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## Luke 13:6–9—Barren Fig Tree

Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. So he said to the gardener, ‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?’ He replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’” (Luke 13:6–9)

John Bunyan (author of *Pilgrim’s Progress*) preached a sermon in 1673 on Luke 13:6–9, stressing the limits of God’s forbearance.

Barren Fig-tree, *Dost thou hear?*  
the Ax is laid to thy roots, the Lord Jesus prays God to spare  
thee;  
Hath he been digging about thee?  
Hath he been *dunging* of thee?  
O Barren Fig-tree, *Now* thou art come to the point;  
if thou shalt *now* become good,  
if thou shalt after a gracious manner suck in the Gospel-dung,  
and if thou shalt bring forth fruit unto God . . . *Well!*  
But if not, *the fire is the last.*  
Fruit or the Fire!  
Fruit or the Fire, Barren Fig-tree!<sup>1</sup>

1. John Bunyan, *The Barren Fig-tree* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1986).