Sermon Discussion Questions

Series: Hope Fulfilled **Date**: October 18, 2026

Shifting Shame and the Longsuffering Grace of God

Luke 13:1–9

1. Shifting the Blame: Jesus challenged the people who focused on the sins and suffering of others instead of examining their own hearts. Why is it often easier to point out someone else's faults than to acknowledge our own? What are some ways we do this in our families, church, or community?

2. Recognizing Our Critical Spirit: The sermon described how criticism, gossip, and even outrage can become ways of covering our own shame. How can we recognize when our judgment of others is rooted in our own insecurities, guilt, or unwillingness to repent? How can we distinguish righteous discernment from a condemning spirit?

3. Understanding God's Patience: In the parable of the fig tree (Luke 13:6–9), the gardener asks for more time and offers additional care to the tree. What does this teach us about God's patience and active work in our lives? How should His long-suffering grace shape the way we view our own spiritual growth and the struggles of others?

4. Moving Toward God in Our Brokenness: The sermon emphasized that we should move toward God, not away from Him, when we become aware of our sin. Why might shame cause us to hide from God or become defensive? How does the gospel give us the freedom to confess our sin, repent, and receive His grace?

5. Extending Grace to Others: The sermon challenged us to examine our judgment, extend grace, and enjoy grace. Think of a person or group whose faults are easy for you to criticize. How might remembering your own need for God's mercy change the way you pray for them, speak about them, or respond to their brokenness?

Closing application: What is one specific area where God may be calling you to stop focusing on someone else's faults, honestly examine your own heart, or extend grace this week?

Interpretation / Application Questions

Interpretation:

1. What does this passage teach us about God? God is the main character of the Bible, so he should be our starting point. Every passage of Scripture reveals something about God, even if he's not specifically mentioned.

2. What does this passage teach us about people? As the pinnacle of God's creation, humans are at the center of his purposes. Think through what the passage reveals about our identity as divine image-bearers.

3. What does this passage teach us about how to relate to God? Loving God with our whole being expresses itself in a variety of ways. Start by looking for reasons to praise God.

4. What does this passage teach us about how to relate to others? God created us to be in community with one another. When he saves us from our sins, he makes us part of the body of Christ. Start by considering what the passage shows about interacting with others—family, friends, roommates, coworkers, classmates, neighbors, fellow believers, non-Christians, etc.

Application

1. What does God want us to understand/think? God has given us the mind of Christ, but we are still tempted to think the way we did before we knew Christ. Deep and lasting transformation begins with the renewal of our minds. Reflect on any wrong ways of thinking that the passage exposes.

2. What does God want us to believe? We may understand a truth at an intellectual level without letting it shape how we live. Consider what false beliefs the passage reveals and what gospel promises you need to believe.

3. What does God want us to desire? This question targets the affections—the combination of desires, inclinations, feelings, and will that are the spring of our actions. God calls us to desire him above all else, but apart from the work of the gospel we will desire what's evil. Reflect on how you see the sinful desires mentioned or implied in the passage show up in your own life, as well as the kind of godly desires you should be cultivating.

4. What does God want us to do? When God's Word changes how we think, what we functionally believe, and what we desire, it will produce tangible change in what we do and don't do. Sometimes a passage gives us direct commands. But many are far less straightforward, requiring us to think carefully about specific actions.