

## ***REDISCOVER JESUS, PART 52: "WHAT IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD LIKE?"***

**LUKE 13:10-21**

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### **Personal Introduction**

Hi everyone. If you don't know me, I'm Jeff. I'm a pastor at HMCC of Jakarta. And it's my privilege to be preaching the Word of God for us today.

Before we begin, please take out your own copy of God's Word and any note-taking materials you need, whether physical or digital. For reference, I'll be preaching from the English Standard Version (or ESV).

Now if you're using digital devices, please turn off all notifications and put aside any distractions as best as we can, so that we can give our hearts and our full attention to the preaching of God's Word.

### **Sermon Series Introduction**

We're currently in Part 52 of our sermon series called "Rediscover Jesus," where we're going through the Gospel of Luke together.

So let's get right into today's sermon: "What is the Kingdom of God like?"

### **Sermon Introduction**

Now if you can close your eyes for just a moment. Try to imagine a kingdom... Ok, now please open your eyes again.

For a brief second, what did you picture? A castle? A king? The people of the kingdom walking around?

Well those are basically the elements of what you'll need to have a kingdom: a kingdom needs to have a king (or the ruler or leader), a kingdom needs to have the people that the king has rule over, and a kingdom needs to have the territory that the king has control over.

And it's similar with the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God has a King - Jesus, the Son of God. And the Kingdom of God has its people - God's chosen people. And the Kingdom of God has control - not merely over a geographical location - but God, in His sovereignty, is in control over all things. So God's Kingdom is His sovereign rule over His people and over all things.

So that's what the Kingdom of God is. But what is the Kingdom of God like? And what is its King like? That's what we'll be looking at today - what Jesus the King is like, and what the Kingdom of God is like.

And by the end, we'll see that the nature of King Jesus is different from the rulers of the world, and that the nature of his Kingdom is different from the kingdoms of the world. And by the end, hopefully we'll also see that only King Jesus and his Kingdom is worthy of all our praise.

### **The One Thing**

***Praise Jesus the King who's powerful yet compassionate  
& his Kingdom that's glorious yet humble***

### **Scripture Introduction**

If you have your Bibles with you or if you have the Bible app, please turn to Luke chapter 13. Today, we'll be reading from Luke 13:10-21.

In the passage immediately before this, Jesus taught that it's wrong for people to think that God punishes some sinners with life's tragedies. And Jesus corrected them by teaching them that, not some, but all people are sinners. And unless they truly repent of their sins, they will perish.

So Jesus corrected the people's view of themselves and taught them God's view of people - that all have fallen short of His glorious standard, and deserve punishment.

And God's narrative now continues, as Jesus continues to teach...

## **Scripture Reading**

Let's read Luke 13:10-21.

<sup>10</sup> Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. <sup>11</sup> And behold, there was a woman who had had a disabling spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. <sup>12</sup> When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your disability."<sup>13</sup> And he laid his hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and she glorified God. <sup>14</sup> But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed 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." <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 for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?" <sup>17</sup> As he said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame, and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.

<sup>18</sup> He said therefore, "What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it? <sup>19</sup> It is like a grain of mustard seed 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."

<sup>20</sup> And again he said, "To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? <sup>21</sup> It is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, until it was all leavened."

This is God's Word.

## **Overview**

We'll look at this passage in two parts.

- I. What is the King of God's Kingdom like? Jesus the King is powerful yet compassionate (vv.10-13)
- II. What are the rulers of worldly kingdoms like? They can be legalistic and unloving (vv.14-17)
- III. What is the Kingdom of God like? Jesus' Kingdom is glorious yet humble (vv.18-21)

## **I. What is the King of God's Kingdom like? Jesus the King is powerful yet compassionate (vv.10-13)**

Verses 10-13 says this:

<sup>10</sup> Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. <sup>11</sup> And behold, there was a woman who had had a disabling spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. <sup>12</sup> When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your disability."<sup>13</sup> And he laid his hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and she glorified God.

So during those times, it was customary for a visiting teacher to be invited to teach at the local synagogue. So as Jesus and his disciples were heading to Jerusalem, they passed by a town, and most likely he was invited by their local synagogue ruler to come and teach at the synagogue while he was in the neighborhood. And so Jesus taught, and it's specifically mentioned that it was on Sabbath day.

