

In The Right Place  
Luke 13:10-13

As we return again today to our study of these blessed words of Luke chapter 13, I can't help but continually marvel at the treasure of wisdom and knowledge and grace and mercy that God so generously shows to us within the mysteries of His word! And He does it so simply and so clearly that anyone who will humbly surrender their hearts to Him will immediately know it.

Here, in the very simple words of this passage, God reveals to us who He is, and what He is about all throughout the many occurrences of our daily life.

And he does that, while at the same time, also revealing to us who we are and what we are supposed to be about within all our many circumstances. And that if we will be in the right place at the right time, wondrous things can take place in our lives. Listen, beginning in verse 10 of Luke chapter 13,

<sup>10</sup>Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. <sup>11</sup>And 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. (13:10-13)

Here simply, it was a Sabbath day, the day of worship, and Jesus was teaching in the synagogue. That was who He was, and that was what He was supposed to be doing. He was a preacher and a teacher, a giver of the gospel, and He was supposed to be in the synagogue on that day.

And there were also other people there to hear His preaching and His teaching. And that was where they were supposed to be and that was what they were supposed to do on that Sabbath day. And among them, there was a suffering servant, a woman. And that was exactly where she was supposed to be on that day, in the right place at the right time.

And that is also exactly where He desires each of us to be each Sabbath day, in His house, intentionally placing ourselves under the preaching and the teaching of His precious word, in the right place at the right time.

That is His plan for us. And here in this passage, Jesus is declaring to us that if we will do our part and be faithful to come to His house and to listen, to be in the right place at the right time, then it will not be just the preacher and other church members that we will meet there, we will also have an opportunity to have a personal encounter with God Himself. We will hear His teaching from His word and perhaps also, on occasion, we may even see Him perform a very special miracle, and it may even be for us, personally. Is that not an exciting thought?

Granted, within our modern day circumstances, our usual preaching and teaching will come through the voices of other men and women, like the Pastor or a Sunday School teacher. But if those men and women have been really faithful in their study and in their teaching of God's word, then it will actually be the Spirit of God who forms all the words that are being spoken through them.

The simple, but profound promise to us is, "If we will be faithful to do our part, and that is to faithfully come to His house on the Sabbath, to be in the right place at the right time, no matter what other personal plans we might rather have wanted to be involved in, then great blessings will come to us."

Consider this thought very carefully folks! It's only as we faithfully present ourselves before God, that He is able to reach into our souls, into our habits, into our behaviors, into the very depths of our beings to begin to make those necessary changes that will bless our lives eternally.

Here in these words, we can see that all the elements were in place for God to do one of His very special works, to perform one of His blessed miracles within the life of a dear and suffering saint.

Here, a woman, who had suffered from a crippling disability for eighteen years, was faithfully doing her part. Though she was bent over and suffering with pain, she didn't let her illness and suffering keep her from going to church.

Folks, I do fear that there are many very dear and believing saints who are not so faithful. They instead take the occasion of even a minor illness to go ahead and remain at home.

But here, Jesus is demonstrating that if we really want to have a personal encounter with Him, we need to always be faithful to do our part, and to come to church.

A question . . . does that mean that God is not in our house or wherever else we might be?

No, it doesn't mean that, because yes, He is there in our home, or in our car, or wherever else we might be. But often in all those other places, the condition of our soul is not such that it can receive the blessing that Jesus wants to give to us.

It seems that within His almighty sovereignty, Jesus will give us permission to ignore Him and even to deny Him. And when we exhibit a lack of faith, He willingly restricts the miracles that He will do. When speaking about the lack of faith in the people in His own hometown, we are told in Matthew chapter 13,

<sup>58</sup> And he (Jesus) did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith. (Matthew 13:58)

God knows our hearts folks. Recall the many times that we are told in these gospels that Jesus knew the unspoken thoughts within the minds of the people around Him. And He really does know if we want to be around Him or not. Remember the words of Psalm 139. In those words, we are told clearly that God knows every thought that enters our minds. He knows every desire, every motive.

