

# 'On the road'

## Luke's account of the life and ministry of Jesus

Luke is up front about his intention in writing his gospel record: it was to help a man called Theophilus to have the confidence to trust in Jesus as Lord and Saviour. He wanted to bolster the embryonic faith of this man in the face of both the hostility he was likely to face and the adversity which almost certainly would be his experience.

The aim of this study of Luke's gospel, therefore, is to help us all "*fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith*", to the end that we "*run with perseverance the race marked out for us*" (see Heb.12.1-2)

You can find the background to this series [here](#).

\*

## 26. Luke 13.18-30 [w/b Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2018]

*“.., make every effort to enter ..”*

The incident in the synagogue which saw a crippled woman wonderfully freed from her infirmity (Luke 13.10-17), an incident which provoked further hostility towards Jesus on the part of the religious leaders, may have seemed to some a small thing - a nameless place and a nameless individual - but bit by bit a momentum was growing.

*“Who dares despise the day of small things ..”* the prophet Zechariah had declared (**Zech.4.10**): Jesus picks up on that note as He teaches here about the kingdom of God, explaining both what it's like (vv.18-21) and how it's entered (vv.23-30).

*[Despite your best intentions, there may not be time for all the questions to be addressed in your Community Group! It may be helpful to try and ensure that in this study you cover questions 2, 6, and 7. As always try to leave good time for shared prayer!]*

\*

**1. Read Luke 13.18-30.** There's benefit as always in reading the whole passage before considering it in more detail.

What is the theme of the whole passage?

How does the passage (a) encourage you, and (b) challenge you?

**2. Read Luke 13.18-19.** By telling parables Jesus painted pictures which helped shed light on the truths He wanted to convey.

What is the point of this parable of the mustard seed?

What lessons does it have for you as an individual, and for us as a fellowship?

**3. Read Luke 13.20-21.** Jesus goes on to tell the parable of the yeast, which is very similar to that of the mustard seed.

What is the point He wants to get across by telling this parable?

In what ways (if any) do you think it differs from the previous parable?

What encouragement do you take from this parable and the truth Jesus is communicating?

4. **Read Luke 13.22-23.** Luke inserts here a reminder of the setting for this whole section of his gospel - Jesus is travelling from Galilee to Jerusalem.

How does this reminder of the essentially 'missionary' setting here help you better see the force of Jesus' teaching and ministry?

What do you think might have prompted the person to ask Him at this point if only '*a few people*' are to be saved?

5. **Read Luke 13.24-25.** Jesus spoke elsewhere about the 'narrow gate' (see Matt.7.1f) and about 'not knowing' some who will plead with Him at the last (see Matt.7.23).

What does Jesus mean by '*the narrow door*'?

He suggests that entering by the narrow door requires 'effort' (the original is the word from which we get our 'agony'): why is it such an 'effort' to enter thus?

6. **Read Luke 13.27-27.** These verses continue what is in essence another parable through which, effectively, Jesus is seeking to answer to question asked in v.23.

What arguments are being offered to Jesus by these people as to why they should be allowed to enter?

What might be their contemporary equivalents?

Jesus' reply repeats (and thus underlines) what He has said before (v.25): what is He getting at, and stressing to His hearers?

**7. Read Luke 13.28-30.** With the conclusion to the parable we are (finally!) given the answer to the question asked in v.23: Jesus uses graphic pictures to get His message across.

What is the truth which Jesus is communicating here?

What is the practical thrust of His message?