

Sermon: Why?

Luke 13:1-9

1. In our text, the people want answers as to why tragedy has occurred. They question if the people who were killed by Pilate while making sacrifices to God, and those who were killed by the falling of the Tower of Siloam died because their sin was greater than those who were still alive. How do you understand Jesus' response?

Jesus answers their question stating that, no, those who died did not have sins greater than those who survived. Instead, Jesus tells them, "unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did." It was not meant to be unsympathetic, but meaning that because Jesus loves us, Jesus wants us to be ready at all times. We don't want to wait until we no longer have an opportunity to repent of our sins and live a life worthy of the calling of God. We want to be fruitful Christians at all times.
2. Jesus never denies that sometimes sin does cause death, but basically tells the questioning people that our response to tragedy is more important than worrying about whose sin is greater. What do you understand that response to be?

Jesus reminds us that even though we are sinners saved by grace, we still are responsible for asking forgiveness for our sins. People are still killed by drunk drivers, and abusers still injure and/or kill their spouses and children. Then there is natural tragedy which has nothing to do with our sin, such as earthquakes, tornadoes, etc. Though tragedies are horrible, they happen for we are not in heaven yet, we do not live in a perfect world; therefore, should remind us that the kingdom of God is basically the good in the world. The kingdom of God is the ministries we do to help others, the good will we have toward others, anything that represent the goodness of God, and is absent of evil, is the kingdom of God.
3. How do you understand repentance and do you believe it to be a one-time thing?

Repentance is asking God for forgiveness for our intentional and unintentional sins. It is an ongoing thing, because we will always be sinners in need of God's divine grace.
4. What do you think the people were supposed to gain from The Parable of the Barren Fig Tree? How does this parable give you hope?

There are several ways to possibly interpret this parable. One perspective is that we as God's people are the fig trees. We are called to fruitful disciples, producing fruits of the Spirit, being witnesses to an awesome God, and making disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world. Jesus could be that gardener who has invested in us with his blood sacrifice, who never gives up on us, and wants to love us, nurture us, and make us fruitful.

5. How does this study help you to grow in faith?

Prayer:

Dear Lord, we thank for this day and for everyday that we arise, for we know not what tomorrow holds. In just an instant, our lives could be changed forever by our own action, the action of others, or by nature. We thank you for the Word that reminds us to, "Repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand." Your word gives us hope that even in the midst of our barren seasons, you deem us as worthy to be saved. We thank you for the holy gardener, Jesus, and for Jesus' love, grace, mercy, and power, who never gives up on us. My prayer today, Lord is that the Holy Spirit will help me to live a life of repentance; therefore, ever ready for whatever I might face. Help me to not waste time trying to understand the mysteries of God, but to trust more in a God who knows all, a God who is all powerful, and who makes no mistakes. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.