And so while Jesus was teaching, there was a woman there (probably at the back of the room) whose back was bent over. And her back was bent over, not just a little bit, but to the point where she could not fully straighten herself (so this was a serious condition. Imagine you're standing up and trying to touch your toes - so your back is significantly bent forward). Now imagine you're stuck in that position. Not for a short while, but for 18 years. That's how this woman had to live for almost 2 decades.

This woman's life must've been very difficult - she wouldn't be able to look at her surroundings freely, she wouldn't be able to move around freely. She'd be very limited with what she can do. Even going to the synagogue to listen to Jesus must've been a very difficult ordeal.

And the text specifically highlights that her condition was not a regular physical disability, but it was caused by a disabling spirit (an evil spirit had inflicted this physical ailment upon her). So this was part of Satan's evil scheme to inflict pain and suffering upon this woman - to keep her in bondage by using her own body against her.

So not only would she have been marginalized for being a woman, but she would've also been a social outcast. People would've most likely just disregarded her, treating her as if she's of lesser value than a regular person. And I'm sure that made Satan very happy. Satan thinks that he's successful - that he owns this woman and is victorious over her.

But notice what happens next. While Jesus was teaching, Jesus saw her. Even though others at the synagogue might've disregarded her, and even though it must've been difficult for her to even look at Jesus herself, Jesus saw her.

And he had compassion for her. Jesus didn't ignore her, but instead he called her over.

And notice how Jesus took the initiative. Because at this point, the woman hasn't even said anything yet. Jesus took the initiative of calling her over because he had compassion for her and cared for her.

And, imagine, as the woman slowly walked to Jesus, everyone's eyes must've been on her as she slowly made her way to Jesus. And then when she finally reached Jesus, Jesus said, "woman, you are freed from your disability." Then Jesus lovingly laid his hands on her, and immediately she was able to straighten her back and stand straight.

This is the power of Jesus Christ - he has the power to free people from spiritual bondage. The evil spirit that was disabling the woman did not have a fighting chance. Jesus has complete power and authority over Satan and his demonic powers. And unlike Satan's power that binds people down, Jesus' power frees people because Jesus loves us and cares for us.

Jesus saw this suffering woman, had compassion for her, and freed her from the bondage that the evil spirit was inflicting upon her.

This is what Jesus is like. Jesus is not only powerful, but is also compassionate.

And after Jesus healed this woman, notice - what did she do next? In response, she glorified God - she gave all the praise and glory to God. And that's the appropriate response to Jesus' power, love, and compassion - to glorify him out of an outpouring sense of gratitude and awe.

Now for those of us who are here today, how are we like this woman with a disabling spirit. Is something also disabling you or keeping you bound?

Perhaps not by a disabling spirit or a physical disability, but perhaps by Satan's lies and deception that are keeping us bound in our sin. Perhaps Satan has deceived us to believe in certain lies...

- Lies that fool us into thinking that our sin is not that bad, so then we keep sinning against God.

- Or lies regarding our appearance, our performance, our self-worth, our identity.
- Or lies that fool us into thinking that we're alone, unwanted, or unloved.

If that's you, then know that you're not overlooked. Jesus sees you, and loves you and has compassion toward you. Because that's what our King Jesus is like.

And if you have not yet put your faith in him, then know that not only does Jesus see you, but he also invites you to come to him - just as you are - with all of your brokenness and pain and suffering. Jesus invites you to know what he is like, to know him deeper, and for you to put your faith in him for only he has the power to free you from the bondage of sin and death. So if that's you, please come up to me after the service, and I'd love to talk to you and answer any questions that you may have.

So what is the King of God's Kingdom like? Jesus the King is powerful yet compassionate.

And next, what are the rulers of worldly kingdoms like? They can be hypocritical and unloving.

## **II. What are the rulers of worldly kingdoms like? They can be legalistic and unloving (vv.14-17)**

Verses 14-17 says this:

<sup>14</sup> But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed 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." <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 for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?" <sup>17</sup> As he said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame, and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.

