

- Last week we looked at several incidents of conflict Christ had in his ongoing confrontations with the Pharisees (Jewish religious leaders of the day who are trying to entrap Him) and talked through the detail of a sermon Luke records which Christ delivered.
- This week we are going to be studying exclusively from Luke, since He is the only one who records these events. We will be looking at the things Jesus said He requires of those who follow Him and desire to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. We will also be looking at the way Jesus said this person will conduct themselves in the world. Finally, we will also be talking about how Jesus, through His teaching, shows Himself to be from Heaven and different from those around Him.
- Christ says that just because bad things happen to people it does not mean that they have sinned. (Luke 13:1-5)
- Remember that Jesus has already answered this question. (John 9:1-12)
- The Old Testament prophet Jeremiah had predicted all that. Before Jesus came people were impacted by the father's choice of idolatry (Deuteronomy 5:9). Probably because of this passage the Israelites had been quoting a proverb they developed that when a parent eats sour grapes, the children's teeth would be "set on edge." Under Jesus' law, people would only be accountable for their own sins. In fact, Ezekiel and Jeremiah both tell them not to quote this common proverb anymore (Ezekiel 18:1-4) (Jeremiah 31:27-30)
- Jesus then tells the Parable of the Barren Fig Tree where a man who owns the vineyard wants to cut down a Fig Tree because it hasn't given fruit. The gardener says to wait until he has a chance to fertilize it and to cut it down next year if it isn't giving fruit then. The obvious meaning is that Christ is the gardener asking God for more time to cultivate the gospel message in a person. The Fig Tree was a common symbol for the Jewish nation. (Luke 13:6-9)
- Christ heals a woman on the Sabbath who had been unable to stand up straight for eighteen years. When rebuked by the Jewish leaders, Christ points out that each of them would loose their animals from their bonds to get a drink of water on the Sabbath and He has merely loosed her from her bonds too. (Luke 13:10-17)
- Christ tells two parables designed to illustrate how the Kingdom of Heaven will grow very large over time from humble beginning. He tells the Parable of the Mustard Seed (in which a very small seed becomes very large tree) and the Parable of the Leaven (in which a very small amount of leaven worked into dough causes a lot of flour to be impacted). (Luke 13:18-21)
- Christ explains that few will be saved and many will not choose to follow the truth. The analogy He gives is to a straight but narrow gate that will lead to heaven and all other paths which are broad will lead to destruction. (Luke 13:22-30)
- Christ is warned that Herod (the man the Romans had appointed "King" in Jerusalem) has it in for him. But Christ explains that he will be staying near Jerusalem anyway and wishes he

could protect all the people he lives there from Herod. He uses an analogy of a mother hen protecting her chicks by gathering them under her wing. (Luke 13:31-35)

- Christ again heals on the Sabbath and tells the religious leaders that they would do work on the Sabbath day by helping if their animal had fallen into a ditch. (Luke 14:1-6)
- Christ tells the Parable of the Wedding Feast to show it is better to humble yourself and then later be exalted. (Luke 14:7-11)
- Christ tells the Parable of the Great Banquet to show that it is better to invite guests who cannot repay you than guests who can, because guests who are more prosperous are also more likely to decline or take the event for granted. (Luke 14:12-24)
- Christ explains the cost of discipleship may mean rejecting family and urges his followers to count the cost of discipleship and to plan accordingly. (Luke 14:25-35)
- Christ tells the Parable of the Lost Sheep to illustrate the importance of restoring one person. The example is that a shepherd who has 100 sheep will leave 99 who are safe and go after 1 who has wandered. (Luke 15:1-7)
- He then tells the Parable of the Lost Coin to illustrate the same point. He says a woman who has 10 coins and loses 1 will look through the entire house until she finds it. (Luke 15:8-10)
- Next Christ tells the famous Parable of the Prodigal Son. A father has two sons. One asks for his inheritance, leaves, and wastes it all. The other son stays home. When the son returns home expecting to be a servant his father greets him and treats him very well. The other son is jealous. But the father assures him that he was always with him and all that the father has was always his, but to be happy with him that his brother returned. (Luke 15:11-31) The meaning is obvious – not to be jealous of those who came to Christ no matter when they come to Christ or what they did before. For example, someone who committed criminal acts in their past and makes a sudden but sincere conversion at the end of their life is just as saved as a person who was faithful all their lives.
- Next Christ tells a parable called The Parable of the Dishonest Manager. The Parable explains that a manager is going to be fired and he worries about what will happen to him. To gain favor with the people he manages, he schemes a way to reduce their debts with them. The manager hopes that they will remember that he helped them out and be able to help them in return. Christ has already told us not to worry about physical things, and now He says that if one is dishonest, he is choosing to serve man and money instead of God. (Luke 16:1-13)
- The Pharisees are wealthy, so they react negatively to this, but Christ emphasizes the importance of this teaching and in fact every part of the law. (Luke 16:14-17).
- Christ gives an example of divorce and remarriage, which He says is wrong if you are causing someone to commit adultery (including yourself). (Luke 16:18)
- Christ provides a telling illustration of the effectiveness of teaching on some persons. He says there was a very sick man named Lazarus who used to the fact that could only eat from the leftovers of a rich man. They both died, and the rich man was in hell and could

see Lazarus in heaven. He first asks Abraham to send Lazarus with a wet finger to quench his thirst, but Abraham refuses. Then the rich man asks Abraham to let him go and warn his family so they will repent. But Abraham says they have Moses and the prophets already and if they won't listen to them they won't listen to a person sent from the dead either. Christ is obviously pointing out that the Pharisees who are not truly following the call to repentance by the prophets are also not being convinced by someone like Himself from heaven either. (Luke 16:19-31).

- Christ explains that it is bad to cause people to sin, and urged his disciples to forgive people instead. (Luke 17:1-4)
- Christ tells his disciples that they could accomplish great things if they just had a little bit of faith. (Luke 17:5-6)
- Christ tells his disciples that they wouldn't expect anything from doing what they should be doing anyway. (Luke 17:7-10)

Questions:

1. When bad things happen to people does that mean they have sinned?
2. What is the meaning of eating sour grapes? What do Ezekiel and Jeremiah have to say about this proverb?
3. What is the Parable of the Barren Fig Tree and what is its meaning?
4. What is a common symbol for the Jewish nation?
5. How does Christ address accusations that He has healed on the Sabbath in Luke 13?
6. What two parables does Christ tell to illustrate how the Kingdom of Heaven will grow very large over time from humble beginning?
7. What is the significance of the narrow gate? What is the alternative?
8. How does Christ react to the news that Herod wants to kill Him? What analogy does He use?
9. What is the significance of Christ telling the Jewish religious leaders that they would pull their animal out of a ditch on the Sabbath?
10. What is the significance of the Parable of the Wedding Feast?
11. What is the Parable of the Great Banquet and what does it mean?
12. What does Christ warn his disciples about the cost of following Him, and what does He urge his disciples to do?
13. What is the Parable of the Lost Sheep and what does it mean?
14. What is the Parable of the Lost Coin and what does it mean?
15. What is the Parable of the Prodigal Son and what does it mean?
16. What is the Parable of the Dishonest Manager and what does it mean?
17. Who objects to the parable of the dishonest manager and why? What does Christ tell them?
18. What does Christ teach about divorce and remarriage here? Why?
19. What is the story of the rich man and Lazarus? What does it mean?
20. What should we do instead of causing people to sin?
21. What does Christ say we can do with a little bit of faith?
22. Should we be expecting to be rewarded for things we should be doing anyway?