And if we demonstrate by our behavior that we love to be in some other place more than we love to be around Him, He knows it completely and He will willingly withhold many of His blessings.

So again, the reality is, God really does know if we really do want to be around Him or not.

Does that mean that we can never "just sleep in", or go hunting, or take a trip, or any number of other alternatives to being in church on the Sabbath?

No! It doesn't mean that. But again, we need to clearly understand, that God really does know every motive within our soul. And He really does know whether or not we love Him enough to want to be around Him as much as we can be.

And the special warning hidden beneath the surface of these words is that if and when we deliberately make wrong choices, we will surely miss out on some delightful blessings that God has planned for us.

May I pause and give a somewhat crass comparison? Recall those times when you have entered your name into a drawing, but you have to be present at the moment of the drawing in order to win. If you are not there, you miss out and another person's name is drawn. The implied warning within these words is very similar.

In some ways, God is saying to you and to me, "you really do need to be in the right place at the right time". "You really do need to be present in church on Sunday. And the words of Hebrews 10 remind us of that. There we're told,

<sup>24</sup>And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,  
<sup>25</sup>not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10:24-25)

The dear woman in this passage, though suffering with a terrible debilitating illness for many, many years was faithful to be in her church on the Sabbath. And by being there, she had placed herself in the right place at the right time to receive a great blessing, to be healed, to be freed from the captivity of her disability. Listen again!

<sup>10</sup>Now he (Jesus) was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath.  
<sup>11</sup>And 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. (Luke 13:10-13)

Wow! Would you not just love for something like that to take place in your life?

And note also in these words, that it was Jesus who sought this woman out to help her. Yes, she most likely herself had, on many occasions, pleaded for God to remove her suffering. But here, Jesus was the one who initiated the encounter.

A question . . . could Jesus have healed this dear woman in another place, perhaps in the streets, as He so often did with others?

Yes, but here, within this special church setting, all of the opportunities were in place for good things to happen, and they did. And yes, no doubt, it was the Spirit of God who drew that woman to that synagogue each time that she came. We know that because of the words of Jesus on another occasion, when He said, "No one comes to me except my Father draws them".

So yes, she was drawn to be there by God's Spirit, and so are we. But please know that that woman needed to also do her part, as do we. And her part was to be obedient to the "drawing" of God and to faithfully come to church.

Another question . . . this woman had probably attended that church on many other occasions, and perhaps Jesus had even spoken there on one or more of those Sabbaths. So what made this particular day any different from all the others?

We aren't really told about that in these words, so we can't know why this day was different. But perhaps we can get some insight into the reason why. Listen, first in verse 11!

<sup>11</sup>And there was a woman who had had a disabling spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not fully straighten herself.(Luke 13:11)

Here, God clearly attributes this dear woman's disability to a "spirit" and this "spirit" was an "evil spirit". We know that because in verse 16 we are told that she was bound by satan for eighteen years. Why the woman was under such severe control of that evil spirit, we aren't told. But she was.

Was perhaps that evil spirit's control due to some sin on her part? Again, we are not told, but the reality is, sometimes it can be, but at other times not.

We read in other portions of these gospels about people who obviously did not intentionally involve themselves with evil spirits, but were still nonetheless controlled by them. One that comes to mind is the young boy who had an evil spirit that would give him fits and would throw him into the fire.

Again, the reality is, evil spirits do what evil spirits do and they get into people's lives and inflict whatever misery they are able to cause. And any person can intentionally or unintentionally invite their presence.

Again, the one thing that we do know for sure, this specific illness was brought upon this woman by an evil spirit. Again, verse 16,

<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?" (Luke 13:16)

So, whether or not the woman was at fault in allowing this demon to afflict her, we don't know. But the presence of a demon is significantly mentioned and most likely has something to do with the timing of Jesus' healing.