Here we observe a completely different response to Jesus. The woman who was healed responded to what Jesus did by appropriately glorifying God. But that's not how everyone responded...

The synagogue ruler (most likely the one who invited Jesus to teach) was indignant - angry and annoyed - at what Jesus did. And the reason for his annoyance was not because Jesus healed, but because Jesus had healed on Sabbath Day.

So to better understand his anger and annoyance, we'll need to understand what Sabbath day is.

For the Jewish people, it was important to keep the Sabbath day holy because God has commanded them to keep the Sabbath day holy (that's one of the ten commandments).

- On Sabbath day, the Jewish people were to rest from work (and that includes the children, the servants, and even their oxen and donkeys along with other animals) - they were all to rest from work.
- And the purpose of resting from their work was to remember and glorify God for His work - for the work that He's done in freeing the Israelites from the bondage of slavery in Egypt.

But unfortunately, the religious leaders would end up straying away from God's original commandment.

- What happened was this: in order to ensure that the Jewish people did no work on Sabbath day, the religious leaders began to define the kinds of work that the people could and could not do.
- And healing became one of those things that they were not allowed to do - this is according to these additional rules and traditions (not God's Word, but man-made rules and traditions).
- And so over time, what ended up happening was that these additional rules and traditions (that were man-made) became just as important to the religious leaders as God's Word.

So in the synagogue leader's view, Jesus had just broken Jewish law, and that was not ok. And that's why he was so angry and annoyed. But the truth is that Jesus had not broken God's commandment, he's just not following the religious leaders' additional rules and traditions, which had actually become very convoluted and inconsistent.

Jesus is completely not in the wrong.

So in response to the synagogue ruler, Jesus says this in verses 15-17:

<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 for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?" <sup>17</sup> As he said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame, and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.

Jesus rebuked the synagogue leader (along with the other religious leaders) because of their hypocrisy. He said, "you hypocrites!"

What Jesus is basically saying is this: "If you allow oxen and donkeys to be freed on Sabbath day, then shouldn't a woman - a person who is made in the image of God; who is more valuable than an ox or a donkey - shouldn't she also be freed of her bondage on Sabbath day?"

- And on Sabbath day, the Jewish people are to rest from work and praise God for their freedom from the bondage of slavery in Egypt. Then wouldn't it also be appropriate for this daughter of Abraham - a fellow Jew - to also be freed from her bondage on Sabbath day?
- Or would you prefer that she remains bound by Satan, the enemy, when Satan has already bound her for eighteen years? Do you think that would honor God on this Sabbath day that we're to keep as holy?"

Jesus rebuked the synagogue ruler for his hypocrisy - for he allows oxen and donkeys to be cared for, but not for the people to be cared for. And as Jesus said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame, and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that Jesus did and said.

Now from this exchange between Jesus and the synagogue ruler, what can we learn about what the synagogue ruler is like?

Well, we can see that this synagogue ruler is being legalistic - he thinks that he can be a good person by merely doing good works and by following all the rules.

And that's actually how many people tend to think as well. But why is that? Because we like to be our own kings and to be in control of our lives. And we feel that if we can be good people by our own good works and our own merits then that puts us in control of our lives.

But there is a danger in thinking that we can be a good person merely by doing good things. One of the dangers of legalism is that it can cause us to be unloving. Because if we think that we can be good by doing good, then we can start feeling superior to others, especially those who we feel are not doing as much good as us.

And that's how this synagogue ruler is like and that affected how he viewed Jesus - he basically thinks Jesus is inferior to him because, unlike him, Jesus did not follow all of the Jewish rules and traditions. He felt superior. And the ruler's sense of superiority led him to be unloving.

He prioritized these rules and traditions over loving others - telling the people that they cannot be healed on the Sabbath and that that's not appropriate. That they should go back on the other six days if they wish to be healed.

That's completely unloving and uncompassionate. That's completely different from what Jesus is like.

But the more serious danger of legalism is that that's not how the Kingdom of God works.

