

**Pre-Sermon:** This is to help you prepare for hearing from God's Word

- Prayerfully read Luke 13:1-9.
- What does Jesus say in this passage that is a little bit surprising?

**Sermon Questions:** This will help you evaluate how well you were listening

- What is the main point of this passage?
- What does Jesus say is coming in Luke 12:49? What does that mean?
- What does Jesus make clear we need to do right now in chapters 11 and 12? What are some different wants he says that and shows how important that is?
- What are some things that keep people who say they believe in judgment from taking judgment seriously?
- Why do the people in Luke 13 ask the question they do? What does Jesus say about how they were thinking about this tragedy?
- What does Jesus say is the lesson they should have learned from it instead?
- What is repentance?

**Sermon Outline:**

1. What is coming
2. What you need to do
3. What not to do
4. How to do what you need to do
5. Why you need to do it now

**Synopsis:** This is a short summary that will help you reflect on the message

Today, I want you to feel the URGENCY of repentance.

Repentance is obviously important because of **WHAT IS COMING**. Over the past couple chapters in Luke we've been talking about the fact that there's going to be a judgment in the future and that God has appointed Jesus as judge. God's plan was for Jesus to come and provide salvation through His work on the cross for those who would trust in Him and then in the future, come again and judge those who don't. Right now is not the time where God is judging the world, it's the time where He is dividing the world into two groups. You are either with Jesus or against Jesus.

This means **WHAT YOU NEED TO DO** right now is make sure you are with Jesus. There's literally nothing more important than making sure you are on Jesus' side. This is something Jesus has stressed and explained a lot in chapters 11 and 12. And yet one reason Jesus has to keep saying this in so many different ways is because so many of the people listening are not responding.

This is shocking. Why would people who say they believe in the judgment, not take judgment very seriously, at least not seriously enough to do anything different than they always had been doing? Over the past couple chapters, Jesus has been giving us some reasons. He tells us **WHAT NOT TO DO**. And the first big one is we must not be hypocrites. Ignoring the heart and choosing to focus on appearances makes it harder to take judgment seriously. Greed, fear, focus on now is another response we need to beware of because it causes us to miss what matters most.

But in Luke 13 we see another reason. Luke writes, "There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And he answered them." What time? They are asking this question after Jesus asked them, why do you not judge for yourselves what is right? After hearing about what's coming, and what Jesus is demanding, these people do something that is very easy for humans to do, maybe even for you to do, to avoid taking Him seriously. Instead of evaluating their spiritual condition, they compare themselves to others.

"Oh you are talking about judgment. We like that. We know the Messiah is supposed to bring judgment. Is this who you mean? Are these the kinds of people he's going to bring judgment on?"

Jesus tells them the comparison they were making was foolish. "I tell you, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish." Every sin that every sinner has committed must be punished and it must be punished exactly the way it deserves. God loves His glory too much to overlook sin. He is too holy not to hate it. He is too serious about His role as King not to punish sin. And he is too honest not to deal with sin exactly the way He said He would. Just because you can't remember all the sins you have committed doesn't mean God won't. Just because you don't take the bad things you have done seriously doesn't mean God won't. We all deserve judgment. Instead of comparing yourself to others, what you need to do is listen to what Jesus is saying, and respond appropriately. **HOW DO YOU DO THAT?** Jesus gives a one word explanation. Repent!

If you don't, you will perish. In other words, face the eternal judgment of God. What could be a more serious issue than that? There are lots of things in life to be concerned about but nothing is more urgent than this. Have you truly seen your sin and your need for a Savior and been convinced that Jesus is that Savior and that He's worth forsaking everything for? Have you actually made a turn from sin?

Jesus tells a story, in verse 6 that illustrates **WHY YOU NEED TO DO THIS NOW**. He talks about a man with a fig tree planted in his vineyard and he came seeking fruit on it and he found none. He said to the vine dresser, "Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should I use it up on the ground?" Obviously Jesus is talking to these Israelites who were there listening to him, but he's talking to you as well. Trees are meant for bearing fruit. If they don't there is a time coming when the tree will be cut down. But God's patient. And the vinedresser says, "Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig round it and put on manure. Then if it should not bear fruit, next year, well and good; but if not you can cut it down." And this is exactly what happened to the Israelites Jesus was talking to. They didn't bear fruit. In spite of this warning, in spite of Jesus himself coming, and pleading with them, and warning them, many of those Israelites refused to listen, and were judged for it.

I don't want that for any of you.

I am glad, many of you have listened to God's voice, you have come to Christ, and as a result, you are enjoying peace with God, even as we speak, you are ready to stand on judgment day. But I also know that some of you haven't. Stop making excuses, stop comparing yourselves with others, stop trying to find a way out, stop defending yourself, and repent, before you are standing in front of the Judge on Judgment Day and it's too late. We know what's coming. We know what not to do. We know what to do. We know how to do it. Let's make sure we do it, and that we call on others to do the same as well, the way Jesus did.

**Application Questions:** We can't just read these passages, study them. It's vital you respond. These questions may help you do that.

- Do you feel the urgency of the gospel? Why or why not?
- Does repentance seem like a big issue to you? Why or why not?
- What does this passage teach you about the mercy of God? What does it show you about the sinfulness of humans? What does it teach you about Jesus and the gospel?
- If you are not a Christian, I hope this passage will show you the urgency of repentance. Why are you not repenting of your sin?
- If you are a Christian, I hope this passage will remind you of the most serious problem the people around you have. Jesus believes the biggest problem people have is their relationship with God. Do you? What would be different about the way you interacted with people if you did?