

# Just Dung It!

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 28 August 2022

Preacher: Dr. Daniel Heeringa

[ 0 : 00 ] Let's turn to Luke chapter 13. Luke chapter 13, there's CDs and t-shirts and all that will be for sale there in the Vestibule. Man, I'm telling you, I'm going to get them a bus because they'll be gone.

That's great. Thank you so much for leading us in worship. Why do bad things happen to good people?

I mean, it don't seem right. It's not fair. And it's one of those things that we don't understand. And when you begin to try to deal with why bad things happen to good people, somebody always says, well, if bad things happen to seemingly good people, were the people really bad?

I mean, was there something there that would cause something like that to happen to them that we didn't know about them? I mean, are they paying for something they did wrong?

That's the kind of questions that people ask, and that's the kind of questions that they ask Jesus.

The beginning of Luke chapter 13 speaks of the Galileans.

[ 1 : 14 ] Now, let me tell you about the Galileans. The Galileans were a spirited, high-strung, excited people that sometimes did too much at the wrong time.

To explain myself, Peter was a Galilean. And when they came to arrest Jesus, he took a dagger or sword and cut off a man's ear.

Now, I will tell you the reason why he cut the man's ear off was because the Roman helmet did not protect the ears. He wasn't aiming at the ear, folks.

Okay? He was taking the dude out. That's what he was doing. And, of course, Jesus put the ear back on, and Peter claimed absolute allegiance to Christ without compromise, and then he folded like a man in the ring with Mike Tyson in his heyday when the pressure got put on.

He was a zealot in every way. That's the Galilean spirit. I will tell you if you go to the Holy Land and you go into Galilee, there's a different flavor about those folks.

[ 2 : 34 ] I like them, you know. They got a little spunk to them, like some of y'all do this morning. And they are excited. And so Pilate didn't like them, apparently, because this speaks of a historical circumstance where Pilate had Roman soldiers interrupt the time of sacrifice of the Galileans by killing the Galileans and then mixing their blood with the blood sacrifices that the Galileans had made.

And these people are asking Jesus, why did that happen to them? They're grabbing headline news and saying, why in the world is this happening to these people?

So Jesus gave them another thought. See, the Pharisees taught and believed that every tragedy was seen as a divine penalty for somebody's sin.

That's why they asked him when someone was sick, who sinned? Was it the boy or was it his parents? I mean, what caused this problem to happen? They brought up things like that.

And when they asked Jesus about this Galilean circumstance, Jesus responded and said, don't concern, this is my translation of this, don't concern yourself with why it happened to them.

[ 3 : 58 ] There's a lot of bad things happening. And he gave another instance. The first incident that they brought up was deliberate. The second seemed to be an accident.

And Jesus is saying, either way, you ought to be concerned not about why things are happening to different people. You ought to be concerned about the state of your heart. And then Jesus responds by telling them to be ready.

And he tells them through a story that we call a parable. It means a side story. One of those stories that come alongside to help us understand the truth better.

And it's found in Luke chapter 13, beginning in verse 6, and he says this. And he told this parable. A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard and he came seeking fruit on it and found none.

And he said to the vine dresser, look, for three years now, I've come seeking fruit on this fig tree and I've found none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?

[ 5 : 04 ] And he answered him and said, Sir, let it alone this year also until I dig around it and put on manure.

Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good. But if not, you can cut it down. Now, some of y'all will recognize right off the bat that we're talking about a fig tree and you'll begin to talk about the symbolism in Scripture and those type things that the fig tree does often represent the nation of Israel.

It does. We see it in the Old Testament. It's carried over into the New Testament. And it mentions, it's talking about Israel many times over. Not to say it isn't here, but that nation, any nation, is made up of people and the people that make up the nation is who Jesus is speaking to.

He's talking to individuals. He's talking to those individuals that were standing there with Him that day. And by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the way that the Holy Spirit breathes life into Scripture and brings it all intact to us where we are through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, He's talking to us as individuals.

If anyone is not fruitful, they could be cut down. The story is, the truth is, to be clear about it, judgment is coming.

