

Luke 13:1-9

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[0 : 00] Well, good morning. I just was realizing that we have another baby born into our midst this week, Ben and Allison Anderson.

Unbelievable. The Church of the Sacred Stroller moves on. It's a life-giving place. And yet we come each week under the hearing of the Word, and in this particular week, we hear of life-important things.

Let me give you a sense of the text. It's just a conversation with Jesus along the way. And He'll provide some application before you get away.

And He'll finish with an urgent exhortation, lest you fail to hear Him and be cut down, dragged away, and consumed.

Jesus is an interesting character if you walk with Him along the way. We have our own idealized, saccharine, and sentimental version of what it would be like to hear Him.

[1 : 30] But He's a bit more like Johnny Cash. He's on vinyl. It's scratchy. It's in black and white.

And He looks you in the eye and says it the way it is. And so it is today. Look at 13.1. There were some present at that very time.

There were some present along the way. If you've been with us for this fall, you know that we are walking with Him toward Jerusalem.

And gleaning from Him lessons to be learned. That started in 951. Luke, at a literary way, lets you know we're now walking toward Jerusalem with Jesus.

He'll finish there in 1941. Arriving and weeping over the city when He comes. But in between are these bundled, caught, more than taught lessons for those who walk with Him along the way.

[2 : 44] Evidently, at this particular time, they came into a conversation. Notice the text. At that very time. Well, what time?

What time was it? It was a time when Jesus had been speaking about the need to be prepared to meet God on a day of judgment.

That's what the preceding story was about. Settling up with the judge before getting dragged into court and thrown behind the bars until you'd be able to pay it all.

At that very time. There was this conversation along the way. Before that, He had given an illustration.

That they had not been able to interpret the signs of their very day. They could see the natural world, but the spiritual world, which indicated preparation for judgment, they could not read.

[3 : 48] At that very time. We come to this conversation along the way. If you look back to chapter 12 and verse 49.

You'll see that He had been teaching that He had come to cast fire on the earth. And that He wished it was already begun. At that time.

We had this conversation. Along the way. And before that, a parable. A story on the need. For those who are in the house.

To be prepared when the master returns. To the house. All these things. By way of story. And teaching. By way of illustration.

He is speaking to them. In the land of the living. To be prepared. For the day of your dying.

[4 : 47] And so the text says. There were some present at that very time. Who told Him about the Galileans.

Whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. They are in conversation. You can almost immediately sense what had happened. Jesus has been saying.

You don't want to be like the individual. Who hasn't settled up their accounts. And suddenly finds themselves before the judge. And no opportunity any longer. To make payment.

Or make things right. And you're dragged away. And I can hear them saying. You know that reminds me. Jesus. Of those Galileans. Recently.

I don't know if you read about it. In the Jerusalem Chronicle. There was probably some. Geopolitical. Protest.

[5 : 40] Underway. And. Pilate had had enough. Death. And it evidently. Brought some. Before the bar of justice.

Delivered the death penalty. And. Just to let them know. It's not putting up with this. It mingled their blood with fire. His own sacrifices.

May their deaths speak to all. Of the need to bend. To Rome. And they say. Boy. Boy. I know what you're talking about Jesus. Because.

What you're talking about. Is what happened to those Galileans. And then we hear Jesus. He answered them.

Do you think. That these Galileans. Were worse. Sinners. Than all those other. Galileans. Because they. Suffered. In this way. Now this is a very.

[6 : 39] Socratic moment. It's a rhetorical question. And those who are. Schooled in the Socratic method. And understand. That you can ask a question. By way of wanting to lead someone. To information.

You can ask a question. That might lead someone. To your pre. Orchestrated destination. You can ask a question. To determine. Whether or not.

They have comprehension. Or you can ask a question. To make sure. That what you have said. Has not somehow. Been mishandled. By way of apprehension.

And this. Is what Jesus. Does. They have equated. His word. In chapter 12.

About the judge. To their situation. And the Galileans. And he wants to instruct them. That they have not. Placed his words.

[7 : 37] In proper context. Take a look at that. Galileans. It's interesting. It's mentioned there twice. I've thought about. How to relate this.

To you this week. Whether to. Give you a picture. Of the Galileans. By returning to primary text. That we could find. In Greco-Roman literature. In the first century. And lay this. In historical ground.

And I could. But I won't. I'll give it to you. By way of analogy. These Galileans. Were. Marked by two things.

It's not just a. A political region. In which they lived. Although they did live. North of Jerusalem. Five miles or so. They were known. By two things.

First of all. Politically. They were fiercely independent. If you were a Galilean. You were not happy. With Rome. You fought. Taxation.

[8 : 32] You didn't want to hear. From City Hall. You were fiercely. Politically. Independent. Secondly. Regarding spiritual matters. You were vocally.

Aloof. The Galileans. Well. It's kind of like being. A Hyde Parker. Right. I mean.

There's a subset. Of those of us. Who live. We understand this. Fierce. Political. Independence. And religiously.

Vocally. Aloof. So they stood between. In one sense. The geopolitical power. Of Rome. Dissatisfied. With things. And dissatisfied.

