



MAKING CROOKED PEOPLE STRAIGHT By: David W. Lankford

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Today we take our scripture text from **Luke 13:10-17**, "And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath.

And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and she was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself. And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, **Woman thou art loosed from thine infirmity**. And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight and glorified God. And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath day, and said unto the people, **There are six days in which men ought to work: in them and therefore come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day**. The Lord then answered him, and said, **Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?** And when he had said these things, all of his adversaries were ashamed, and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him." When we read about this woman here in our scripture text, it does not only speak to us, but it just as well speaks about us. Sad to say, but many of us were so steeped in sin that we too were crooked. For the most part, we would not like for people to know

just how crooked and sinful we were when we were estranged from Christ. Sad to say, all of us have done things of which we are ashamed and would not want others to know what we had done in times past. The truth is, Jesus knows just who you are, what you are, and what you are yet to become. People who knew you in time past would no doubt struggle to recognize who you are today. Paul the apostle declared in **2nd Corinthians 5:17**, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new". No doubt in time past many people gave up on you, but Jesus could see beyond your faults and your sins and could see what you would become, once you were washed in the blood, sanctified by His Word, and filled with the Holy Ghost. Just like this woman, he had compassion upon her, and Christ also has had compassion upon you; if it were not for His love, mercy, and grace you would not even be here today. The psalmist declared in **Psalms 103:10**, "He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities". The psalmist also declared in **Psalms 130:3-4**, "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared". It is clear from our scripture text that this woman could in no wise lift herself up, but the sad fact was, she was in church obviously every Sabbath and could find no deliverance. What a sad state of affairs when people go to church

each and every week but they can find nothing to deliver them neither to set them free. As a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, I find it absolutely reprehensible that people go to so-called houses of God that are supposed to be houses of worship, but when they leave they still leave in bondage. It takes the preaching of the Word of God, coupled with the anointing of the Holy Ghost, to deliver and set the captives free. When we do a Greek word study of this lady being bound, it actually means she was bound and bent over and being held together by something like a spiritual rubber band. She was not demon possessed, for she was a daughter of Abraham, which authenticates she was in covenant with the Lord God of Abraham. Many Christians today suffer anomalies and afflictions within their bodies, but they are not demon possessed but rather held captive by one of Satan's tactics. The word infirmity #769 in the Greek means feebleness of body or mind, implying some type of malady, fragility, or sickness within the body. No child of God in their flesh will ever go through their entire life without some type of aberration or affliction within their bodies. **Psalms 34:19**, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all". What I find so repulsive and repugnant is that this so-called ruler of the synagogue lacked the power of the Holy Ghost to deliver this saint of God. However, when the light and the power of the Holy Ghost of God Almighty walked into the synagogue on this Sabbath day, this daughter of Abraham would

forever be changed. When people get hung up on trying to keep the Mosaic law, they are truly missing the work of Christ accomplished at Calvary. This ruler of the synagogue was in retrospect a ruler of the darkness of this world. Sad to say, but many churches are ruled by ministers who are ministers of darkness. Paul the apostle declared in **Ephesians 6:12, For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places**". Is not the house of God to be a high place wherein the people of God can be raised up and made to sit in heavenly places? We read in **Ephesians 2:6, "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus"**. This daughter of Abraham was no doubt coming weekly to the house of God to be made to sit in heavenly places; yet she remained bent over, bound, and held captive because the ruler of the synagogue was a ruler of darkness. The ruler of the synagogue had such hatred for the anointing of the Holy Ghost and the life of Christ that he openly rebuked Jesus with indignation. The ruler of the synagogue had this great hatred and indignation because Jesus healed on the Sabbath day. He was the one that was a hypocrite and claimed to be a ruler of the synagogue, but had no Godly power to ever deliver this saint of God and set her free. People are always talking about how gracious and how loving the spirit of Christ is and we are to never be judgmental. However, I want you to notice the power, the force, and the spiritual

righteousness in how Jesus rebutted the ruler of the synagogue. **Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ass from the stall and lead him away to watering?** Regretfully, the houses of God today are being led and steered by hypocrites who profess to be rulers in the houses of God. Regretfully, we are witnessing fewer and fewer ministers who will stand and cry aloud and preach an uncompromising message from the Word of Almighty God. I know what I'm talking about; just like Christ, people either loved him or they hated him. Sometime ago there was a survey done on ministers at a particular radio station in which I broadcast from. The manager of the station told me one of the questions on their survey was quote "if you could take one minister off or leave one minister on this station who would it be?" He said pastor Lankford with you it was 50-50. My response was "just like Jesus, they will either love you or else they will hate you". He was astounded that my ministry and the preaching of the Word of God placed people in such a position. Friends, you need to understand they hated Jesus without a cause, and they will also hate you without a cause, so don't be offended when you are hated, despised, and rejected when you stand for the Word of God and true righteousness. Just like the ruler of the synagogue in our scripture text, there were those adversaries that were made ashamed, and then there were those that rejoiced for the glorious things that Christ had done. You are living in a generation in which you will witness events, signs, and wonders that you could have never imagined. You are blessed to be living at a time such as this. I had a business appointment some weeks ago and in the lobby office a black sister began to prophesy to me. She said in the next two years

your ministry will explode, she said I see you rolling up your pants legs baptizing many souls. I responded by telling her in one service last year that I water baptized over one hundred people in just one setting. Do not grow weary neither grow tired in your pilgrimage, child of God. I want to remind you that the spirit of the Antichrist seeks to wear out the patience of the Saints. We are told by Christ in **Luke 21:19, "In your patience possess ye your souls"**. Again we are told in **Revelation 13:10, "Here is the patience and the faith of the Saints"**. My pundits and my detractors would say that is tribulation Saints: but where does it say that? You, my friend, will witness the great tribulation and you will also witness one of the greatest outpourings of the Holy Ghost ever manifested to humanity. I trust that the God of all grace will comfort keep you and your family in the days to come. Let me humbly say, we are very thankful by your prayers, generous love, and support for The Voice of Evangelism International Ministries. I also want to encourage you that when you ask us to pray for you and your personal needs, my wife and I personally take your prayer request to the Lord in prayer. We do not want to be like the ruler in the synagogue and be declared a hypocrite. Be thou faithful unto the end, for Christ Jesus our Lord will come again the second time. **Hebrew 9:28, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation"**.

Serving With You All,

Pastor David W. Lankford