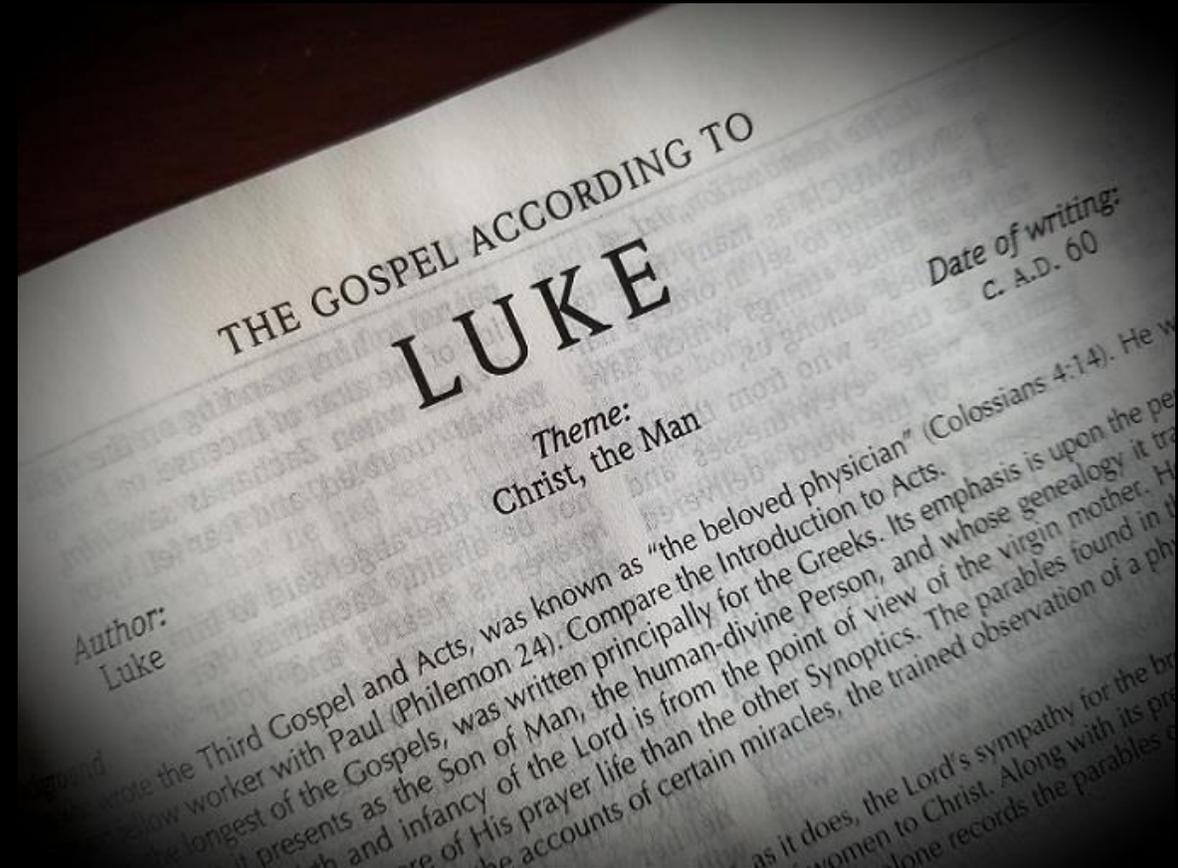


# Verse by Verse

## Luke 13



Previously in Luke

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- Luke began by showing us the ministry of Jesus in and around Galilee.
- Jesus then turned toward Jerusalem.
- His ministry has continued with teaching, healing, and miracles like calming the sea and raising the dead.
- Last week Mark Radke walked us through **Luke 12**, in which Jesus showed us how to deal with our fears.

# Luke 13 Introduction

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- In this chapter, Jesus teaches on the problem of **false or misguided religion**.
- Contrary to popular belief, not all faith is effective for putting a person right with God.
- **Jesus will show us how people can be very close to the kingdom without ever getting in.**
- Much of his teaching will be through illustrations, metaphors and parables.

