

THE HARDEST PART

That's a Great Question



GROWTH GUIDE MARCH 23, 2025

*The Third Sunday in Lent
Scripture: Luke 13:31-35*

AUTHOR

Luke, a Gentile, Greek, doctor, close friend and companion of the Apostle Paul. Luke was a historian, put great emphasis on dates and details, and connected Jesus to events and people in history. Luke's purpose was to present an accurate account of the life of Jesus. He stressed Jesus' relationships with people, gave a prominent place to women and showed Jesus' concern for women. Luke wrote his gospel around A.D. 60, from Rome or possibly from Caesarea, and it is the most comprehensive of the gospels.

CONTEXT

Jesus continues his ministry, traveling throughout towns and villages, teaching and making his way to Jerusalem. In the scripture passage for today, Jesus is speaking to the crowds who are now a focal point in his ministry. Some have told Jesus about people from Galilee who were killed by Pilate as they were offering sacrifices at the Temple. They may have been killed because Pilate thought they were rebelling against Rome. There were also 18 people, who may have been working on an aqueduct for the Romans, who died when a tower at Siloam fell on them.

The definition of theodicy is a defense of God's goodness and omnipotence in view of the existence of evil. Theology is the study of the nature of God and religious belief.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Read Luke 13:1-9. What do you think Jesus' point is as he responds in verses 1-5? What does he warn about in verses 3 and 5?
2. This brings to mind the question: Why do bad things happen to good people?
3. Have you ever asked where God is in the midst of tragedy?
4. How can we make sense of the idea that God coexists with a world that is often evil?
5. It is hard to understand why some people suffer so much and others do not. Does this challenge your faith? Do you ever talk with Jesus about this?
6. We all have questions about life and suffering and tragedy. Can you think of some questions you have for God? If you feel comfortable sharing, have you faced a tragedy or a situation that shook your faith or maybe increased it?
7. When faced with suffering or watching someone you love suffering, how does your faith help you? Sustain you? Challenge you?
8. What do you think of the assumption of some people that sin brings on tragedy?
9. Life is uncertain and can turn on a dime. None of us know how much time we have on this earth and we will all face death someday. What is inevitable?
10. In the Old Testament, a fruitful tree often symbolized Godly living. What do you think is the meaning behind the parable of the fruit tree? What characteristics of God are expressed? What is your response to God's grace in your life?