

Luke 12:54-13:9

1. This passage is part of an extended encounter Jesus had with a multitude of people that included some of His followers, including the Disciples.
2. His earlier comments were addressed to his followers, but these were spoken to the entire multitude of people who were present.
3. To understand what Jesus was trying to communicate we need to remember that He was speaking to people who:
  - a. Saw themselves as God's chosen people.
  - b. Believed that they possessed and understood the truth.
  - c. Were confident that they were pleasing to God.
4. The issues Jesus raised made it clear that His listeners lacked discernment, or understanding, in some important areas.

**I. They did not comprehend what God was doing in their midst. 543-56**

- A. Jesus pointed out that they were able to forecast the weather by observing the clouds and the direction of the wind.
- B. Yet they were unwilling or unable to analyze or discern who He was and what He was about.
- C. They were like the people Paul referenced when he wrote about those who are, "Always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." 2 Timothy 3:7
- D. Many today claim to be Christians, but they show little understanding related to what Christ and the Christian life are all about.

**II. They did not comprehend the weakness of their position before God. 57-59**

- A. They had enough sense to try and settle a dispute with another person when they realized that they were in the wrong and could not win if they went to court.
- B. It would be foolish to go to court knowing that they were going to lose and end up in jail until they could satisfy the judgment against them.
- C. Yet they were unwilling or unable to apply that same logic to their relationship to God.
- D. Man's situation before God is clearly stated in the Bible.
  1. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23
  2. "And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, 28 so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him." Hebrews 9:27-28
- E. Apart from Jesus Christ every human being is in a no-win situation before God.

### **III. They did not comprehend the true nature of sin. 1-5**

- A. The Jews believed that misfortune happened to people because they were somehow displeasing to God.
- B. Jesus pointed out that they could not assume that they were right with God just because they escaped the misfortune that happened to other people.
- C. We are not justified in God's sight because we are morally superior to others.
- D. The righteousness God requires cannot be acquired apart from repentance towards Him, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- E. To enter Heaven we must be clothed in the righteousness of Christ; a righteousness that is imputed to those who have recognized the impossibility of their position.
- F. Noticed that twice Jesus stated, "Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."

### **IV. They did not comprehend that with privilege comes responsibility. 6-9**

- A. The Jews were often referred to in Scripture as a vine, vineyard, or fig tree.
- B. Jesus related a parable about a man who planted a fig tree from which he expected to harvest figs.
- C. It had every advantage.
  - 1. It was planted in the right soil.
  - 2. It was cared for by a skilled vineyard-keeper.
  - 3. It would have been given three years to mature.
  - 4. It was examined for three additional years, but it bore no fruit.
  - 5. It was sentenced to be cut down.
  - 6. It was given an extra year because of the intercession of the vineyard-keeper.
  - 7. It was to be cut down if it bore no fruit, and by implication replaced.
- D. What lessons can we draw from this parable?
  - 1. Those who are recipients of God's grace are expected to bear fruit.
  - 2. Uselessness invites disaster. John 15:1-6
  - 3. Nothing that only takes can survive.
  - 4. God is long-suffering. 2 Peter 3:8-9
  - 5. There is a final chance beyond which there is no remedy.
- E. Jesus' three-year ministry was intended to bring forth fruit from God's fig tree—the nation of Israel.
- F. God graciously granted the nation an extension during the ministry of the Apostles.
- G. The ax fell in 70 AD when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple.
- H. Jesus stated, "My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples." John 15:8 (No fruit, no root is a truism that applies to God's Kingdom.)

### **APPLICATION**

- 1. Those who are truly rooted and grounded in Christ will be fruitful.
- 2. They will manifest the fruit of the Spirit and produce the fruit that remains. (See Galatians 5:22-23 and John 15:16)
- 3. Sadly, there are many professing Christians that are as clueless as the Jews were.