# Luke 13    Key Verse

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- Luke 13:24 (ESV)

Strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

# Luke 13 Outline

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1. A Chance to Repent 13:1-5
2. The Barren Fig Tree 13:6-9
3. Healing on the Sabbath 13:10-17
4. The Mustard Seed 13:18-19
5. The Leaven 13:20-21
6. The Narrow Door 13:22-30
7. Lament over Jerusalem 13:31-35

# 1. A Chance to Repent 13:1-5

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- It is not easy from historical records to know when exactly these two events happened or any further details.
- That should not bother us.
- The point is that some people wanted Jesus to comment on them, perhaps to explain why they happened.
- He doesn't give them the kind of answer they want.

# 1. A Chance to Repent     13:1-5

- If Jesus were here today, people might ask him about the Coronavirus pandemic.
- Why did it happen?
- Who is to blame for what?

# 1. A Chance to Repent      13:1-5

- It is common tendency to try to point fingers when terrible things occur.
- Even at the deepest level we want it all to make sense.
- We can call it karma, call it something else, the tendency to seek a direct explanation has always been there.

# 1. A Chance to Repent     13:1-5

- The Bible has a version of this, memorably expressed by Paul in **Galatians 6:7-8**.

<sup>7</sup> Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. <sup>8</sup> For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

# 1. A Chance to Repent 13:1-5

- The Bible also sees this principle as limited, as we see most clearly in the **Book of Job**.
- Job suffers enormously, though he is perfectly righteous.
- His friends don't know what to say, but then they resort to karma or sowing-and-reaping explanations.
- In other words it must somehow be Job's fault.
- But they were wrong.

# 1. A Chance to Repent 13:1-5

*It is far too easy for us to point fingers when natural disasters strike or other accidents occur ... Such events should be occasions for all of us to take stock on how obediently we are following Jesus, for who knows how much longer we have until either our deaths or the return of Christ?*

*– Craig Blomberg, Denver Seminary*



# 1. A Chance to Repent 13:1-5

- Christ says that the answer is repentance.
- We are not to hold onto our sin and cherish it.
- We are to turn from it and turn our hearts toward Jesus, our divinely provided Savior.

## 2. The Barren Fig Tree 13:6-9

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- The vineyard is a common symbol for Israel.
- The fig tree in the vineyard is a perfect biblical symbol of a prosperous life.
- 1 Kings 4:25 (ESV)

And Judah and Israel lived in safety, from Dan even to Beersheba, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, all the days of Solomon.

## 2. The Barren Fig Tree 13:6-9

- The problem is the tree gave no figs.
- Jesus is using this parable to mainly speak against the religious leaders of his own day.
- Still, the principle that the parable teaches is true beyond those religious leaders.

## 2. The Barren Fig Tree 13:6-9

*If good fruit is absent from a person's life, some kind of judgment is certain. Inner repentance leads to an external demonstration of righteousness. Without visible fruit, professions of repentance are as genuine as a barren fig tree pretending to be healthy.*

*– Tony Evans, Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship, Dallas*



## 2. The Barren Fig Tree 13:6-9

- The lesson for us is, “Don’t pretend.”
- Get your life right with God and let him transform you so that you produce fruit worthy of repentance.
- If God is really working in your life, then there will be some kind of evidence of that.

## 2. The Barren Fig Tree 13:6-9

- Colossians 1:9-11 (ESV)

<sup>9</sup> And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, <sup>10</sup> so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; <sup>11</sup> being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy.

### 3. Healing on the Sabbath 13:10-17

### 3. Healing on the Sabbath 13:10-17

- We might label this a classic case of Jesus healing on the Sabbath, which we see many times in the Gospels.
- Instead of rejoicing that the woman was healed, the ruler of the synagogue complains.

### 3. Healing on the Sabbath 13:10-17

- Jesus calls him and his friends out, revealing their mixed up priorities.
- The average person watching Jesus had more common sense – and spiritual discernment – than the religious leaders.
- Let's Read 13:15-17 again.

