

Luke 13

“Strive
to Enter
Through the
Narrow Door”

THE GOSPEL OF
LUKE

Sunday,
April 26

Luke 13 begins with news of two tragic events.

There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And he answered them, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”

That leads Jesus to tell a parable (13:6-9) about a man who had a fig tree in his vineyard. For three years he had been waiting for that tree to bear fruit, and it had borne none. When he told the vinedresser to cut the tree down, the vinedresser asked the owner to be patient for one more year while everything that could be done would be done to see if the tree would finally bear fruit.

Luke moves on to tell us about Jesus teaching in a synagogue on a Sabbath day and healing a woman who had had a “disabling spirit” for eighteen years (13:10-17). When the ruler of the synagogue saw what had happened, he was “indignant” and told the people to come on one of the “six days in which work ought to be done.” When Jesus answered, “all his adversaries were put to shame, and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.”

In Luke 13:18-21, Jesus asked, “What is the kingdom of God like?” comparing it to a grain of mustard seed and leaven. In 13:22-30, he taught that people must “strive to enter through the narrow door,” emphasizing that some would be left outside while others would “come from east and west, and from north and south, and recline at table in the kingdom of God.” Finally, in 13:31-35, we hear Jesus lamenting over Jerusalem.

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! Behold, your house is forsaken.”

So how does Luke 13 help us grow in certainty about Jesus? Let’s talk about it...

For Class & Family Discussion:

- ▶ How can **Luke 13:1-5** help us think through a major question that people have been struggling to answer for thousands of years? What does Jesus want disciples of all times to understand?
- ▶ When Jesus tells people to “repent” (**13:3, 5**), what does he expect? Why?
- ▶ What do you think Jesus means by his parable of the barren fig tree in **13:6-9**? How does it relate to what is going on in Luke’s “orderly account” at this point?
- ▶ As we do our best to put ourselves in the scene of **13:10-17**, how does it help us understand who Jesus is and what he wants? Why would he refer to the ruler of the synagogue (and others) as “hypocrites” (**13:15**)?
- ▶ In what way is “the kingdom of God” like “a grain of mustard seed” (**13:18-19**) and “leaven” (**13:20-21**)?
- ▶ When Jesus encourages people to “strive to enter through the narrow door” (**13:22-24**), what does he mean? What does he want us to understand?
- ▶ Take another careful look at **13:25-30**? What do you think Jesus is communicating? How does it relate to everything that was going on in **Luke 13** and the surrounding chapters? In what way do his words in this section of Luke’s “orderly account” still matter?
- ▶ How would you summarize what Jesus said in **13:31-35** in your own words? What is very clearly on his mind, and why?
- ▶ Remember the goal of Luke’s Gospel—“that you may have certainty” (**1:4**). How does **Luke 13** help us grow in certainty about Jesus?