

Luke 13:1-9

Practice Repentance

Scripture: Luke 13:1-9

Memory Verse: Mark 1:15b *“Repent, and believe in the gospel.”*

Lesson Focus: Jesus has some fiery words for us in this lesson: Repent or perish! We want the kids to learn that repentance is not only a one-time change of direction from sin to God (salvation), but also a daily practice that keeps us continually marching in that same direction closer and closer to Jesus as His disciples!

Activities and Crafts: Coloring Picture of Salvation ABCs, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Bring it Home Discussion for 3rd – 5th.
Craft for 1st/2nd Grade: Repentance Flip Sign

Starter Activity: Sense of Direction Game

Consider getting the lesson started off with a game that should help the kids burn off some energy. We will have some North, South, East, West signs for you that you can put up in your room to use for this. * Start off by having the kids stand in the center of the room. You will then shout out a direction and the kids will quickly move to that wall. Make sure you point out which wall is which direction before you start!

After a few tries, consider adding a new element that will get kids “out” to make it a little more fun. Instead of saying the direction, throw out some locations and have the kids decide which direction it is! Below are some examples:

- Denver (North)
- Pueblo (South)
- Canada (North)
- Mexico (South)
- Kansas (East)
- Utah (West)
- Europe (East)
- Pikes Peak (West)
- North Pole (North)
- South Pole (South)
- Pacific Ocean (West)
- Atlantic Ocean (East)

The kids who choose the right one can continue while the rest will sit back down. Keep playing until you have a winner! Afterwards, transition into the lesson with a question:

Q: Why is it important for us to have a good sense of direction?

A: So that we know where we are going (and it helps us not get lost)! *

As we continue in our study of the gospel of Luke today, Jesus also is going to challenge our sense of direction, though maybe not in the way that you think! Jesus doesn't care whether we are moving North, South, East, or West. But He does care about the direction our souls are moving! And our souls are always either moving toward Him or away from Him. Let's see what He has to say!

Bible Study:

Luke 13:1: People appear to have some questions for Jesus about something awful that happened to certain Jewish people from Galilee. These people from Galilee came to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices and apparently were murdered by Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor. *

Q: If you could ask Jesus one question right now, what would you ask Him? Have you ever wondered or even asked God, “*Why does God let bad stuff happen?*” I do, especially when really bad stuff does happen that troubles me. * Well, these Jewish folks were really troubled by this bad thing and were curious to hear what Jesus had to say about it.

Luke 13:2: Jesus answers them in a way that shows us what they were probably thinking: “*These people must have been the worst of sinners and deserved to be killed in this way.*” Many people in the world still think this way today calling it “bad karma”. *

Luke 13:3a: But Jesus says NO! In this case they were not singled out for a horrible death because of some secret horrible sin. *

Luke 13:3b: But instead of telling them why this happened to these victims He tells them what they need to know. * He warns them that they are also in danger of sudden destruction because of their sin! And that the only solution is to repent!

Luke 13:4: Jesus gives another example of a different disaster that happened in their day to make the same point. Let’s see if we can answer Jesus’s question ourselves.

Q: Based on what He has said so far, do you think these folks who were victims of this other tragedy were worse sinners than the rest?

Luke 13:5: Again, Jesus says NO and gives the same appeal to them: Repent or perish! *

This isn’t the first time Jesus has preached repentance. In the gospel of Mark, the very first words of Jesus recorded are to repent (as our memory verse, **Mark 1:15**, states) and believe in the gospel. So, it is important we know what repentance means!

Q: What does repentance mean? A: It means turning AWAY from sin or having a **change of direction!** And by believing the gospel we turn TO God! When you become a Christian you declare that you no longer wish to sin, but to live God’s way. *

Teachers: At this point refer back to the “sense of direction” game that you played at the beginning. We will provide you with two additional signs that say “sin” and “God” * that you can use for this illustration. Put them up on opposite sides of the room * and have a volunteer come up and stand in the middle and face the correct sign per the Qs below.

Q: What direction is an “unbeliever” facing? A: Sin! While an unbeliever may not always do bad things, the Bible declares that sin is their master and their back is turned to God! *

Q: What happens when an unbeliever repents and believes in the gospel? A: Not only have they “twirled” * away from sin, but now they are firmly facing God!

This **change of direction** is exactly what Jesus is challenging His hearers to do!

Teachers: At this point insert yourself into the illustration. Start by having both you and the volunteer facing the “sin” sign, but you will be standing “closer” to the God sign.

Q: Who is closer to the “sin” sign? A: The volunteer. This illustrates how the closer you are to the “sin” sign the worse your sin is (and this is how the people asking Jesus thought about those victims of these tragedies, that they were “worse” sinners!)

Q: But what direction am I still facing? A: Sin! I might be “sinning less”, but I’m still in sin and in the same danger! It is more important which direction you are facing, than it is where you stand on this “line” between sin and God! *

Boys and Girls: This “twirl” away from sin and towards God illustrates salvation! When you first repent and believe in the gospel, the Bible says that you become not only a new creation (**2 Corinthians 5:17**), but that you have a new direction in life (**Colossians 2:6**)!

Luke 13:6: Jesus now teaches a parable to help us understand the effect true repentance has on our lives. *

Q: If you plant a fruit tree, what do you expect to find on it? A: Fruit! But this tree in Jesus’s parable doesn’t have any!

Luke 13:7: Notice the patience of the owner. He has been patiently waiting for three years for this tree to bear some fruit, but his patience is finally running out!

Q: Who do you think the owner is in this story? A: God, that’s right!

Q: But who do you think the tree is? A: People like you and me! This is another warning to repent and believe, but also that true repentance will bear fruit! *

Teachers: Consider placing yourself in the middle of the signs one more time. This time you will be facing God (indicating you are a believer), but point out how believers don’t just stay there! Rather, they take baby steps closer and closer to God. Point out how this represents bearing fruit in life (**Galatians 5:22-23**). Consider even taking one * step back showing that believers still make mistakes and sin, but they are always still facing God.

Luke 13:8-9: Finally, we have the keeper of the garden’s response to the owner. Notice that not only was the owner (God the Father) patient, but even the gardener is counseling further patience! This gardener appears to be Jesus Himself working to help the tree bear fruit. And believers need His help to bear fruit! *

Key Point: Jesus has greatly challenged us in our lesson today to repent and believe in the gospel.

Q: Where do you stand on this line between God and sin? All of us are somewhere in the middle, but remember the first question you must ask is which direction are you facing!

If you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, He is inviting you to “twirl”! Repent and believe in the gospel today. * **Change your direction!** Otherwise, you will perish forever paying the punishment you deserve for your sins! God is patient, but don’t wait any longer!

If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, keep practicing your faith, including repentance. This is not a one-time act, but a daily practice where we keep our face toward God and our backs toward sin. Abide in Him and bear fruit that shows your faith is real! *

BRING IT HOME

Read Luke 13:1-3

What does it mean to repent? Why is it so important?

Parent Signature:

Parent Challenge:
What are Jesus's first words in Mark's gospel? (see Mark 1:15)

Read Luke 13:6-9

What accompanies true repentance?

