins (note Jn. 9:2 again). But Jesus said it was not so—and then proceeded to enforce the point with two well-known incidents in Jewish life. Thus, the lesson was given that life was uncertain and ceasation of life just as certain. God might be long-suffering, but the last chance will come for one and all. Uselessness preceded disaster as surely as God was alive. The unrepentant will suffer loss of well-being just as certainly. Can you discern the signs of the time?

In a Synagogue—Luke 13:10-17

An ox for a woman! Few would, in Jesus' day or even now, really have been willing to say an ox was actually of more value than a woman, yet when closely examined, some thought so even if they would not admit it.

Our text presents some people who fall into such a category—as we shall see, Jesus pointed out that some men would water an ox on a Sabbath day, but would not allow a woman to be healed. The problem stemmed from interpretation of a Sabbath law, which they had falsely construed. Perhaps the men would have been more excusable, but when their fallacious thinking was exposed, rather than rejoicing in the new freedom Jesus offered, they reacted adversely.

The woman had a long standing problem, and Luke used an old medical term for curvature of the spine to describe her trouble. She apparently could not straighten herself up. Jesus, in effect, considered her deplorable state and freed her from it, much as a man might free an ox from a stall to permit the ox to be watered. While she was praising God, others did not share her joy: the ruler of the synagogue specifically. He became in much pain

(the meaning of the Greek term) and addressed those present, expressing his personal dislike regarding the act, as if the woman had come to be healed, and Jesus had done so, expressly to "break the Sabbath." Jesus knew the remark was made for His benefit, so He responded with the idea that no one felt the Sabbath was being broken by doing necessary things, even for a dumb animal. If this was so, how much more ought a person loved of God be relieved of Satan's bonds. The conclusion drawn by some was this: God's command about the Sabbath is important but our interpretation and application of it is wrong. God meant for the Sabbath to be a blessing to us, not a burden. He (Jesus) is trying to show us God's design for it. Praise God! And they thought rightly. God meant it to be used in regard to what was best for body and soul, and "rest" was not the main point at all. However, others were simply chagrined and not convinced. Thus it ever was. One can see why Jesus was rather plain spoken, as in Matt. 15, Mark 7. So many needed a spiritual "loosing" and so few who would even step aside so that those who desired could enter into freedom, 11:52 and Matt. 23:4.

The parables of the kingdom, the mustard and the leaven follow in the next verses through 21. It is difficult to tell whether Jesus just tacked these on because of the healing or if the healing interrupted the discussion which included these. The two familiar parables (Matt. 13) described the spread of the kingdom as to its great potential, and the power of the kingdom, so quiet and secret, yet so surely and ultimately noticeable.

Feast of Dedication—John 10:22-39

The close of this three month period found Jesus late in December at Jerusalem. The Feast of Dedication

drew some people into the city, and perhaps some of these were among those who pressed the issue about His identity, v. 22. These were not different than those in Luke 12:54-57 in that they could discern the signs of everything except the ones Jesus was working. Had they been observant, the works done by Jesus would have told them the answer to the question they asked. The gist of their trouble: a bias of mind with a veil over the truth. They were not following and volitionally so. Jesus explained that His identity was plain to those who willed to keep listening and following Him, and to all such, He Himself gave eternal life. Not only so, but they would enjoy the protection of both Himself and His father. The implication of this was that He and the Father were equal, and working together. (Note Jn. 17:11, 22, 23 for texts on the idea of "oneness"—the Greek texts are the same.)

His auditors immediately drew the conclusion that He was claiming deity. As before pointed out, rather than correcting their impression, He reinforced it. He pointed out that their law (Psalms is thus a part of that subscribed as law) had labeled others (judges whom God had appointed) as god(s) and they did not object. Why should they object if He also claimed to work with and for God? And if He was, then let the chips fall where they may. The issue: either deny the works, or believe.

So the issue was closed, as He evaded the arrest attempt and left for three intensely active months in the Perea area across the Jordan, away from Judea and Jerusalem. When He returned to Jerusalem to stay, they would crucify Him within a week, and mankind's degradation would be indelibly etched in space and time in the crucifixion of the Lord of Glory. The real-life drama was rapidly drawing to a close.