Last week, we looked at Luke 13:1-9. And in those passages immediately before this, we learned that Jesus taught the people that it's wrong for people to think that God punishes some sinners with life's tragedies. And Jesus corrected them by teaching them that, not some, but all people are sinners. And unless they truly repent of their sins, they will perish.

So Jesus corrected the people's view of themselves and taught them God's view of people - that all have fallen short of His glorious standard, and all deserve punishment - eternal punishment in Hell. And that's everyone. No one is good enough that they can earn their own salvation by doing good works. Good works and following rules and traditions is not enough. Everyone justly deserves eternal punishment in Hell. That's the bad news.

But here's the Good News of the Kingdom of God: even while we were still sinners - even while we were still his enemies - Jesus loved us.

Just like how he loved the woman with a disabling spirit. Jesus saw her, had compassion for her, invited her to him, and by his power and grace - Jesus healed her. Not because she was deserving, not because of all the good works that she did for Jesus, not because of all the good things that she said to Jesus. Jesus healed her because he had love and compassion toward her.

And Jesus' ultimate act of love and compassion is at the cross. He died on the cross for our sins as our substitute. So those who believe in him as Lord and savior, will not perish, but have eternal life. We will not remain bound in our sin and death. Those who believe in him will not be put to shame, but will rejoice in the eternal life that we have in Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior.

That's what our King and his Kingdom is like. And next, Jesus will further explain what the Kingdom of God is like...

So first - What is the King of God's Kingdom like? Jesus the King is powerful yet compassionate. Second - what are the rulers of worldly kingdoms like? They can be legalistic and unloving. And third...

### **III. What is the Kingdom of God like? Jesus' Kingdom is glorious yet humble (vv.18-21)**

Verses 18-19 say this:

<sup>18</sup> He said therefore, "What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it? <sup>19</sup> It is like a grain of mustard seed 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."

For context, the Jewish people had been waiting for the arrival of the Messiah and the Kingdom of God for a very long time - for generations.

So when Jesus asked, "what is the Kingdom of God like?" Most people at the time may already have their own expectations of what God's Kingdom would be like (this is what they've been dreaming about for years). For some, they might've expected the Kingdom of God to be like a revolution. And for the Messiah to be a military general who would defeat Rome and free the Jewish people from Roman occupation. Others might've been expecting for the Kingdom of God to bring them wealth, status, and power.

So when Jesus asked, "to what shall I compare it?" Many during that time would assume that Jesus would compare God's Kingdom to something grand and magnificent. Especially as the people are currently hyped and rejoicing at all the glorious things that they've just seen Jesus do.

But instead, what did Jesus compare the Kingdom of God to? a mustard seed... one grain of mustard seed... that a man took and sowed in his garden... and it grew and became a tree. Perhaps the people that were rejoicing are now a bit confused.

An actual mustard seed grows into something more like a shrub, not a tree. But the Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed that grew into a tree - not a shrub, but a tree - that's big enough to house multiple bird nests in its branches.

So Jesus is using a hyperbole or a stylistic exaggeration here to emphasize the supernatural growth of this tiny mustard seed into a big tree (even more than what's naturally expected).

Jesus then shared another parable...

Verses 20-21 say this:

<sup>20</sup> And again he said, "To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? <sup>21</sup> It is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, until it was all leavened."

Jesus compared the Kingdom of God to another modest object - it's like a small amount of leaven (or yeast) that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, which is actually a large amount of flour! That much flour would create about 30 kg of dough! That would be enough bread to feed about 100 people!

Again, Jesus is using a hyperbole to emphasize the magnitude of the spread of such a small amount of leaven (or yeast) in that much flour.

So from these 2 parables, we can see God's power displayed in how God's Kingdom will grow supernaturally, beyond what we naturally expect (just like how the mustard seed grew supernaturally, and how the leaven/yeast spread supernaturally. Even beyond what was expected).

And this supernatural growth directs us to look at the final state of this growth - the final state of God's Kingdom - which will be completely glorious. Apostle John would have a vision of this glorious final state. In the Book of Revelation, John wrote this:

**Revelation 7:9 (ESV)**

<sup>9</sup> After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands,

Heaven will be glorious. Not only will it consist of one woman rejoicing (or one synagogue rejoicing), but it will grow and consist of people of all nations - all of our brothers and sisters - with God, rejoicing and worshipping Him forever.

