

Luke 13:1-9

Last week we resumed our study of Luke's Gospel with this extremely serious passage of Scripture.

1. I hope we acquired a good understanding of the context and meaning of the interaction and parable
2. This morning, I hope to be able to build on that foundation with some practical application.

*Now on the same occasion there were some present who reported to Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. 2 And Jesus said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were greater sinners than all other Galileans because they suffered this fate? 3 I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.*

Just to be certain, they understand, he gives another illustration

*4 Or do you suppose that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them were worse culprits than all the men who live in Jerusalem? 5 I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."*

Jesus then drives home this warning in a parable.

*6 And He began telling this parable: "A man had a fig tree which had been planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and did not find any.*

1. A fig tree in a vineyard?
  - a. This was intentional.
  - b. This tree was cared for in a special way.
2. There was really no excuse for it to not have fruit.

*7 And he said to the vineyard-keeper, 'Behold, for three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree without finding any. Cut it down! Why does it even use up the ground?'*

1. This tree was un-productive: no fruit
2. It was counter-productive: it wasted space
3. The fate of the tree: to be cut down

*8 And he answered and said to him, 'Let it alone, sir, for this year too, until I dig around it and put in fertilizer; 9 and if it bears fruit next year, fine; but if not, cut it down.'"*

1. We saw what this looked like in the life and history of the Jewish people, the nation of Israel
2. We saw that the fruit that God is searching for is the fruit of repentance.

Now, this morning, the question we need to answer is, what does this mean for us...the church, the true Israel?

1. To put it as simply and clearly as possible, God is looking for fruit in our lives, specifically the fruit of repentance.

2. This should not be news to us!

- a. Repentance is not something that is a one time deal.
- b. It is something that should characterize the true believer's life!
- c. The very first of Martin Luther's 95 Theses was, "*When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said repent, he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance.*"

So, the question this morning is not, should we be characterized by repentance. The question is what is true repentance and how does it look?

1. In its most basic definition, repentance is a 180 degree turn...a u turn.

2. Webster in his dictionary from 1828 quotes a Johnson as saying, "*Repentance is the relinquishment of any practice, from conviction that it has offended God.*"

Thomas Watson wrote that repentance is a spiritual medicine made up of six special ingredients.

### 1. Sight of Sin

- a. It begins with an opening of the eyes.
  - b. Acts 26:16-18 *But get up and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you; 17 rescuing you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, 18 to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.'*
- b. Repentance is an opening of the eyes, like in the prodigal son: he came to himself.
- c. The eye is made for seeing, but also for weeping. When our eye sees our sin, it should weep for that sin...which leads to point 2.

### 2. Sorrow for Sin

a. 2 Cor 7:9-10 *I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, so that you might not suffer loss in anything through us. For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death.*

1. Worldly sorrow is sorrow over circumstances of sin, while godly sorrow is sorrow for the offense of our sin.
2. Hypocrites grieve only for the bitter consequence of sin.
3. True repentance is a sorrow for our sin.

c. Luke 7:36-38 *Now one of the Pharisees was requesting Him to dine with him, and He entered the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. 37 And there was a woman in the city who was a sinner; and when she learned that He was reclining at the table in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster vial of perfume, 38 and standing behind Him at His feet, weeping, she began to wet His feet with her tears, and kept wiping them with the hair of her head, and kissing His feet and anointing them with the perfume.*

d. Psalms 51:17 *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.*

### 3. Confession of Sin

- a. Naturally flowing out of a clear sight of our sin, and sorrow for our sin, is a confession of that sin.
- b. First, there is a vertical confession of sin
  1. We confess to God, specific, personal sin.
  2. 1 John 1:9 *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
  3. Gregory Frizzell's "Returning to Holiness"
- c. Then there is the horizontal confession of sin
  1. There is a measure of accountability and seriousness when we confess
  2. James 5:16 *Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.*

### 4. Shame for Sin

- a. When we see our sin, feel its offense, and admit it to God, and to our fellow believers, we should be ashamed!
- b. **The problem is not that shame is felt. The bigger problem is when sin, being seen, brings no shame!**
  1. It is a great shame not to be ashamed
  2. Jeremiah 6:15 *Were they ashamed because of the abomination they have done? They were not even ashamed at all; They did not even know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; At the time that I punish them, They shall be cast down," says the LORD.*
- e. Be assured, the more we are ashamed of sin now, the less we will be ashamed at Christ's coming.

### 5. Hatred of Sin

- a. When shame is felt for our sin, hatred of sin comes next.
- b. *Christ is never loved till sin be loathed. Heaven is never longed for till sin be loathed.*  
Watson.
- c. Hatred of sin is a key indicator of true repentance and godly sorrow...not their sin, but YOUR sin.
- d. *It is easier to cry against 1000 sins of others than to mortify one sin in ourselves.*  
John Flavel

## 6. Turning from Sin

- a. Finally, we turn away from the sin we have seen, sorrowed over, confessed, and been shamed by.
- b. We turn from sin, not because we are afraid of the consequences, but because we have seen it as God does and we hate it.
- c. Turning from sin is synonymous with dying to our sin. A continual dying to sin is the life of repentance.

1. *Do not take a day off from this work; always be killing sin or it will be killing you.* Owen

2. Romans 8:13 *for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*

3. *It is the constant duty of believers to render a death blow to the deeds of the flesh, that they may not have life and strength to bring forth their destructive influence.* John Owen

### Conclusion:

Is the fruit of repentance present in your life? The owner of the vineyard is searching your heart and life even now searching for it!

1. Do you see your sin? Are you sorrowful over it?
2. Have you confessed it, specifically, been shamed by it, and do you hate your sin?
3. Are you turning from your sin? Putting your sin to death little by little...lot by lot.

The vinedresser is digging this morning, fertilizing, and giving you tender grace and mercy to bear fruit in keeping with repentance. Will you repent...but don't just repent! Go even farther.

1. When you feel the sting of sin, look up to Christ!
  - a. In Numbers 21:4-9 The people of Israel became impatient, yet again and spoke against God and Moses.
  - b. They said, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this miserable food."
  - c. The LORD sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died.
  - d. The people come to Moses confessing their sin...repenting...but what then?
  - e. God told Moses to make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole in the midst of the people.
  - f. If anyone who is bitten looks upon it, he will live.
  - g. It wasn't just repenting, but looking!

2. John 3:14-17 *As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; 15 so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life. 16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.*

3. Repent, but don't just repent. Go even farther this morning and look! Look to Christ.

GOSPEL