[ 6 : 45 ] That's what Jesus says. Judgment's coming. But aren't you glad that He gives us a little more time? Now, it may not be much more time, but if you don't believe that God's been patient with us, well, you're wrong.

Because He has been. And if you were to sit down and be honest with each other, you'd quickly understand why I believe that we have a lot to be thankful for.

But instead of the sit down, let me just tell you, I believe that we ought to be thankful for the patience of God because, for instance, Romans 3.23 states that we're all sinners.

sinner. And we all fall short of the glory of God. We've all messed up. And Romans 6.23 tells us that the cost of that sin is death.

And when it speaks of death there, it's not really talking about the heart dying, it's talking instead about an eternal separation from God. The sadness of a believer passing from this life into the next, we're not sad because they now have received the reward and in heaven, we're sad because they're not with us anymore.

[ 8 : 01 ] It's the separation. And when it speaks of the death that comes to the cost of sin, it's talking about the eternal separation from God. And to fit the story that Jesus tells here, you will be chopped down and may I add, be burned.

That's what Jesus says. And you will see as we continue to talk about the stories that Jesus told, he didn't just say it once or twice. He said it a lot.

Jesus gets to the heart of the matter and the sin of unfruitfulness is serious to God because the word tells us how to bear fruit. John 15, 5, Jesus said, I am the vine, you're the branches, whoever abides in me and I in him, he, it is, that bears much fruit from apart from me, you can do nothing. there ought to be evidence in your life that you are in Christ if you're a Christian.

If there is no evidence, you're not in Christ. Scripture's clear about that. John goes on and on about it in the gospel of John as well as in 1 John.

[ 9 : 21 ] There is no such thing as a fruitless Christian. There is such a thing as a fruitless person who thinks that he or she is a Christian.

And that person in due time, in the next season, in the next moment, whatever the timetable is, it could be a second, it could be decades, will be cut down.

So how do we respond to that? I think that's, that's not nice on Sunday morning. How do we respond to that? What do we take from this story? Well, because I'm a Baptist preacher, three things, okay?

One is be patient with others. Be patient with others. As a man who's leaving this afternoon to drive through Atlanta to get to Mississippi, this don't apply to me.

Be patient with others. When I was a college kid, God called me to ministry. I went and got probably the first commentary set that anybody gets back in that day.

[ 10 : 47 ] That was the Matthew Henry commentary set. Now they've got a, a bridged one volume version now that you can read. But this was the old font in the six volumes.

I like what Matthew Henry says about the patience of God. He says that had it not been for Christ intercession, the whole world would be cut down.

We owe a lot to God's mercy. We owe a lot to Christ intercession. I mean, let's be clean, we owe it all.

We owe our lives. And we ought to be patient with each other. If you go home and eat a peach and take that pit outside and plant it in the ground, you will not get fruit immediately.

It will take years to grow a tree out of that pit that will grow, that will make its own peach.

[ 11 : 58 ] And that is if you're successful. I grew up with a peach tree in my backyard. The bugs loved it a lot more than we did, apparently. Got a whole lot quicker.

Young trees do not grow early. early. And if Jesus is comparing us to trees, we need to expect fruit, but it takes time. And we need to be patient.

Hear me. We have children around here that need the nurture of God. That takes time.

It takes willingness. It takes patience. We have new Christians that may be grown, but are new Christians.

Maybe they're not grown. We baptized several children recently. They've never brought fruit and it takes time. We have some that's supposed to be seasoned Christians, but where's the fruit?

[ 13 : 15 ] God is patient. Thank God He's patient with them and He's patient with us. And as everybody likes to say these days, we have to pay it forward.

We need to be patient with others as well. So don't rush me this morning. Be patient. The second thing is this.

Fertilize the unfruitful. Where there is unfruitfulness around us or in us, we need to dig around and throw some manure on it or just dung it.

Okay? That's not exactly what Nike said. It's a little better. So let me ask you, how are you doing when you walk with God?

You don't grow fruit trees for ornamentation or at least God doesn't. What kind of priority is your walk with God?

