International Bible Lessons Commentary

Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series

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Luke 13:22-30
King James Version
July 22, 2018

The **International Bible Lesson** (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, July 22, 2018**, is from **Luke 13:22-30**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary*. **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** will help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the *International Bible Lessons Commentary* website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study. You can discuss each week's commentary and lesson at the *International Bible Lesson Forum*.

(Luke 13:22) And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem.

Jesus conducted His final earthly journey on the roads between Galilee and Jerusalem, where He would be crucified and die as a sacrifice for our sins, making our forgiveness by the King of the universe both just and merciful. After Jesus rose from the dead as our resurrected Lord and Savior, His earthly ministry was carried on by His followers from then on to this day around the world. Jesus emphasized that teaching the truth to others was the most important aspect of His ministry. Jesus' miracles and His healing the sick and His raising the dead revealed the love of God and affirmed Jesus' authority to teach the truth about God and the way of salvation.

(Luke 13:23) Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,

This question interested many people then, and it continues to interest many people today. After the Hebrews were led out of slavery in Egypt, because of their faith in God only two entered the Promised Land. By faith,

only a remnant returned from exile in Babylon to Judea. So, are only a few people going to be saved? “Saved” meant “inherent eternal life,” “enter the Kingdom of God,” “enjoy the Great Feast in heaven,” “spend eternity with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” Jesus ignored this question as irrelevant in this particular discussion. However, He warned in the *Sermon on the Mount*: “Small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it (Matthew 7:14).

(Luke 13:24) Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

Jesus insisted that what matters is whether or not YOU will enter the Kingdom of God. If YOU want to enter the Kingdom of God and enjoy eternal life, YOU must STRIVE, make every effort, AGONIZE (the meaning of the Greek word in the original biblical text). To win the prize in the Greek Olympic Games the competitor had to strive, train, and agonize strenuously to prepare himself and be physically able to compete successfully. Think of the effort required to excel in any competitive sport or endeavor in life. Striving for salvation is the most important endeavor in this world, and by following Jesus and obeying His teachings we become spiritually strong and fit for life in heaven. Following Jesus must become the most important work in your life, because it is the most important endeavor anyone can ever pursue. To be saved requires a commitment to make every effort, to strive, and even to agonize in order to truly understand Jesus’ teachings and obey them. Those who live by faith in Jesus understand what this means. Living by faith in Jesus includes the prayerful study of the Bible to learn all we can about Jesus and what He did and taught so we can love, follow, and obey Him in everything: this takes supreme effort, and we can follow Jesus with God’s help. As we study history and look around the world today, few people want to obey Jesus and follow Him wherever He leads; so, they will not be where Jesus is. Believing and doing what the Bible teaches seems too narrow for some people, but Jesus said we must enter through the narrow door or gate to be saved. Following Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life to be saved seems too narrow for some people, but in John 14:6, Jesus said “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one

comes to the Father except through me." According to Jesus, those who do not trust Him and believe what He said, "will try to enter and will not be able to." To enter through the narrow door believers must follow Jesus, for He will lead us through the narrow door into the kingdom of heaven.

(Luke 13:25) When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:

The time would soon come when those listening to Jesus during His journey to the cross would not be able to talk with Him face-to-face in this world. While He was with them, hearing Him teach and seeing the expressions of God's love for them was the time for them to turn from following the ways of the world and to placing their faith in Him as their Lord and Savior. Spending time with Jesus on the road or eating a meal with Him in a neighbor's house, but not doing what Jesus taught, would result in Him not knowing them at the most crucial time of their lives. Jesus, of course, knew their names, but they had never made the effort to truly know Jesus and His ways by trusting and obeying Jesus, by bowing mentally, morally, and spiritually before Him as their Lord. They never allowed Jesus to have a personal relationship with them. The time will come for everyone when the door to spending eternity with Jesus will be open or shut to them; so, we should make every effort to know and love Jesus, to be known by Him and to follow Him, to always be with Him.

(Luke 13:26) Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.

Two thousand years ago, it was possible to eat and drink with Jesus and listen to what He taught, but never believe what He taught or heed His warnings or repent of sins or stop following the culture and start following Him. Throughout history, some people have often gone to church and have heard the truth about Jesus, but they have never changed their thinking, repented of their sins, trusted in Jesus, come to love God, and grown in grace and the love of God through faith in Jesus Christ. Hearing Jesus teach

or learning what Jesus taught is of no value to the person who will not believe Jesus, believe in Jesus, follow Jesus, and love Jesus. In John 15:10, Jesus declared, “If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love.”

(Luke 13:27) But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.

Jesus called those who listened to Him but refused to do what He said “evildoers.” To be known by Jesus is to live in a close, personal, loving, relationship with Him as His love and Spirit fill our minds and hearts. His presence in and with us enables us to strive and agonize to live daily by faith in Him and trust in His future for us. It is not easy to turn from evil doing and practicing sin to practicing Jesus’ teachings and doing good, but Jesus will personally empower and guide all who believe His teachings and seek to know and love Him. Bowing before Jesus as our personal King and Savior is the only way to cease from practicing evil and receive the power from God to do right.

(Luke 13:28) There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.

Remembering Jesus’ parable of the rich man and Lazarus, many will spend eternity with the rich man and few will spend eternity with the founders of Israel and the followers of Jesus. Jesus issued a solemn warning to get people’s attention and encourage them to heed His warnings, to repent of their sins and follow Him. Those who thought their Jewish race would qualify them for heaven would be disappointed if they refused to believe in and follow Jesus, their Messiah. They would not just be disappointed, but they would weep and grind their teeth at their great loss and pain.

(Luke 13:29) And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

As Jesus concluded, He spoke of people from around the world coming to place their faith in Him as Lord and Savior, even as many Gentiles came to believe in Him during His earthly ministry and during the ministry of Paul the Apostle and the other apostles. Jesus has promised that there will be places at the feast in the kingdom of heaven for all who will love, serve, and worship Jesus as King. In John 14:3, Jesus promised: "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."

(Luke 13:30) And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

The Jews considered themselves first (and the best of all people) because they were God's chosen people. They thought they would have first place in the kingdom of heaven because they were Jews. They considered the Gentiles to be last. But Jesus turned things around and said the way of salvation was open to all people everywhere and anyone could become one of God's chosen ones through faith in Him. Throughout Paul's ministry and the ministry of other Christians throughout history, many Gentiles have entered the Kingdom of God, and now many Jews are also coming to believe in Jesus the Messiah and entering the kingdom of God to the praise of His glory.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. Are only a few people going to be saved?

2. What did Jesus say people must do to be saved?

3. What are some of the ways we can know Jesus and be known by Jesus?

4. What did Jesus say are the consequences of Him not knowing you?

5. Where will the people come from who will enter the kingdom of God?

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