With Judaism. Which continued. To try to orchestrate. Things. From city center. Down in Jerusalem. Where the pure ones were. And these are.

[9 : 28] The Galileans. And what Jesus does. Is he. Picks up on this idea. That they have a notion. In their mind. That you know. Well the Galileans.

Got what the Galileans. Deserved. Because they're worse. Than everyone else. Anyway. Well you know. Why Hyde Park. Never got the point. Fixed. Because they're Hyde Parkers.

Jesus says. No. You don't understand. The Galileans. Are not worse. Than anyone else. But I'll tell you what.

If you don't. Repent. You will likewise. Perish. He tells another story. Verse 4. Or those. 18.

On whom the tower of Siloam. Fell. And killed them. Do you think. That they were worse offenders. Than all the others. Who lived in Jerusalem. See notice there. The emphasis again. Those who lived in Jerusalem.

[10 : 27] Those from the power base. So just as the Hyde Parker. In the text. Begins to feel. A bit of relief. He's let us off. Because he knows.

That we don't. That our political fierce independence. And our spiritual aloofness. That doesn't necessarily account. For things that negatively happen to us.

We are like everyone else. In that respect. But now he. He turns to five miles. The other way of Jerusalem. To Siloam. Where there's a big building project. Where there's money to be made. Where somebody's taking advantage.

Of the system. And evidently. Didn't put the scaffolding up. The way they needed to. And recently. They had read about this as well. Did you hear about the building that fell? The structural engineer.

Didn't have his game face on. 18 people died. Jesus says no. At a geopolitical level.

[11 : 23] Not all suffering. Is because you are worse than other people. And at a natural disaster level. No. People who are suffering natural disasters.

Are not necessarily worse. Than anyone else. He corrects it. He does not place. The problem of evil. Or suffering. Or disasters.

On the backs. Of those who are necessarily. Finding themselves at the hands of it. But what does he do instead? He turns the attention back.

On those with whom. He is in conversation. Two times. No. I tell you. But unless you repent. You will all. Likewise. Perish. No.

I tell you. But unless you repent. You will all. Likewise. Perish. That's the surprising line.

[12 : 18] He pulls. Back. The people. Along. The way. To the core. Issue. Of his teaching. Which is simply this. You. Be ready.

You. Be ready. For they had begun to think. Wow. If there's judgment coming at the end. Wow. The people who are getting it horrifically now. Jesus. Boy. They must really be worse off than the rest of us. He says. No. No. You. You be ready. Judgment will come to you.

If you have not. Repented. This is an indictment on those who would think that. Well. It all comes down to karma. You know. It's good and bad. Well.

You do something. Then you're going to have to create that energy. And evidently. These people created negative energy. And so negative things happened. And the gods fell upon them. Jesus says. No. None of that. None of that. You and I are subject to natural disaster.

[13 : 18] You and I are subject to suffering. Simply because we live in a fallen world. Not because you're more sinful than anybody else. That's what he wanted them to know.

To bring them back. To be able to say to them. If you. Don't. Take care of your stuff with God. Then you too will end on the wrong.

Side. Of the arm. Of law. When the man comes around. You will fall.

Or. You will be under the weight. Of something that you cannot bear. God's judgment. And so. Here we are this morning. And I ask you.

Do you need to repent. Of the life you are living. Before God. If so. Get it done. I say it to you. I say it to myself. Do you need to repent.

[14 : 19] Before God. Of the life you are living. If so. Get it done. How is repentance made?

There's two ways you can repent. You can pursue two different lines. You can get right. Or righteous. By law keeping. You can promise to do better.

You can leave here this morning. And turn over a new leaf. Some of you might say. I got to turn over a whole new forest. And you can say.

I'm going to repent. I'm going to get right. I'm going to walk well. If you do it that way. Those who choose that way. Are determined. To be the righteous person.

To walk the talk. And in the end. You will trust. In your ability to justify yourself. In the sight of God. In other words. You're going to get religious. People are doing it every day.

[15 : 28] I would not. Recommend. That. For any of us. This morning. There is a righteousness. That you can go after. By law keeping. And there is a righteousness.

That you can receive. By faith. Now this person. In contrast to the first. Will look to God. To justify them. This person.

Will say. Well. If I need to repent. Before God. And get my life in order. I do know this. That I cannot. Fully comply. With the law of God. As I understand it.

In the scriptures. I will not. I am not capable. Of fully loving God. With all my heart. All my soul. All my strength. All my might. All the time. They will not put hope.

In themselves. They will understand. The folly. Of thinking. You go to church. So that you can walk out. And turn over a new leaf. You. This person.

[16 : 25] Will understand. That it's not about religion. You don't need religion. You need a relationship. With one. In which. Their righteousness. Can be applied.

On your deficit. That's as simple as it is. It's substitutionary. Righteousness. You need. Someone. To stand.

In. For. You. I need. Someone. To stand. In. For me. And that. Someone. Must demonstrate. Complete. And full. Righteousness. Before the law of God. So.

