



The Gospel According to Luke

Wk. 67 “A Supernatural Lesson from a Natural Disaster”

By Pastor Jody May

Luke 13:1-5 ESV

Repent or Perish

13 There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. ²And he answered them, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? ³No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. ⁴Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? ⁵No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”

Background information:

13 There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

Jesus has just spent time among a huge group of people explaining how the Kingdom works under His authority. ***He summarized that sermon with, don't be a 'hypocrite' like the Pharisees, don't just play at religion, don't just pick some rules you like and claim that is the way to God. The way to God is through me, settle with who I am to you, before your day of judgment.***

Right after this Jesus is interrupted for a third time (12:13 “Teacher tell my brother to share”, 12:41 Peter – “is this about us?”) and as usual Jesus uses the interruption as a teaching moment. **BTW that is the best way to do discipleship with someone if you can keep the frustration or anger out of your mouth.** It seems that they are trying to connect what Jesus is teaching about the Kingdom with what happened to these Galileans.



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This story about the Galileans is not found in the other Gospels so what we have to do here is piece this story together, we use conjecture, on the impact of this big news event, so that we understand the intent behind this statement.

First, we know Pilate was real, served as Roman Governor from 26-36 AD, he had a nasty habit for roughing up the local population, as in he was not kind towards the Jewish Leadership. Pilate was in charge of Judea at the time but spent most the year in Caesarea, a Gentile town, on the Mediterranean coast. He would come into Jerusalem only a couple of times a year during the major holidays, one being Passover.

Galilea was governed by Herod Antipas, same guy that had JB killed, and the Galileans were somewhat looked at differently than the Jews in the south. Not like Samaritans mind you, but they were lowlanders, they were a little rowdy. The southerners were Highlanders, more loyal to Rome, because they wanted to keep Jerusalem in tack.

We put this altogether and we have Pilate, confronted with some rebels, while he’s in Jerusalem, most likely for Passover. Instead of turning these guys over to temple guards, or letting Herod deal with it, he intervenes. Just to let you know, by His reputation for being spiteful, he is most likely doing this on purpose. It seems that the Galileans ended up where the sacrifices were being offered during Passover. Perhaps they were there to offer sacrifices for their sins or perhaps they were in hiding from Pilate, that part we don’t know.

Pilate though, does this tremendously sacrilegious thing and sends Gentile/pagan soldiers up to the altar and has the Galileans killed, mixing their blood with the blood of the sacrifices. He (Star Trek fans you will like this) disobeys his Prime directive, **don’t mess with the religion of your conquered people**, and defiles the altar, which is why the murder of these Galileans made the headlines.

Our Dilemma:

It seems that these guys made a statement to Jesus based on a belief they already had. That these Galileans, did not make peace with God, on the way to Passover,



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and they were murdered before their sins could be atoned for. This great calamity not only had an effect on them, but it seriously put a damper on Passover that year for all Jews. Which shows that the sins of your people will have an effect on you as well. **Belief: Calamity happens BECAUSE it is a direct judgment for sin of the individual.**

Jews believed this because it was a part of **their history**, Korah led a rebellion against Moses and was consumed by fire along with 249 accomplices. Dathan and Abiram, connected to the golden calf incident, were swallowed up by the ground along with their families. Achan, took spoil from Jericho and caused 36 soldiers to die in the next battle getting him and all his family stoned to death. So, it has been recorded in scripture that sometimes, calamity happens as a direct consequence for someone’s sin and it affects others.

Now, here’s what this means though. The dudes in our story, it seemed like, they wanted to tie in the notion **that if you live a life with no calamity, then rest assured you are ok with God**. The **PROBLEM** with that, is it still **goes around the NECESSITY** of going **through Jesus** to get to God the Father. **This belief TOTALY goes against what Jesus has been saying in chapter 12! DILEMMA** Is it:

**Justified by your FAITH ALONE in CHRIST or are you
Justified by JUSTICE ALONE in your WORKS?**

1. The Question that Jesus raises?

² “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way?”

⁴ Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem?”

Jesus compares another story of calamity, that they would know, it would be their front-page news. In v.4 there is this tower that collapsed that was part of a retaining wall next to a public pool, spring, in the city of Jerusalem. Jesus had been there when he healed a blind man in John 9. This wall collapsed and killed



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18 people, that was the equivalent to the trade center tower calamity in that day. This was a horrible event and Jesus compares these two tragedies by His questioning. The fact that He questions these guys means there’s a **problem** with the **way** they are **thinking**.

Jesus challenges faulty theology:

Before we get to His answer, I want you to notice that Jesus uses the example of people from Jerusalem, people who lived in view of the temple, people of good reputation, that they suffered just like those of less reputation, the Galileans. **It’s a subtle hint to say that people with supposedly better lives DID NOT FARE any better in life than those viewed as less worthy.** Suffering does not always point to evil intentions and it necessarily does not point to God’s disciplining hand. **Both groups of people suffered and died by natural consequence of a fallen world.**

Maybe, you are shaking your head in agreement w/me this morning, but I also want to ask you a question I had to ask myself.

- Did we look at Haiti in 2010, in light of their devastating earthquakes, between 220k – 3000k deaths, that many injured, and Billions in damages and say it was a rightful judgment?
- Did we look at the Tsunamis in Indonesia in 2004 causing 200k deaths and say it was because of their wickedness?
- Did we jump on the bandwagon after 9/11 and say this too was because of America’s wickedness?

Why do we need to see the world this way? (What needs to be repented of)

And here’s the question I need to ask, did we do it because it made us **feel better** about our **righteousness** because we were not caught up in that **judgment?** **Do we secretly breathe a sigh of relief when disaster hits someone and not us because it gives us some false sense of hope and security?** Because, that may show that we may think that God is **judging us now**, on the **basis**, of how we are **living our lives**.

