



THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

LESSON 12 – STUDY QUESTIONS LUKE 13:1-14:24

DAY ONE

1. What scripture verse or Spiritual Reflection thought from last week's lesson (Lesson 11, Chapter 12:8-59) most inspired you? Share some comments regarding this verse or thought.

Read Luke 13:1-9

2a. As today's lesson begins, Jesus continued His discourse. Some of Jesus' listeners told Him about "the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices," a particularly shocking fate to the Jews. What did Jesus then ask His listeners in verse 2?

b. The idea of suffering related to sin is a very ancient tradition and a frequent theme in the Old Testament. Read and record the following verses:

Proverbs 13:21

Psalm 37:17

3a. Jesus refuted this theory and confirmed the importance of repentance. Summarize what He said in verses 3-5.

b. Read and summarize John 9:1-3 which illustrates Jesus' teaching.

4a. Verse 8 begins the well-known parable of the barren fig tree. In this verse, what happened when the man came to his vineyard to look for fruit on the fig tree he had planted?

b. What did the vineyard owner in the parable say to the gardener in verse 7?

5. The gardener began his answer to the vineyard owner by suggesting that he let it alone for one more year while the gardener applied fertilizer (verse 8). What did he suggest the owner could do after the year (verse 9)?

6. CONNECTION: We could summarize the parable of the barren fig tree in one short sentence: God gives us many chances. At some point He expects us to produce good fruit. The parable of the barren fig tree refers to Israel (as well as to us individually). Israel did not fully accept Jesus as the Messiah even though He preached and performed miracles for 3 years. God gives us all we need to grow in faith, but it is our individual responsibility to receive all that He does for us and give Him back the fruit that He wants us as good Christians to produce. Think of the beautiful "fruits of the spirit" which ripen and grow in the lives of Christians. Share with your small group one or two of the fruits that you feel have ripened in your life and are YOUR harvest gift to God.

Read and record Galatians 5:22-23 and let thoughts of what you need to do to produce more "fruit" lead you into prayer.

DAY TWO

Read Luke 13:10-17

7a. As today's lesson begins, we find Jesus once again teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath (verse 10). According to verse 11, who appeared?

b. What did Jesus say to her when He called her over (verse 12)?

8a. According to verse 13, what happened when He laid His hands on her?

b. Not everybody was excited about this miraculous cure! How did the leader of the synagogue react, and for what reason (beginning of verse 14)?

9a. Ignoring the miracle that had occurred before them, the leader of the synagogue protested indignantly. What did he say to the crowd (end of verse 14)?

b. Read and comment on Isaiah 58:13-14 which more truly reflects God's idea of Sabbath.

10a. But the Lord answered him and said, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it away to give it water?" (verse 15). How would you express His sentiment in today's terms?

b. Jesus continued to explain the reason that He had cured the crippled woman on the Sabbath (when by Jewish law no work was to be done). Select and record the phrase or phrases which you think would have justified His action to those in the synagogue (verse 16).

11. What were the two different reactions of those in the synagogue after He spoke (verse 17)?

12. CONNECTION: In today's lesson we find Jesus teaching in the synagogue, where He healed a crippled woman on the Sabbath. His action caused a stir. Over the centuries Jewish scholars had added many rules to the Fourth Commandment. The leader of the synagogue became indignant when Jesus healed the woman. He considered the miraculous healing to be work, which was forbidden on the Sabbath. "But there is no rest from love." (Douglas Bushman *Praying with Saint Luke's Gospel* p 217) And what better time or place for God to perform a miracle of healing love than on His day and in a place where He is worshipped! In light of this story, and in light of the quote from Isaiah, consider what you think is the real meaning of keeping the Sabbath day holy. Share some comments with your small group on special ways in which you honor the Sabbath, or plan to in the future.

Read and record Ezekiel 20:20 and write a prayer today thanking God for His gift of the Sabbath, a day to honor and worship Him.

DAY THREE

Read Luke 13:18-25

13. Today's lesson begins with the parable of the mustard seed. While a mustard seed is quite small, the shrub that grows from it (especially that of the black mustard) can grow up to 10 feet tall. With what two questions does Jesus begin the parable (verse 18)?