Here also is another significant truth that must be accepted, and that is, within the walls of most all churches, there are suffering saints, inflicted with all sorts of illnesses, and some of those illnesses are, no doubt, as with this woman, caused by an evil spirit.

What does that realization mean to you and to me? It means that demons do what demons do. They inflict misery upon people. And yes, even Christians, even you and me. We are saved yes and on our way to heaven, but often, suffering all the way there.

But please also know that our being saved and our being in church provides the very best condition and very best place for us suffering souls to be in if we want to be freed from our captivity to our illnesses and our disabilities.

If I am disabled and bent low by suffering brought on by a demon, folks, I want to be right where Jesus might perchance drive that demon away and bring me back to good health.

We don't like to think about such things, to think that my arthritis or your diabetes or high blood pressure is being brought upon us by an evil spirit. We want to think that as Christians, demons cannot get near to us and cause us to suffer. We want instead to adamantly attribute our illness, and everyone else's illness and infirmity and disease to just some natural cause.

But oh dear Christian, please, please do stop and read the words of Ephesians chapter 6, were we are clearly told that,

12 . . . our struggle is not against flesh and blood, (not even our own bodies) but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces

of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. (Ephesians 6:12)

Again, dear Christian, please don't be naïve. The spiritual forces of evil are always at work doing what demons do. And their main focus is against you and me.

This dear woman here in this synagogue had suffered so much and for so long that she was probably really ready for some relief. And I would suggest that she didn't busy herself with some of the same "prideful" responses that we might have. She wanted to be healed. And she was!

One more thought on this involvement of an evil spirit. Note that the fact of the presence of the evil spirit is simply said and is accepted without question. Perhaps you and I should begin to do the same with some of our illnesses.

To simply understand that that is what demons do in the lives of believers does not make us "unsaved" or "evil". It simply acknowledges that evil spirits do what evil spirits do within the lives of ordinary people. And the only cure for such afflictions is through the Spirit of Christ driving them out of us.

Yes, pills and surgery and other treatments often do help our suffering, but they seldom really cure us.

Folks, the one overwhelming truth that we must take from these words is that Jesus is our healer. And if we want Him to be a healer to us, we need to ever and always put ourselves into the condition and into the right place at the right time where we can receive the healing that He offers.

At home, He wants us to humbly seclude ourselves within a quiet setting, daily, alone and with His word in front of us, and in a state of mind where we can cry out to Him in prayer.

And He also wants you and me to be faithful to assemble ourselves together, with each other. Those words again from Hebrews 10,

<sup>24</sup>And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,  
<sup>25</sup>not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10:24-25)

Sadly, as we mentioned a moment ago, most people across our world don't assemble themselves together in our churches. And while that might be more understandable for people who don't believe in Jesus, again, sadly, even people who profess strongly to believe in Jesus don't attend a church either.

For reasons of their own, they stay at home or they do something else. Perhaps they were offended by a former church member, or perhaps their former Pastor didn't visit them when they were ill, and they just quit going there.

It seems that for most people who don't attend church, they just got out of the habit of going there and now they just do other things.

And again, that is so very sad for them. Because being in a church on a regular basis is really the right thing to do. There we are in the right place at the right time.

For this dear suffering woman that we read about in this passage, she suffered from here illness for eighteen years. If that were to take place in today's church environment, for those eighteen years, that woman would have had eighteen years of fellowship with other members of the Body of Christ, people who would help her and give her comfort in her sufferings.

And not only that, even during her suffering, she would have been able to also be a help and a comfort for other suffering saints in her church.

Folks, simply put, being in church as often as we can go there is the right thing to do. There you'll be in the right place at the right time. And there you'll be available to receive blessings from the Lord, and at the same time be able to bless others who need your help.

And the promise from the Lord Jesus is that He will be faithful to be among us and He promises to do marvelous things beyond anything we could ever hope or imagine.

I'll close with these simple words given in Matthew 18 verse 20.

<sup>20</sup>For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them." (Matthew 18:20)



Let's pray.