

Transition to His Perea Ministry

Looking into the Face of Jesus

The Life of Christ, 2: Pages 113-118

Manuscript: Lesson Plan 72

Introduction

Our texts for this lesson are Luke 13:10–21 and Luke 13:22 and John 10:22–42. We will be reading from both Luke 13 and John 10 in a moment, so please open your Bibles to Luke 13 and John 10.

In our text, there is about to be a transition in Christ's ministry. As this transition is made, we will just skim over several texts and try to learn lessons from what happened during this transition.

First, however, we need to understand what is happening. This was in the last six months of Jesus' ministry. He spent the last couple of months in Judea. He was about to take His ministry to Perea. He would spend about 3.5 months there before making His final trip to Jerusalem. Then His final days would come.

Before we get to Perea, let us learn what happened a few days before He headed east, across the Jordan. To begin, let us read Luke 13:10-17 (read).

Jesus Heals a Woman with a Disabling Spirit—Luke 13:10–17

The conflict in this story is that Jesus healed this woman on the Sabbath day. This is considered the fifth Sabbath day controversy in His ministry. The previous four incidents included the following: The healing of the crippled man (John 5); the plucking and eating of grain (Matthew 12; Mark 2; Luke 6); the healing of the man's withered hand in the synagogue (Matthew 12; Mark 3; Luke 6); and the healing of the man born blind (John 9). This one was no different from the others.

The religious leaders accuse Jesus, and Jesus responds to them in Luke 13:15 (read). This was similar to His response in Matthew 12 where He used the example of them pulling a sheep out of a pit on the Sabbath. His adversaries were humiliated (Luke 13:17). The people rejoiced. But tension began to rise between Jesus and the religious leaders once again.

Jesus Teaches Concerning the Kingdom—Luke 13:18–21

Jesus gave two parables about the kingdom the parable of the mustard seed and the parable of the leaven in Luke 13:18-21 (read).

He had used both parables previously (see Matthew 13:31–33). On those occasions, He seemed to be warning His listeners to avoid the influence of His enemies. Here, they seem to have a more positive message about how Christ's kingdom would grow.

Jesus Gives a Final Teaching Before Heading to Perea—John 10:22–40

We now turn our attention to Jesus' final teaching before He leaves for Perea. Let us read John 10:22-40 and as we do please focus on the different topics and lessons we can learn from them (read).

The first topic is the Feast of Dedication (John 10:22). "The feast was the last of the principal Jewish feasts to be instituted. It originated between the Testaments in the period of Maccabean freedom. It commemorated the rededication of the temple (around 165 BC) after it had been defiled by Antiochus Epiphanes"

according to the Truth for Today commentary. This feast is better known as Hanukkah (or Chanukah)—the Hebrew word for “dedication.” Note John 10:23 says that “it was winter;” the feast happens in December. In Jesus’ day, it was an eight-day feast and was well attended.

Next, we read of continued conflicts with His enemies. In John 10:24, they wanted to know plainly if He was the Christ. Jesus had made it clear who He was. Publicly, He had used the phrase that He was the “Son of Man.” He had privately told His disciples that He was “the Christ” (Matthew 16:16–20). However, He has not publicly said, “I am the Christ.” Christ preferred to show He was the Christ rather than just make the claim (John 10:25, 26).

Why did they want Him to publicly and clearly make the claim that He was the Christ? Did they really want to believe in Him? No, they were looking for a way to accuse Him of blasphemy so they could kill Him. Remember, this is how they forced His crucifixion—by making Him answer under oath the question clearly and condemning Him of blaspheming (Matthew 26:63–68).

There are several lessons we can learn from John 10:27–30. “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me” (John 10:27). “[N]o one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand” (John 10:29b). Several people want to use this verse to say that once you are saved, you are always saved. Remember the context on this one; the purpose was to show God’s care for His sheep. This does not take away man’s freewill; even back then, sheep could jump over the fence and run away. This does not mean that we cannot choose to leave God’s care; but what it does mean is that, if we choose to stay in God’s protection, no one else has the power to “snatch” us out of His hand. Other verses along these lines are 1 Corinthians 9:27; 10:12; Hebrews 10:26; Acts 8 (Simon); and 2 Peter 2:20–22. “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30).

From that point, the conflict escalated (John 10:31–42). They were about to stone Him (John 10:31). Christ asked a simple question: which good work requires you to stone me (John 10:32)? We see Jesus’ response to their answer in John 10:34–38. Christ replied that the Law sometimes called God’s representatives “gods” (Psalm 82:6). If that was not blasphemous, how much less was it blasphemous to refer to the Christ as God? Jesus challenged His enemies to decide which one of His works were not from God. The focus phrase in this section is in John 10:35—“Scripture cannot be broken.” God’s inspired words cannot be undone or set aside. We may try to not believe it, but the Scriptures will be fulfilled.

They tried to arrest Him, but He escaped once again (John 10:39). This seems to be the time He decided to move to Perea (John 10:40–42).

Conclusion

Let us focus on two of the lessons taught in the text. First, the Scriptures cannot be broken. And, second, “Once saved, always saved” is **not** scriptural; it is an idea which originated from man. Too many people want to not believe there is a hell and think there is no way that they could go there as long as they believe that God exists and that Christ is real.

The Scriptures cannot be undone (Matthew 7:21). God’s Word will be accomplished. The question is: Are you obeying His will?