14. In verse 19 Jesus explained that the kingdom of God is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in the garden; it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches. Although a short parable, it contains much symbolism. Comment on the meaning of one or two of the symbols within this parable (remember there are no wrong answers!):

The mustard seed

The person who sowed it

The garden

The growth of the tree from the seed

The birds of the air

The nests in the branches

15a. In verse 21 Jesus presented another parable. According to verse 21, to what did He compare the kingdom of God?"

b. Once again Jesus used an ordinary example from daily life to teach. When yeast is mixed in with flour to make dough, what happens to the dough and how does this tie in with the growth of the kingdom of God in the parable of the mustard seed?

16a. Jesus continued on His journey, going through one town and village after another on His way to Jerusalem (verse 22). What did someone ask Him, according to verse 23, and what do you think he was worried about?

b. With what cautionary advice did Jesus answer him in verse 24?

17a. Jesus then illustrated His answer with the image of the owner of the house who has already shut and locked the door. Imagine people outside knocking on the door late at night. What did Jesus say they would ask (verse 25)?

b. And what would the reply be from the owner of the house?

18. CONNECTION: "I do not know where you come from." What a chilling answer from the owner of the house! To be left in the cold, to be left outside because you are not recognized. This was especially frightful to Jews who did not want to be excluded from God's chosen people. We too want to be recognized and to belong. Consider how we are known and thus included in certain groups ... perhaps by our actions, our beliefs, our dress or appearance, even our family, where we live, or what life experiences we have shared. How do you think this lesson can be applied to your life? Are you putting the important things first so that you can "make it through the narrow door"?

Just as Jesus the Good Shepherd knows His sheep, so we His sheep must obey His commands and follow His path. Our salvation depends on our obedience and love of God, and it isn't easy as "the door is narrow." Read and record John 10:27 and let thoughts of love and obedience to God lead you into prayer.

DAY FOUR
Read Luke 13:26-35

19a. Jesus continued with the Parable of the Narrow Door. In verse 26 He described how the person left outside argued to be let in. How did the person try to make the "owner of the house" recognize him?

b. We can surmise that those who "ate and drank with the owner (Jesus) when He taught in the streets" did not heed His teaching. What is the answer from the owner of the house according to verse 27?

20a. Jesus then applied the parable to His present companions, foretelling what will happen to evildoers at the end of the world. Of what does He warn them in verse 28?

b. In verse 29 Jesus indicated that people will come from east and west, north and south to eat in the kingdom of God, meaning that non-Jews will also be included. Record verse 30, which assures us that all are welcome at His table! (Good memory verse)

21a. As Jesus was teaching at that same hour, some Pharisees came and warned Him to get away because Herod wanted to kill Him (verse 31). With what courageous words did Jesus begin His answer to them (verse 32)?

b. Note specifically Jesus' reference to the "Third day" in which He would finish His work. To what do you think He was referring?

22a. In verse 33 Jesus said that He must proceed to Jerusalem "because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem (verse 33). In another translation (The New Living Translation) Jesus says "I must proceed on my way. For it wouldn't do for a prophet of God to be killed except in Jerusalem!" Complete Jesus' words describing Jerusalem:

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that

How often have I desired to gather

b. Take a few moments to meditate on Jesus as The Prophet as He looks ahead to Jerusalem, where He anticipates His own passing; and read ahead to [Luke 19:41-44](#) and record a phrase or phrases that you feel relate to Jesus' lament over Jerusalem.

NOTE: Our commentary points out on page 96 that "To be sure, prophets were also slain outside Jerusalem, but given the presence of the temple within the city and the city's history with the prophets, Jeremiah and Isaiah make Jerusalem the major symbol of a prophet's destiny."

23. In verse 35 Jesus lamented that the earthly Jerusalem is no longer favored by God, that God has left it ("your house is left to you"). He ended by quoting from Psalms, words which later will be connected with Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Record Psalm 118:26.

24. CONNECTION: In today's lesson we can hear the sorrow in Jesus' words ... sorrow not for Himself, but for those who have heard His Word but have not turned from their ways and have not recognized Him as Messiah. He lamented for Israel and for Jerusalem, the Holy City. He lamented for the unrepentant and the unsaved of yesterday, today and tomorrow. We, too, can look on our own generation and lament for those who have ears but do not listen, eyes which do not see, and a heart that does not care for others. Today write your own prayer of lamentation for those who have not found saving grace in Our Lord Jesus Christ, and pray for their repentance and redemption.

Read and record the words of the weeping prophet in Jeremiah 4:14 and let thoughts of repentance and hope lead you into prayer.

DAY FIVE

Read Luke 14:1-14

25. Chapter 14 begins on one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the Sabbath. His host and other guests were watching Him closely (verse 1). According to verse 2, what did He see in front of Him?