[ 14 : 33 ] Now I will tell you it's much easier to point at somebody else and say, boy, I'll tell you what they need to be doing in their life. Well, let's get past that this morning because we're being patient with them.

Let's not be so patient with ourselves. Let's instead look at where we are. What kind of priority is your walk with God? We're not saved to look good, folks.

We're saved and given a responsibility and thank God in enabling and empowerment to bear fruit. And if we don't, God will choose to use someone that will bear fruit.

And the only way you're going to bear fruit, let me take you back to 715.5. The only way you're going to bear John, excuse me, John 15.5, the only way you're going to bear fruit is to abide with the Lord.

And you need time with God in His Word daily. We can put out all the bookmarks on every offering box that we got.

[ 15 : 39 ] We can encourage it and put it in the newsletter and put it before you all we want. But if you don't commit yourself to spend time with the Lord daily, I'm not talking about a ritual.

Forget rituals. I'm talking about a relationship. I'm talking about a quiet spot to let God speak to your heart.

You need to talk to Him. That's prayer. You need Him to talk to you. That's His Word. that's the way the conversation happens.

It's when we allow Him to speak to us through the Holy Spirit of God through His Word and we talk to Him too. We need to talk to others.

That's what the church is about. That's a formula and it works. It works. I will tell you that if the only part of First Baptist Church that you're a part of is to walk in the doors somewhere between 1020 and 1035 and sit down in here, I am glad you're here.

[ 16 : 55 ] I am. I prayed for you before you got here. I'll pray for you after I leave here. and I'm glad you're here. But I will tell you this is not enough.

It's not enough. You won't know this church just from that. You won't build relationships with folks in this room just from that.

And Christ came to establish the church and it's very clear in the book of Acts how you do that properly and that is to spend time together. We have Sunday school classes for that.

We have Bible study groups for that. We have prayer groups for that. We're providing as many avenues as we possibly can and looking to provide more for you to get engaged and get connected to other folks that are going through common things that you're going through and help us as iron sharpens iron so let one sharpen another.

To work each other. To maybe prune one another from time to time. to compliment the fruit of another. To help one another along because we don't want to look like it on Sunday morning at all. [18:08] None of us do. Okay? But we all need help. It's not that we necessarily want anybody to tell us what they think. I don't mean that. But I'm just telling you folks, you need the camaraderie around the word of God.

You need that. And if you don't have it, it is more difficult to abide with the Lord. He established the church for those purposes because he knew we needed it.

He knows what you're facing on Monday morning. And you probably know what it is too, but if you don't, he's already there by the way. He knows what the circumstances are. And you need that kind of abiding with each other.

And let me go ahead and make a commercial while I'm here. You say, Preacher, I don't know how to get engaged in that. I mean, it's just intimidating to walk in the doors and try to find where to go and I can't find my way around the building.

I understand. I'm new. You know, I'm new. The first time that I came here, the first Sunday I was here as your pastor, okay, on May the 1st, the first guy that welcomed me was not in this church.

[19:20] Did not have a home in Pickens. He just came in off the street and said, Y'all have any coffee? I said, that's a great question. Man, I hope so. You know, I don't know, but man, you're early.

Do you know the Lord? And he said, yeah. I said, good. Come back in 30 minutes, okay? Because you're too early, you know. And listen, on September 11th, I can tell you where the coffee's going to be, all right?

Because the coffee bar's opening. Amen? So anyway, it's going to be in the Welcome Center, which is the middle door between the sanctuary and the fellowship hall. And everybody don't know that, folks. We need each other.

Christ knew that. Don't take that joy away from others, mingling in and mixing in your lives and helping us all to become stronger.

We need that. God's established that. And without that, something's missing. And it shows. It shows. Be clear.

[20:29] Apathy, lack of production, fruitlessness, they're all forms of disobedience. So fortify your spiritual life with prayer.

Fortify your spiritual life with the Word of God. If you don't know how to do that properly, come see me on September the 11th. Well, you can see me before then, but September the 11th begins that class in the fellowship hall.

