

Lessons 6-7, February 23 & March 2

DON'T MISS OUT!

Luke 13:1-35

Introduction

A Christian thinker recently said, “Ideas have consequences, and bad ideas have victims.” Unfortunately, because we don’t know everything, sometimes we make false assumptions and believe bad ideas. For thousands of years doctors believed the Greek philosophy that taught that illnesses were caused by an imbalance of bodily fluids. Over the centuries, thousands of patients—including King Charles II and George Washington—died as these well-meaning physicians used leeches to suck away what they thought was too much blood.

Though our culture has advanced in many ways, people still suffer from the results of bad ideas. Just think of all the victims of transgender procedures and abortion. In many cases, the physicians think that they are doing the right thing as they assist in killing an unborn child or disfiguring someone’s anatomy. While we might look down our noses at these for ignoring biblical truth, we must remember that we also were at one time blinded by the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4).

Have you ever assumed someone was a Christian, only to find out later that they were actually unsaved? _____

Unfortunately, we often make the mistake of assuming who is a true follower of Jesus. We observe their pleasant nature, knowledge of the Bible, family, or life circumstances and assume that they are saved. But Jesus teaches that because salvation happens entirely in one’s heart when they repent of their sin and believe in Him, **we should never assume someone’s spiritual state.**

In **Luke 13**, Jesus teaches the crowds three possessions that you must have if you want to be saved from sin. First, you must possess life: after you die it is too late. Second, you must possess knowledge of Jesus: if you do not know Him or you reject Him, you will miss out. Third, you must possess the passion to strive for salvation. No one will get into the Kingdom of God accidentally.



Are you alive? (Luke 13:1-9)

1. After speaking to His close disciples in chapter 12, Jesus addresses those who told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices (Luke 13:1)

Pilate, the Governor over the region of Judea, had apparently executed some Jews while they were offering Temple sacrifices as an extreme punishment. Nothing more about this specific incident is known. Obviously, Pilate is seen as an enemy of God and the Jewish people.

2. Jesus says that unless everyone repents, they will perish like the Galileans and eighteen men from Jerusalem (Luke 13:2-5)

Like the incident of the Galileans, very little is known about the Tower of Siloam that fell on the eighteen in Jerusalem (see John 9:7). Jesus' point is clear, however. Many Jews regarded Galileans as worldly, sinful Jews and the Judaeans (like those who lived in Jerusalem) as godly, blessed Jews. Jesus is saying that everyone—Galileans and Judaeans alike—are equally sinful and in need of repentance, else they perish as punishment from God.

3. What is repentance? (see Romans 2:1-11; 2 Timothy 2:24-26; 2 Peter 3:9-12) _____

4. In Jesus' parable, what did the vineyard owner want to do with the unfruitful fig tree? (Luke 13:6-7) _____

5. What is the vinedresser's appeal to the vineyard owner regarding the fig tree? (Luke 13:8-9) _____

6. What type of fruit should be expected of all those who repent? (see Luke 3:8; Isaiah 1:16-18; and 2 Corinthians 7:10-11) _____

Here, Jesus is speaking to crowds of Jews who have false assumptions about their spiritual status. They believe that because they are God's chosen people, they are inherently closer to God. They did not realize that their knowledge of God through His Law actually made them more accountable for their lack of trust in Jesus (see Luke 12:48). As one commentary writes, "The lack of judgement in the present should not be considered a sign that all was well in Israel. It was a sign of God's mercy, not approval" (Stein). Individually, and as a nation, Jesus is calling them to repentance.

7. Why is it important that you truly repent before you die? _____

8. Can you think of someone who got saved after a near death experience?

Do you know about Jesus? (Luke 13:10-21)

1. Over eighteen years, how did the evil spirit affect the woman in the synagogue? (Luke 13:10-11) _____

Like the eighteen Jerusalem men, this woman experienced a tragedy. But while Jesus never credited the tower's falling to spiritual forces, He explains that this woman's infirmity was caused by Satan (Luke 13:16)

2. Instead of glorifying God and rejoicing like the woman, how did the ruler of the synagogue respond to Jesus' healing on the Sabbath? (Luke 13:12-14) _____

3. Why do you think Jesus said it was more appropriate for this Jewish woman to be healed on the Sabbath day than another day? (Luke 13:15-16) _____

4. What do you think made the ruler of the synagogue and those who agreed with him Jesus' adversaries or enemies? (Luke 13:17) _____