NOTE: Dropsy, better known in America as edema, was a physical condition characterized by extreme swelling in the body caused by fluid retention.

26a. Jesus asked the lawyers and the Pharisees, "Is it lawful to cure people on the Sabbath, or not?" What was their answer, and what did Jesus do (verse 4)?

b. This was the fifth time that Luke recorded Jesus healing on the Sabbath. Jesus used an example from daily life to explain why it was proper to do so. Record His explanation in verse 5 and their response from verse 6.

27a. In verse 7 we read that the guests took their seats for the meal, and Jesus noticed how some guests chose places of honor. Summarize the parable that He told them in verses 8-9.

b. In verse 10 Jesus explained to them what they should do instead of always taking the best place. Summarize what He told them.

28. Just as in Luke 13:30 (in which Jesus said "Indeed, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last") Jesus taught that the humble shall be exalted. Record verse 11. (Good memory verse)

29. Jesus continued to teach, counseling the one who had invited Him to the meal not to just invite friends, brothers, relatives or neighbors ... those who can repay his hospitality. Describe instead the kinds of people who should be invited and with what repayment the host will be blessed (verses 13-14).

30. CONNECTION: Courage, humility and mercy are highlighted in today's lesson from Jesus' Sabbath meal with the Pharisees. First, courage: Jesus was aware that He was under scrutiny from the Pharisees but He continued to teach and heal on the Sabbath. Second, humility: Our commentary relates our own sense of self-righteousness to those who seek the seat of honor versus those who are humble and contrite, and dependent on God's mercy. Third, mercy: God's mercy to the repentant as well as the expectation that we should be merciful to those in need. Select one of these virtues (courage, humility, or mercy) and share an example of a person or persons who embodies this virtue.

Read and record 2 Chronicles 7:14 and begin your prayer today asking God to imbue you with the Christian virtues of courage, humility and mercy.

DAY SIX

Read Luke 14:15-24

31a. As today's lesson begins, Jesus was still at the Sabbath meal at the house of the Pharisee. What did one of the guests say upon hearing Jesus' teaching on mercy (verse 15)?

b. "Eating bread in the kingdom" (or a banquet) is a familiar image of salvation in both the Old and New Testament. Record Isaiah 25:6.

32. In response Jesus told the "Parable of the Great Dinner." Summarize what happened after the host invited many to a great dinner and sent his slave to tell them all was ready (verses 18-20).

THINK: Which excuse have you used?

33. The slave returned and told his master of all the excuses. The owner of the house became angry. What did he tell his slave to do (verse 21)?

34a. After the slave did this, there was still room for more guests (verse 22). What did the master say to the slave then (verse 23)?

b. Who do each of the groups below represent to you?

Invited guests

Poor, crippled, blind and lame

People in the roads and lanes

35. Record verse 24 in which Jesus summarized what would happen to those who had been invited but had made excuses for not coming.

36. CONNECTION: Jesus told the Pharisees that they were not hearing and accepting God's invitation and that others would take their place at the table! The Pharisees felt no need to answer the invitation...they were not "hungry." The guests at God's table in the Parable of the Great Dinner (as well as the guests Jesus told His Pharisee host to invite in Luke 14:13-14) are the same: the poor, the lame, the crippled, the lost. For us to come to the table, we

must recognize that we, too, are broken and in need. We, too, are the poor, the lame, the crippled, the lost. Coming to God's table in need allows us to acknowledge and even rejoice in our dependence on him. Share with your small group a joyful experience of coming to God's Table of Plenty.

As the hymn goes, "Come to the feast of heaven and earth ... come to the table of plenty!" Write a prayer today asking God to help you hear and accept YOUR invitation to the banquet of the Lord.

Table Of Plenty

Come to the feast of heaven and earth! Come to the table of plenty! God will provide for all that we need, here at the table of plenty. O come and sit at my table where saints and sinners are friends. I wait to welcome the lost and lonely to share the cup of my love. O come and eat without money; come to drink without price. My feast of gladness will feed your spirit with faith and fullness of life. My bread will ever sustain you through days of sorrow and woe. My wine will flow like a sea of gladness to flood the depths of your soul. Your fields will flower in fullness; your homes will flourish in peace. For I, the giver of home and harvest, will send my rain on the soil.

After completing this lesson, read pages 91-100 in the *The Gospel According to Luke* by Michael F. Patella, O.S.B. The Cornerstone Catholic Scripture Study acknowledges that scripture quotations in this study are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible: Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

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