Those are some of the very things that I'm going to be talking about. It's a great opportunity for that. Don't let the evil one deceive you, separate you, and deplete you.

COVID has been awful. The losses that people have suffered have been tragic. In the midst of all of that, I buried two 42-year-olds that died with COVID.

I've seen the pain that went into that dilemma and that difficulty. And I know how tough it is to preach to an empty sanctuary in front of a camera that they'll watch the next day.

[21:31] It ain't the same as the fellowship of believers, I promise you. It's different from that.

COVID has been awful. But I'm telling you, the worst part of it, not taking away from any of the physical pandemic part of it, but the worst part of it has been the spiritual pandemic that took place.

Because we all withdrew and we all got to ourself. And just like so many people died of other health concerns because they couldn't treat them because everybody was focused on COVID and so they didn't take care of their bad heart and they didn't take care of the cancer they were fighting because they couldn't get in to see the doctor because of all those circumstances and they suffered with other matters.

In the same kind of way, in the midst of that, we pulled away from everything, never bothered to re-engage and come back and it's been a spiritual pandemic upon the church of Jesus Christ.

And it's time to relaunch and change that, folks. It's time to get engaged. It's time to grow in the Lord and allow God to do that.

And if I'm digging a bit, that is exactly what Jesus was doing and that's exactly what he said we need to do. Dig around the roots. Dig around the roots. Throw some manure on.  
[ 22 : 45 ] Just dung it. Remain faithful to the people of God. Let God work in us and through us. But it's not just about us.

A lack of unfruitfulness, excuse me, a lot of unfruitfulness is caused by people not being believers. believers. People need the Lord. They need him today.

There's people in this room. I don't know who you are, but there's people in this room who've never given his or her heart to the Lord Jesus Christ. Everybody may think you have.

You may have thought that aligning with the church and going along for some time is enough. But the reality is, and I shared this midweek this past week, the greatest burden I have as a pastor, whether it's wrong or right, the greatest burden I have as a pastor is the people that I preach to each week and look at and wonder, God, do they know you?

Has their life been changed by you? Has there been a difference in them, oh God? Please don't let them walk out of here knowing the gospel, knowing what it means to surrender your life to the Lord, and then walk out of here unchanged, not committed.

[ 23 : 57 ] When the ax hits the root, it will forever be too late. And God has placed people in our lives to help us change, and God has placed us in other people's lives to share our faith with them.

God has given us neighbors, the neighbors you don't like, the neighbors you wish would go away with all the moving going on, let them move, Lord, let them move.

God's put them there. And all their junk in the yard, he's put them there. God's given you your work mates, the ones that you avoid.

God put them there. God give you your fellow team players. God give you your team moms and your team dads to share your faith with, to make an example of, to show.

Dig around a little bit. Poke at it. Throw some manure on it. Just dung it. You are not responsible for their response to you. You're responsible for giving them an opportunity to personally hear an invitation to come to Christ and don't let your true friendship with them come in the way of giving them an opportunity at eternal life.

[ 25 : 19 ] Fertilize the unfruitful. And lastly, prepare for the coming day. If there's not fruitfulness after the effort, the tree is, the tree is axed down and replaced and there's a day coming.

Thank God it's not too late. I don't know when it will be too late. I'm not selling any books on it. Okay. I'm just telling you, Jesus was clear.

It will be. And those who refuse to come to the Lord, God is patient. Thank God for that. But time's running out. And those who waste that time and fail to faithfully serve the Lord, time runs out.

Now I understand what people are waiting on. I get it. I get it. But I want you to watch what happens. When you're young, you don't have your own family.

You think, well, I'll wait until I get a family. When I get a family, I'll get fully engaged and faithful. And then you get a family. And then having kids is always make or break, one or the other.

[ 26 : 34 ] It's either too much trouble to go or you're going because you want the kids there. That's what happens. The decision that comes with that. But when you get a family, you kind of wait until the kids are older.

And then the kids get older and life gets busier. And you've got to make decisions, tough decisions about how you're going to prioritize your life because they just want the most of it. And our life kind of revolves around that.