5. How does Jesus' power over Satan and the demons prove that He is God and that He is bringing the Kingdom of God? (Luke 13:16-18; see Luke 10:18-20 and Luke 11:20-23) _____

6. To be saved, why must someone believe in Jesus and not just believe in God? _____

7. In what ways does the gospel—the message of the Kingdom of God—start small and gradually expand like a growing mustard seed and yeast being worked into flour? (Luke 13:18-21) _____

Jesus' illustration of a tree housing birds used in Psalm 104:12; Daniel 4:10-12; and Ezekiel 17:23, and always describes a kingdom protecting and providing for the people of the world. Jesus is saying that the Kingdom of God will bless not only Israel but Gentiles as well.

"Three measures of meal" refers to three pecks or sixty pounds of flour. The gospel starts so small that some may say that it is hidden; yet it will spread throughout and affect the "whole" or everything imaginable (see Luke 11:36).

8. In what ways has the gospel improved different cultures across the whole world? _____

Do you have the passion to pursue salvation?

(Luke 13:22-35)

1. Though Jesus teaches the townspeople through many cities and villages, His primary destination is the city of Jerusalem (Luke 13:22)
2. If you want to be included among the saved, Jesus says you must strive to enter the strait (narrow) gate because many will seek to enter in and shall not be able (Luke 13:23-24)

The question may have been the initiated by the Rabbinic teaching that only some Jews would get to enjoy paradise after death and that the rest must wait until the Millennial Kingdom. Jesus refuses to participate in this debate. He addresses the much more important topic of personal salvation.

Jesus has turned the question around. His questioner had asked, “Will the saved be few?” Jesus replies with the question, “Will the saved be you?” - Darrell L. Bock

3. Why did the people outside the gate believe that they deserved to be let inside? (Luke 13:25-27) _____

These were trusting in using the “right” words—calling Jesus “Lord, Lord.” They were trusting in having personal contact with Jesus by eating and drinking with Him. They were trusting in the fact that they heard His teaching. But though they had been around Jesus, He did not know them. They were workers of iniquity—of evil (see Luke 11 for more of Jesus’ teaching on evil).

4. What false belief does Jesus correct by saying that Gentiles from the north, south, east, and west will join the patriarchs and the prophets in the Kingdom instead of them? (Luke 13:28-30) _____

Only those who repent of their sin, believing in Jesus, will get to participate in the Kingdom of God and be saved from eternal damnation (see John 3:5, 16). Those who are striving after salvation, if they are introduced to Jesus, will see that He is the Savior and accept Him—Jews and Gentiles alike! But those who passively neglect to deal with their sin will find out that they are workers of iniquity all too late.

5. How does God want us to respond to warnings, like the one Jesus is giving? (Proverbs 29:1) _____

6. Why isn't Jesus intimidated by Herod's threat? (Luke 13:31-33, see Luke 12:4-7) _____

Bock says, "By calling Herod a fox Jesus may be saying either how clever Herod is, as in the English idiom, or how destructive he is, more consonant with ancient expression." But while Herod is a real threat to Jesus (and so are the people in Jerusalem who will praise Him on Palm Sunday and crucify Him on Good Friday), Jesus knows that He will live to accomplish God's mission, and He will die to finish it.

7. Why will Jerusalem receive desolation and abandonment instead of acceptance and protection from Jesus? (Luke 13:34-35) _____

Conclusion

While Jesus' addresses in **Luke 13** are directed toward unbelieving Jews, we can be sure that He meant for His followers to learn as well. We are surrounded by people who are alive but may never have been introduced to Jesus. Some, certainly, have no desire to think about spiritual things; but others may be striving for salvation but have not heard the gospel. In our effort to be pleasant, we can make the horrible mistake of assuming that someone is saved without ever actually finding out. Sometimes the people

we think most likely Christians are actually the most lost—since Christians assume that they’re already saved.

Can you list some friends, family members, or fellow church goers of whom you have never directly asked if they believe in Jesus for salvation? _____

This chapter would have been a direct challenge to Theophilus' faith. He needed to examine himself—had he repented of his sin and did he believe in Jesus? Was he a part of the Kingdom of God? At the same time, the passage would be an enormous comfort to him because Jesus clearly taught that Gentiles would also participate in and receive blessing from the Kingdom. The self-righteous Jews who expected to be saved by the Law would be cast out while the humble, repentant Jews and Gentiles would be welcomed in.

Write out a summary of when you were saved and share it with someone this week _____