Jesus says. In chapter 5. 32. I've not come. To call the righteous. But the sinners. Which is another way of saying. I'm not here.

To talk to the people. That are going to do it. Their way. And keep my law. I'm here. To talk to the people. Who know. I'm done. I'm undone. I can't. Jesus says.

[17 : 21] That person. I will lead. In the way of righteousness. So. How do you do it? I just want to read.

A little section. From another letter. In the new testament. If you're here today. And you're like. I went to church. They told me to repent. Before the curtain fell. They told me.

Not to go out of here. And just. Buckle down. And bear up. And get after it. But rather look. For righteousness. To be applied. To me. Then here it is.

But the righteousness. Based on faith. Says. Then it moves on. Confess with your mouth. That Jesus is Lord. And believe in your heart.

That God raised him. From the dead. You will be saved. With the heart. One believes. And is justified. Same word as righteous. You're going to be. Right-o-fied. You're going to be made right.

[18 : 24] By your heart. Believing. In Jesus. And your mouth. Confessing. For the scripture says. Everyone who believes in him. Will not be put.

To shame. And there's no distinction. Between Jew. And Greek. For the same Lord. Is Lord of all. Bestowing his riches. On all. Who call on him. For everyone. Who calls on the name.

Of the Lord. Will be saved. That's what you do. You call. On the name of the Lord. That his righteousness.

Would be applied to you. Understanding that his death. Was not God's payment. For where he had gone off. But rather he was taking up.

Your and my payment. Needed. If we were to walk in. Have you done that? I invite you to do that today.

[19 : 24] I invite you to be right with God. You can be right. With God. By repenting. Which is a heart.

That turns. From self-justification. To the son. By way of substitution. That's what it takes. For you to say.

Dear God. God. I'm a sinner. I'm told to repent. I'm grabbing on. With both arms.

To your son. That his death. Would be adequate payment. For my sin. And I want to walk out. Under his name. And when I come before you.

And the curtain falls. And the trees cut down. And the fire is made. You will look to me. And say. Here is one.

[20 : 21] Here is one. Who has attached himself or herself. To my son. This is an especially good word.

For those. Who might. Feel. That well. I've been here. Done that. Heard that. Long time ago that. It's especially good.

For religious people. Church people. It's especially good. For people who heard. What I just said. Three minutes ago. And thought. Boy. I hope somebody's paying attention. Get ready.

Get ready. Well. How much time do you have left? He's in conversation.

Along the way. He's made application. Before they get away. Six to nine. He gives. An urgent.

[21 : 33] Exhortation. Before. Any. Might be cut down. And dragged away. He told them a parable. A man had a fig tree. Planted in his vineyard.

And he came seeking fruit on it. And found none. And he said to the vine dresser. Look for three years now. I've come seeking fruit on this fig tree. And I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?

And he answered him. Sir. Let it alone for this year also. And I'll dig around it. And put in the manure. And then if I should bear. If it should bear fruit next year. Well and good. But if not. You can cut it.

Down. How much time do you have? How much time do I have? The parable indicates. Three fourths of the time.

Has come and gone. He circled the mulberry bush. Once on this. You've heard this before. He circled the mulberry bush. Two years.

[22 : 33] You've heard this before. He circled the mulberry bush. Three years. I've heard this before. And Jesus says. Where.

Is the fruit? What a question. Why. Should it use up.

The ground. Cut it down. Oh. Thank God. For the vine dresser. Who comes to the owner of the field.

And says. Now. Now father. I understand. But. But. Let him hear it one more time. Let him hear it one more time.

The purpose of the story. Was to provide urgency. By way of exhortation. Before we're cut down. And dragged away. Perhaps.

[23 : 37] You. Perhaps. I. Stand at the threshold. Of the great day.

I'm not talking about. When he returns. And. Closes the curtain. On humanity. I'm talking about. When the Lord comes around.

And brings me. Into his presence. Long before this world. Shuts down. Just a conversation.

Along the way. With some application. Concerning what you need to do. Today. Followed. By the urgent. Exhortation. That you would get it done.

Before. You. Are. Dragged away. Dragged away. If you've never trusted Christ.

[24 : 47] To be your righteousness. Trust him today. Having trusted Christ.

If you willingly. Keep. Kicking at the goads. Take off those spurs. Today. Because the man.

With the long black coat. Is coming around. He's got names. He's taking names.

And writing them down. Now. I'm going to ask you. To close your eyes. You know. I don't do this often.

But if you are trusting Christ. Today. First time. Say. Wow. I've got to get right. Just raise your hand.

[25 : 55] I see you. Sister. Praise God. Our Heavenly Father.

Father. We. We. We all need. This. Weekly. Gathering. This. So unusual. Sit in a room. With a bunch of people.

And open a. Ancient text. And hear. Your voice. I do. Thank you. For those who. You have brought.

Heart change. To this morning. And. Conviction. On. Many lesser matters. That. Need to be fixed. In the lives. Of many more. Oh Lord.

Thank you. For your grace. For birth. For life. Today. In Christ's name. Amen.