Let’s zoom back in and see how Jesus answers His own questions:



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2. The Answer that He gives.

³ “**No**, I tell you”, and ⁵ “**No**, I tell you”

Where do we find the answer in scripture? Even though there are some places in scripture that support immediate consequences for sinful behavior it is the exception not the usual circumstances.

God made sure before Moses ever wrote the Torah, that the **1st - story of Job**, would spell out for us that calamity happens not because of your personal sin, but because we live in a fallen world. That means nature is at war with us because of the fall, the devil roams around like a lion, and there is evil that men do, and when calamity hits it effects large groups of people that seem innocent.

Ecclesiastes 9, most believe it to have been written by Wise King Solomon puts it this way:

² **It is the same for all**, since the **same event happens** to the **righteous** and the **wicked**, to the good and the evil, to the clean and the unclean, to him who sacrifices and him who does not sacrifice. As the good one is, so is the sinner, and he who swears is as he who shuns an oath. ³ This is an evil in all that is done under the sun, that the **same event happens to all**.

Jesus is giving short and brief answer of ‘**NO**’ based on what He finds in the OT.

And if you are listening this morning, if you take in the Truth of what Jesus is alluding to, **Calamity/Suffering is the same for everyone**, then you are ready for what must happen next.

³ ... but unless you **repent**, you will all likewise **perish**.

⁵ ... but unless you **repent**, you will all likewise **perish**.”

What type of Repentance is this?



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Metanoeo - me-tä-no-e'-ō: The word used here for repent; to change one's mind for the better. Jesus is warning these dudes, along with the crowd, it is time to change your thinking on this, and here's why. Unless you do, you will all likewise perish. **What is He saying**, is God is going to drop a tower on you too unless you fix your faulty thinking? NO, because that goes exactly against what He was just saying.

GOSPEL:

It alludes to though, that unless you change your thinking about how the kingdom works, what he's been laying down in chapter 12, that a Jewish person's (or a church's person) standing with God is not based in heritage, family, where you were born, how good your parents were, or even **how much good you have done lately and how many bad things you have avoided.**

If you want to live by JUSTICE ALONE in your WORKS, then you too will perish (to eternally put away – hell). Let me explain it this way: If you live thinking that you are **justified, which is shown by escaping calamity**, whether caused by men or by nature, then you **live** believing God **judges** you according to your **earthly works.**

2 Corinthians 5:17 & 21 ESV

¹⁷ "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come... ²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the **righteousness** of God."

You become righteous, **JUSTIFIED**, through someone that knew no sin, He lived for you and me, **with the intent**, to be **judged** by God. He was **judged** for our sin and **paid it**, and He was **judged** for His **righteousness** and the **Father paid Him**, and gave Him **resurrection**, which Jesus **freely gives to us** now! That those that choose to **REPENT** to believe in Him instead of believing in themselves will have eternal life.



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If you and I will struggle through this, repent as Jesus counsels, we will come to a realization like King Nebuchadnezzar did when he was delivered from his personal calamity.

Daniel 4:34-35 ESV

³⁴ At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever,

for his dominion is an everlasting dominion,

and his kingdom endures from generation to generation;

³⁵ all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing,

and he does according to his will among the host of heaven

and among the inhabitants of the earth;

and none can stay his hand

or say to him, “What have you done?”

Nebuchadnezzar realized that His deliverance was not because of His works, that his mind returning was a gift, that his ability to see the truth and believe in God is called **MERCY**.

You want to know why an earthquake hasn't swallowed you up yet, want to know why your plans kept you out of the towers on 9/11, or why you weren't in a public place during a mass shooting, want to know why you are here this morning and not in a car wreck, **MERCY**. The warning from Neb. Is, you **can't treat the gift of Mercy frivolously, BECAUSE** it is given to you one more day to work out your **REPENTANCE**. You aren't dead yet because of the kindness of our Lord, and that's it. Amen...

3. The Application we are called to.... Repent.



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[Which leads us according to Louis Berkhof¹ the full repentance shown by the volition of the will.]

Without getting too technical, this repentance of the mind/thoughts, as Jesus was describing, has to be worked out and practiced because it leads to the other elements of repentance such as changed emotions and a new desire to live for Christ.

Family, here’s where I want to challenge you this morning and want to encourage all of us to keep practicing our repentance, to work out our Sanctification, so that you may have peace of mind in this world, whether Calamity hits or not.

- **Challenge our assumptions about why bad things happen.**
 - Catch what you’re thinking when you see bad things happen to others.
 - Catch to see if you are jealous when good things happen to others.
 - Catch to see if you rejoice when bad things befall another person.

- **Exercise your Repentance by being thankful to God for Mercy.**
 - Start your prayers off with not what you are desperate about but what you’re are thankful for.
 - If you can’t find something to be thankful for then ask God’s forgiveness and for His help in that.

- **Help someone else see God’s Mercy in their lives.**
 - Share with someone that is feeling down on how hope was brought to you by God’s Mercy.
 - Share with your family what you are thankful for and make it a habit to do more of that **rather than complain** over what you don’t have.

¹ Louis Berkhoff, “The Doctrine of Soteriology,” *Systematic Theology*, (Edinburgh, Scotland: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2000), 486.



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PRAY

COMMUNION

BENEDICTION

Go in the name of the Father that mercifully allows us to live another day to experience the work of Salvation in our lives.

Go in the name of the Son, that brings us to true Repentance through contemplation and deliberation on His life, death, and resurrection.

Go in the name and the power of the HS, that makes the works of the Son real to us and causes us to share the Mercies of God with others.