

BIBLE DISCOVERY

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LUKE: Cost of Discipleship

Luke 13:1-9

We're diving back into the Gospel of Luke. After nine chapters introducing us to Jesus and His call, Luke now takes us with Him on the road to Jerusalem (Luke 9-19). Along the way, we'll hear some of Jesus' most famous teachings and stories, as He shows us what it truly costs to follow Him and why following Him is worth everything.

The Big Idea

(What is the author's point?)

We do not know why every bad or evil thing happens. What we do know is two fold. One, when bad things happen, we shouldn't assume God is punishing someone - that punishment was bore on the cross. Second, no one person is worse off than another; we all must repent of our sin.

Why It Matters

(Why is this relevant to us?)

Have you ever been around a child who is entering that phase of their development where their curiosity really starts to peak? There's one question that seems to be repeated over and over and over again - you know what it is...say it with me—"why?"

It's so fascinating to see a little mind take in the world around them and try to make sense of what they see.

"Why do the trees sound like that?"

"Why do hurricanes exist?"

"Why is snow the color white?"

As we get older, I don't think this question ever leaves our system; it simply gets targeted at more complex realities—why is there such injustice in the world? Why would God let that happen?

It reminds me of Psalm 73, where the Psalmist takes in the world around him and concludes that "surely in vain I have kept my heart pure."

When we see wickedness around us or what feels wildly unjust, we wonder "why?" We try to make sense of it because we're not hardwired to live in chaos. Yet we won't always get an answer that satiates our curiosity. Especially when we encounter bad things happening to what we deem as really good people, it can be confusing. Jesus redirects our longing hearts, instead of trying to always

understand what's going on out there, to make sure we understand what's going on in here (our own hearts) and how we are all in need of a savior.

Good to Know

(What are some helpful insights into this passage?)

"whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices" (vs. 1) – This is the only mention we have of this incident in history so we don't know exactly what happened.

We do know that Pilate was a brutal governor who often relied on violence to impose Roman rule in Jerusalem. We also know that Galilee was a hotbed for Jewish zealots who wanted to fight for freedom. Likely, this was describing how a small handful of Galilean zealots were celebrating Passover at the temple and began making a scene, and in order to quell a larger revolt, Pilate had them killed. You can imagine this was an extremely charged event that was dividing the Jewish community, with some wanting to revolt against Pilate, while others were calling for "peace."

"Do you think these were worse sinners?" (vs. 2, 4) – At that time, Jewish rabbis taught that God's normal way of punishing sin was through immediate retributive justice, and His normal way of rewarding the righteous was through material blessing. Jesus was correcting that belief.

"those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell" (vs. 4) – We don't know much about this incident either. But while many probably asked "how could God have let this happen?" many others saw this tragic accident as God's punishment. Again, Jesus challenges this short-sighted view.

"unless you likewise repent, you will all likewise perish" (vs. 3, 5) – Jesus was saying here, "Just because those terrible things didn't happen to you, doesn't mean that you're innocent before God." as Paul would say later in Romans 3, "all have sinned."

Repent is a very important word, not just in this text but in the teachings of Jesus. It's more robust than to acknowledge wrongdoing. To repent is to walk a different path - to give your allegiance to Jesus as King. It's a turning from one way and a commitment or recommitment to a better way of living and being in this world (the way of the Kingdom).

A fruitless fig tree (vs. 6) was used throughout the Old Testament to symbolize the spiritual state of the nation of Israel. In the parable, interpreters disagree as to which character represents Jesus. Is He the vineyard owner demanding fruit from His fig tree or was He the merciful gardener wanting to do everything He could to help the tree do what it was meant to do? Probably He's both.

The heart of the parable is whether or not Israel will repent and turn to Jesus. This same question lingers for us today.



**THIS WEEK'S
Bible Discovery Author**
Steve Berg

Group Guide

Following the series with your group?

- Start with some [icebreaker questions](#).
- Read the passage together before you dive in.
- Share any insights from the message. Use the questions below to get your conversation started:

Conversation Starters

1. In this passage, we see Jesus challenging people who see others as "worse" sinners than themselves. Where do you tend to compare yourself to others?
2. How is Jesus challenging the way we often view tragedies?
3. What does the imagery of the fig tree communicate about God's expectations of us?
4. What comes to mind when you read verses 8 & 9?
5. How do you acknowledge Jesus as your king in your daily life?

Prayer

Jesus, help us to give our whys back to you as we remember that you have met our deepest longings as our Savior. Give us an eternal perspective when we see things that don't make sense to us. And keep us always turning toward you as our one and only king. Amen.