## 4. The Mustard Seed 13:18-19

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- The visible kingdom here on earth grows large from a small beginning, which, in a way, is a good thing.
- We want it to grow.
- When these parables are told in **Matthew 13**, the birds are representative of evil – and this is not so good.
- And they are making themselves at home in the visible kingdom of the church. **It happens.**

## 5. The Leaven 13:20-21

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- Similarly, adding leaven to the flour will make the dough rise.
- It gets really big, which is impressive.
- But leaven is a type of fungus or fermenting presence – and is **symbolic of corruption**.
- That's why on **Passover** there is only **unleavened bread**.

## 6. The Narrow Door 13:22-30

## 6. The Narrow Door 13:22-30

- Here you have all these people who think they deserve to get in, but they miss their opportunity.
- They “ate and drank” with the master – perhaps symbolic of the Lord’s Supper or Communion.
- Yet the master says, “Depart from me, all you workers of evil,” which are really harsh words.

# 1. A Chance to Repent 13:1-5



*It is far more important to be working to get into the kingdom than to be debating how many others will be there. A small door is open, but it will soon be shut ... Therefore, everyone should seize the opportunity to enter the kingdom while they can.*

*– Takatemjen Ao, Northeast Alliance for Leadership Education and Social Transformation, India*

## 6. The Narrow Door 13:22-30

- Luke 13:24 (ESV)

Strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

- The word “Strive” in Greek is *agonizesthe*.
- You can see our word *agonize* in it.
- We have to be fully engaged. It doesn't just happen.

## 6. The Narrow Door 13:22-30



- Greek expert **Bill Mounce** explains the word for us.
- *to fight, struggle, often an athletic contest*
- *to be a combatant in the public games; to contend, fight, strive earnestly*

## 6. The Narrow Door 13:22-30

- Paul uses this same word when he writes to Timothy.
- 1 Timothy 6:12 (ESV)

Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

2 Timothy 4:7 (ESV)

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

## 7. Lament over Jerusalem 13:31-35

## 7. Lament over Jerusalem 13:31-35

- The sad truth is that the city of Jerusalem has had more opportunities throughout history than anywhere.
- Today it is possible that Jerusalem is the most religious city on Earth.
- And yet even now, a true repentance and turning to God is not obvious there.

## 7. Lament over Jerusalem 13:31-35

- What about us here in the USA?
- We have enormous problems, and no one doubts that.
- What will our response be to all of this?
- We can point fingers, we can play at religion, or we can truly repent and turn to God.

## 7. Lament over Jerusalem 13:31-35

- 1 Corinthians 13:5 (ESV)

Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!

# Luke 13    What We Just Read

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# Luke 13    Key Points

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1. There are many ways to play at religion and get it wrong.
2. We can look alive, but still live fruitless, Christ-less lives.
3. We can approach God pointing to things about ourselves that we believe should cause him to accept us.
4. Or we can come to our Father through Christ and ask his forgiveness, knowing that we need **undeserved grace**.

# Luke 13    Key Points

4. Or we can come to our Father through Christ and ask his forgiveness, knowing that we need **undeserved grace**.
- **This grace is what Jesus offers** – if we are willing to accept that it is **completely undeserved**.

# Luke 13    A Prayer

# Luke 13    A Prayer

- Heavenly Father,
- At present, we see that good and bad things happen to both good and bad people.
- We accept the way that you maintain your control over the world, allowing evil and tragedy to exist side-by-side with everything that is good.
- Even within the church, the living expression of Christ's life on earth, we see that there is corruption.

# Luke 13    A Prayer

- Help us not to be a part of that problem, but rather be part of the solution.
- Help us not to trust in ourselves, in our own goodness, merit or virtue or righteous works.
- We see that before your holiness, the only safe way to approach you is in humility, admitting our guilt and seeing our need for repentance.

# Luke 13    A Prayer

- Forgive us of our sins, fill us with your Spirit.
- Help us to live completely for you, relying on your power, the power of Christ's resurrection life, at work with us.
- In Jesus' name,
- Amen.

## Luke 13    References

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