

## The Best U-Turn You Could Ever Make!

Luke 13:1-9; Coast Community Church; Pastor Earl Miles; 6-3-18

The Lord Jesus has been teaching on the sin of greed and worry and the need to be consumed with the coming kingdom instead of being consumed with temporal pleasures and the everyday needs of life. He has emphasized the need to think as a servant whose master has been away and is going to return to evaluate whether we have been faithful to do what we should do or not. This block of teaching concludes with a commentary on a news report (Luke 13:1-9).

### 1. Tragedy, for the unrepentant, is a call to repentance.

<sup>1</sup> Now on the same occasion there were some present who reported to Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. <sup>2</sup> And Jesus said to them, “Do you suppose that these Galileans were *greater* sinners than all *other* Galileans because they suffered this *fate*? <sup>3</sup> I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. – Luke 13:1-3

- Tragedy by human hands (Bock)
- ‘That the blood had mingled with that of their sacrifice was a particularly horrible detail.’; ‘It was commonly held that disaster was a punishment for sin (John 9:2).’ – Morris
- ‘The notion that personal disaster is the result of personal sin was deeply rooted in the consciousness of the Jew’ - Hendriksen
- ‘It was the belief of many that disaster and sudden death always signified divine displeasure over particular sins (Job 4:7). Those who suffered in uncommon ways were therefore assumed to be guilty of some more severe immorality (John 9:2). – MacArthur
- ‘Disaster was commonly held to be the result of sin.’ – RSB

<sup>4</sup> Or do you suppose that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them were *worse* culprits than all the men who live in Jerusalem? <sup>5</sup> I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.” – Luke 13:4-5

- Tragedy by natural causes (Bock)
- ‘Jesus responds by saying that such a calamity was not God’s way to single out an especially evil group for death, but as a means of warning to all sinners.’ – MacArthur
- Great sufferers are not to be accounted great sinners; We cannot judge of men’s sins by their sufferings in this world; for many are thrown into the furnace as gold to be purified not as dross and chaff to be consumed; The judgments of God upon others are loud calls to us to repent. Some have not yet grace to repent yet it is a mercy to them to have space to repent. Cutting down, though it is a work that shall be done, is work that God does not take pleasure in. - Henry

### 2. True repentance bears outward fruit.

<sup>6</sup> And He *began* telling this parable: “A man had a fig tree which had been planted in his vineyard; and he came **looking for fruit** on it and did not find any. <sup>7</sup> And he said to the vineyard-keeper, ‘Behold, for three years I have come **looking for fruit** on this fig tree without finding

any. Cut it down! Why does it even use up the ground?’<sup>8</sup> And he answered and said to him, ‘Let it alone, sir, for this year too, until I dig around it and put in fertilizer;’<sup>9</sup> and **if it bears fruit** next year, *fine*; but if not, cut it down.’” – Luke 13:6-9

- Point of the parable – repent now – don’t delay; A fig tree in a grape yard (vineyard)? Why? (fertile soil) Not unusual – would be given the best care (Hendriksen)
- Fig trees bear fruit annually and grow to be 15 to 25 feet in height (Bock)
- Fig trees take a long time to bear fruit. The fruit of the fig tree is not easily seen from a distance but is often hid under the leaves. By its strong roots it was drawing moisture and other minerals needed by other plants. - Hendriksen
- Three years = time of Jesus’ ministry? Well-established tree/failure to bear for three years is ominous/unlikely to bear again - Morris
- A cut tree is a common image for judgment (Bock)
- ‘Brings out the need for repentance and God’s slowness to punish (mercy) – but that opportunity doesn’t last forever’; ‘the fact that evil is not punished here and now does not mean that God approves of what sinners are doing; it means that to the end God is merciful’ – Morris
- ‘The vinedresser was visibly disturbed when he heard these words. It would appear that this fig tree had become an object of his special interest. And now the owner had ordered him to cut it down! Everything within him rebelled at the thought. He therefore begged for permission to dig around the tree, thereby loosening the soil so that both the sun and the clouds could perform their separate tasks more effectively with respect to this tree. Also, he wanted to enrich the soil by spreading manure around the tree. The man became emotional, as appears from the words, ‘Then if it bears fruit afterward ...’ At this point there was, as it were, a lump in his throat, so that he could not even finish the sentence. Finally, a few additional words issued from his lips: ‘but if not, you may cut it down.’ (Luke 20:16; 21:20-24) – Hendriksen

### **3. Repentance is a turning to God - from sin - for mercy, happiness and obedience.**

- **Turn to God** (Acts 11:18; Acts 17:30; Romans 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9; Luke 1:16; Luke 1:17; Acts 9:35; Acts 11:21; Acts 15:19; 2 Corinthians 3:16)
- **Turn (from self-righteousness and sin) to God for Mercy** (Mark 1:4; Mark 1:15; Luke 5:32; Luke 10:13; Luke 15:7; Luke 17:3; Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38; Acts 3:19; Acts 5:31; Acts 19:4; Acts 20:21; 2 Timothy 2:25; Hebrews 6:1; Isaiah 45:22; Acts 26:18)
- **Turn (from idolatry and self-gratification) to God for Help and Happiness** (Matthew 3:2; Matthew 4:17; Revelation 9:20; Acts 14:15; 1 Thessalonians 1:9)
- **Turn (from self-determination) to God for Obedience** (Matthew 3:8; Luke 3:8; Acts 8:22; Acts 26:20; 2 Corinthians 7:9; 2 Corinthians 12:21; Revelation 2:5; Revelation 2:21; Revelation 3:3; Revelation 9:21; Revelation 16:11; Acts 3:26)