

**Matthew 13: 33; “Until All is Leavened”, Session # 3 on the Parable of the Leaven,
presented by Pastor Paul Rendall, on October 23rd, 2022,
in the Adult Sunday School Class.**

Matthew 13: 33 – “Another Parable He spoke to them: “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.”

Review and Introduction

Last week we looked at Colossians 4: 6, and we saw that your speech being seasoned with grace, that is seasoned with salt, is a part of this hiding the leaven in the meal of your words that you are thinking about sharing with others. Leaven relates to the power of the word of Christ’s grace. And we saw that adding salt to the bread mixture relates to flavor; that is, the wisdom and that discretion that is necessary for the shaping of the bread, and whether it will be desirable when it is tasted.

In tasting of gospel bread the sinner must see that the Lord Jesus was loving, good, and kind to come down from heaven to do the will of God on their behalf. Faith can only be created in the heart of the sinner when they can taste and see for themselves that He is good. How blessed is the man who will fear Him, have regard for Him!

Psalm 34: 8-10 – “Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him!” “Oh, fear the Lord, you His saints!” “There is no want to those who fear Him!” “The young lions lack and suffer hunger; but those who seek the Lord will not lack any good thing.”

John 6: 57 & 58 – “As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.” “This is the bread which came down from heaven – not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead.” “He who eats this bread will live forever.”

The one who comes to Jesus comes to feed upon Christ Himself, spiritually, and the things that He came to bring to them out of his love for them.

1. In our Sharing the Gospel, discretion is needed.

We must be those who use discretion by adding salt to our recipe of what we will say. We want to control the rate at which the dough ferments. We have placed the leaven into the meal. We believe in the power of Christ to save. We do not want our own presentation to overpower the hearer. We want to have discretion in what we say. We want the wisdom of Christ and the power of Christ to be the things that the sinner tastes, and in tasting of them, they will see that Christ our Savior and Lord is infinitely good.

The sinner, the person outside of Christ, needs to see that these things of being redeemed and saved and justified and sanctified, are all coming to him because the Lord is merciful and loving towards those who are thinking about their need of Him. The gospel must be put into this good and presentable shape, and not be limp or lifeless, when we present it to others.

2nd Corinthians 4: 7 – “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.”

The sinner needs to understand that the power both to be saved, and to live the Christian life, is of God, and not of themselves.

2. Leaven never ceases its work until all is leavened.

Matthew 13: 33 – “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.”

a. In regard to Individual Christians

The Object: Being Saved and then Transformed.

The object of the hiding of the leaven in the meal, making our gospel preparations, and preaching the gospel to people around us, is that they will receive the bread of life, and be saved by partaking of it. And then because this gospel leaven is in them they will not only be raised from the dead spiritually, but they will also begin this transformation process of becoming like Christ Himself, being changed from one degree of glory to another by the Spirit of God. This is a very gradual process and lifelong, but eventually when we die, and all sin is removed from our spirit, we will be completely leavened in the good sense of grace having fully transformed us into Christ’s image.

2nd Corinthians 3: 18 – “But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. (“From one degree of glory to another”, ESV)

Leaven does not change the substance of the meal or flour in which it is hid. But it does very much change its qualities. The same is true with regard to regeneration and sanctification, spiritually speaking. When the leaven is placed in the dough (into the gospel preparations), and it is then believed by the sinner, it saves, by Christ’s power. The quality of our life is completely changed. As we abide in Christ, the influences of His grace then go on then to transform the dough of our heart by the Holy Spirit’s working.

3. Seeing that God’s leaven in transforming us, our Response is to Obey Him.

Philippians 2: 12-14 – “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.” “Do all things without complaining and disputing...”

We are given eternal and spiritual life from receiving Christ’s life. And His life then diffuses itself throughout our life and we are transformed more and more into His blessed image and likeness. This is what the word of Christ’s grace does by the power of the Holy Spirit in our heart and life when we believe in Jesus. Our response to God’s working in us in this glorious way, is designed to lead us greater obedience to Him.

2nd Corinthians 2: 14-17 – “Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses (manifests, in the margin) the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.” “For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who being saved and among those who are perishing.” “To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life.” “And who is sufficient for these things?” “For we are not, as so many peddling the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ.”

God leads us in triumph in Christ, that is, Christ’s finished work applied to us in Justification and Sanctification. By His leading of us in this way, the fragrance of His knowledge is diffused through us, in every place we go.

4. There will be a certain completion of the work of the leaven both before, and at, Christ's Second Coming.

The Work of Sanctification will be entirely completed in our Glorification.

Philippians 1: 3-6 – “I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.”

b. In Regard to the Gospel's effect upon all the nations of the world before Christ's Second Coming, all nations will be leavened.

Micah 4: 1-5 – “Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it.” “Many nations shall come and say, ‘Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.’” “For out of Zion the law shall go forth, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.” “He shall judge between many peoples, and rebuke strong nations afar off; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.” “But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, And no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken.” “For all people walk each in the name of his god, but we will walk in the name of the LORD our God Forever and ever.”

Notice that the context of these verses is the latter days of this present Church age. We know that these verses do not refer to the whole church age because of the way that Christ's kingdom, the kingdom of heaven, is being talked about here. Christ's kingdom, or the New Testament Church is called here, “the mountain of the Lord's house”. There will come a time when this kingdom will be established on the top of the mountains, the other kingdoms of this world. It shall be exalted above all the hills. That is, God Himself shall exalt Christ's kingdom's influence (the leaven) over all the countries of the world in a very great way. Peoples shall flow to it, and many nations shall come and say to each other – Come, and let us go up the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways and we shall walk in His paths.

This leavening power will be demonstrated by the Triune God and by Christ Himself specifically – He shall judge between many peoples, and rebuke strong nations afar off; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.”

Brethren, these things have not yet taken place in Church History, but we are told here that someday they shall. This will be in the time of the Millennium before Christ's Second Coming.

Thomas Haweis' Commentary – “As a little of this diffuses itself gradually through the whole mass of meal with which it is mingled; so doth the gospel word when quickened by divine grace, powerfully diffuses its energy through all the faculties of the soul, and over all the members of the body; sanctifying the whole, communicating throughout a sweet savor of Christ, and working a blessed and universal change into his image and likeness; and spreading far and wide among all nations, the word of truth shall continue its mighty operations till all nations shall be brought to the obedience of the faith. Note, (1.) Divine grace works often imperceptibly, but irresistibly. (2.) Where the leaven of truth is hid in the heart, there its influence will infallibly appear; there will be a sweet savor of Christ in all we speak or do.”

Lange's Commentary on the Scripture – “This Parable, like the last, has its general and its individual application: (1) in the penetrating of the whole mass of humanity, by degrees, by the influence of the Spirit of God, so strikingly witnessed in the earlier ages by the dropping of heathen customs and worship:—in modern times more gradually and secretly advancing, but still to be plainly seen in the various abandonments of criminal and unholy practices (as e.g. in our own time of slavery and dueling, and the increasing abhorrence of war among Christian men), and without doubt in the end to be signally and universally manifested. But this effect again is not to be traced in the establishment or history of so-called Churches, but in the hidden advancement, without observation, of that deep leavening power which works irrespective of human forms and systems. (2) In the transforming power of the ‘new leaven’ on the whole being of individuals. “In fact the Parable does nothing less than set forth to us the mystery of regeneration, both in its first act, which can be but once, as the leaven is but once hidden; and also in the consequent (subsequent?) renewal by the Holy Spirit, which, as the ulterior working of the leaven, is continual and progressive.” (Trench, p. 97.)