John continues his account in Revelation 21. He wrote this:

**Revelation 21:4 (ESV)**

<sup>4</sup> He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

Again, Heaven will be glorious. Not only is one woman freed, but all of God's people will be free. In Heaven, there will be no more death, no more pain, and no more suffering. We'll be completely free from Satan's lies and temptations, free from the bondage of sin and death.

In the end, God and His Kingdom will have the final victory over Satan. All of God's adversaries will be put to shame, and all of His people will rejoice at all the glorious things that God has done.

Now what does this all mean for God's people? As His people, we also share in God's victory. When Jesus returns for a second time, those who believe in Jesus will be glorified. The blind will see, the deaf will hear, the mute will speak, and those who have been suffering and in pain will be free and have rest.

That is the glorious future that the Kingdom of God promises for those who believe in Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Because when Jesus returns for a second time, he will establish New Heaven and New Earth, and his people will be the citizens of this New Heaven and New Earth.

But Jesus, our king, has not yet returned. We're currently in the in-between period of Jesus' first and second coming (the mustard seed is growing but it's not yet a tree. The yeast is spreading but the flour is not yet leavened). God's Kingdom is here, but it's not fully here yet (it's not yet consummated). We're not yet in Heaven. We currently live on Earth, a broken world with broken people, where there's still sickness, pain, and suffering.

So then the next question is: what are we to do in the meantime? Well, simply put, we're to live as the people of God's Kingdom (in such a way that's honoring to our King), we're to be distinct from the rest of the world. We're to be light and salt of the Earth; a city on a hill that cannot be hidden.

As God's people, we are to showcase to others what the Kingdom of God is like and what King Jesus is like. And we do this by humbling ourselves before others, by sacrificially loving and serving others just as Jesus has loved and served us.

Because God's Kingdom is not only glorious, but it is also humble. Because notice how Jesus didn't just highlight the glorious final state of the Kingdom of God, but he also highlighted its humble beginning. Jesus didn't just compare the Kingdom of God to a giant tree, but he compared the Kingdom of God to a grain of mustard seed and a small amount of leaven.

This humble beginning of God's Kingdom is a big part of God's Kingdom.

Because God uses the humble, the gentle, and the lowly to spread His Kingdom to all nations. Jesus' ministry on Earth started with 12 disciples (and they were not extremely notable men, but some were humble fishermen). And Jesus used the weak to shame the strong (just as he used the woman with a disabling spirit to shame the ruler of the synagogue).

We - as broken, imperfect people - have a role to play in the growth and spread of God's Kingdom.

So the next question is: what can we do to help grow God's Kingdom? To help us with our next steps, here are 3 life applications that we can do...

First, we can "reveal Jesus" to others. We can reveal what Jesus the King is like by showing love and compassion to others.

- Even to those who are difficult to love, even those who are disregarded by society, and those going through difficult times. We can continue to show them patience and grace and compassion; being good witnesses to Christ, and revealing Christ-like character to them.

Second, we can help others persevere in their followership of Christ with endurance.

- Sanctification is a process. We won't be fully sanctified and glorified till Jesus' second coming. So in the meantime, let's point one another to Christ, and help one another persevere in our walk with endurance.

Third, we can pray for the supernatural growth of God's Kingdom.

- Ultimately, it is only God who has the power to transform hearts and grow His Kingdom. So pray that His Kingdom will spread throughout Indonesia and throughout the world, and that many hearts will be transformed, and many will be saved.

And as we remember that we're saved, not by our good works, but only by the grace of God - because of Jesus' love and compassion - let's respond appropriately like the woman with the disabling spirit, who gave all the glory and all the praise to God.

## **Life Application**

1. Reveal Jesus - reveal what Jesus the King is like by showing love and compassion to others.
2. Help others persevere in their followership of Christ with endurance.
3. Pray for the supernatural growth of God's Kingdom.

## **The One Thing**

***Praise Jesus the King who's powerful yet compassionate  
& his Kingdom that's glorious yet humble***



## **Conclusion**

If you're able, can we all stand as we respond to God's Word together?