And then the kids are gone and it's time for a break. And then the grandkids come and you want time with them instead.

And then you get older and then you think, well, it's not my time. It's somebody else's time now. Now, 80 years later, there's a life that proclaimed to have a relationship with God, but has never faithfully served and never bore fruit.

Just hanging around, but never bearing fruit. And I challenge you today, quit making the life stage excuses that cause you not to be everything that God would have you to be.

[ 27 : 46 ] Make today be the day that God digs around at your roots. Throw some manure on it. I want you to know I prayed for you.

In preparing this sermon, I prayed for you. And then what about other Christians who have a burden for others? You know, you want to keep them your friends, but you want them to know Jesus and there's a fine line with being patient with them and feeling a deadline coming and Jesus tells us

again and again, you're going to see it in coming days.

The day is coming. Many of the parables that he shares has to do with the door shutting, the master returning, the judgment that's coming. I don't like talking about looming judgment.

That's not my thing. I'm a positive person. Jesus wanted you to feel the looming judgment of the Lord.

Why? Because we need to get our lives right. Because we need to bear fruit in this season.

[ 28 : 59 ] Because if you're a Christian today, you have a faith that needs to be shared. One thing they never prepared me for.

In seminary, in watching preachers growing up, watching my pastors growing up, I never was prepared for what I call the sacred closets of people's lives that God has allowed me to be in. When you walk in with a family besides someone dying, I think I don't belong here. But that dear family wants their pastor to be a part of that.

I know it's a sacred time. I know it's a personal time. I know it's a private time. I get it. And Fred, you know, you never get used to that.

I've seen them breathe their last. And I've never had one say, boy, I wish I'd wasted more time.

[ 30 : 18 ] Never had somebody facing death tell me in my final visits with them. Boy, if I wouldn't have, if I wouldn't have spent my time so wisely, I wish I'd wasted more time.

But I've had more than a handful tell me. I wish I would have taken advantage of my time and the opportunity that I had. And I'm simply saying this morning, wish no longer.

Dig around. Dig deep. Throw some manure on your life. Just dung it. Just allow your life to be changed by the ever abiding presence of the sweet Holy Spirit of God and the promise of Jesus.

With every head bowed and every eye closed, I want to ask you this morning. Has there ever been a time in your life when you've surrendered your life to follow the Lord Jesus Christ? I'm not asking you if everybody thinks you have.

I'm asking you, have you ever given your heart and life to the Lord Jesus Christ? I want you to know we're going to stand and we're going to sing in just a moment. But more important than that, we do this for you to have the opportunity to respond in obedience.

[ 31 : 40 ] And we will take the time to share with you what that means. We're not going to rush that deal for you. But as the Holy Spirit convicts your heart and speaks to you, you respond to him today.

And we'll guide you in that. Maybe God's drawing you to be a part of this church. You feel led to join us in the journey. We're not perfect, nor are you. We'll work out great. You just come down and let us know that.

We'll be happy to help you in that process. We may begin the process for that, but you come.

Maybe you have been saved and you know you're a Christian, but you've never been baptized by mercy.

You've never publicly proclaimed your faith in obedience to the way Christ not only showed us, but instructed us. So I encourage you to be obedient in that.

Or maybe you're just here this morning and you just need some digging around to take place in your roots. I mean, you just want to be honest with God. You need some work. There's not enough fruit.

[ 32 : 40 ] And I want you to know the steps down here behind me are a makeshift altar for you to lay it down before the Lord. I realize you can do that where you are. You can do it up here. I just, I just want you to be obedient.

I just know the spirit of God is stirring today. He's moving in hearts and lives and I don't want you to be disobedient. I just want you to do what he tells you to do. I'll be happy to pray with you, guide you in any way in any of that or anything else on your heart and life.

Lord Jesus, lead us right now. I pray your blessings, your leadership, your guidance upon every person in this place and every person watching online.

God, God, you move and work and help us to be obedient to follow you right now. In Jesus' precious name, Amen.