

Luke's Gospel: Son of Man, Seeker of Men.

"How to Find Beauty in a Broken World"

Part 1

Today's Question: Do we live in a just world or an unjust world?

Luke 13:1-9 (NKJV); Repent or Perish

13 There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. ² And Jesus answered and said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all *other* Galileans, because they suffered such things? ³ I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. ⁴ Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all *other* men who dwelt in Jerusalem? ⁵ I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish."

The Parable of the Barren Fig Tree

⁶ He also spoke this parable: "A certain *man* had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. ⁷ Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, 'Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?' ⁸ But he answered and said to him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize *it*. ⁹ And if it bears fruit, *well*. But if not, after that you can cut it down.' "

How to find Beauty in a Broken World:

1. Realize that we live in an _____ world in the _____ (v. 1-5).

- Have you ever heard of the **just world hypothesis**?
- What is a better understanding of our world? **A Just God theology:** Even though we live in a fallen world presently, we serve a just God who will one day right all wrongs and bring about justice to all who are oppressed.

- Jesus gives us two historical events that illustrate we live in a fallen world and can't expect a just world in the present age.

Illustration #1-The Galileans who were martyred by Pilate (v. 1-2).

Scripture Insight: *Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices.* Pilate was known for his brutality and had massacred people in Jerusalem on other occasions (Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.60 - 62). Crowds were heavy and sometimes out of control at festivals and both Pilate and Galileans were present then. *sacrifices.* People brought lambs for sacrifice at Passover.¹

Illustration #2-The 18 killed by the Fall of the Tower of Siloam (v. 4).

2. **Embrace the grace to _____ from who you _____ to who God wants you to _____** (v. 3, 5).

- The secret to finding beauty in an unjust world is this: True change starts with changing yourself!

→ **Repentance is a change of mind with a corresponding change of action.** It's a change of thought with a change of life. Feeling sorry is **not** repentance. Asking God for forgiveness without making any changes is not repentance. *Repentance is turning from my world of brokenness (sin) to God's world of beauty (sanctification).*

- The parable's paradox: It wasn't because the people were worse sinners than the others that they died, but if you don't repent of your sins, a worse death will occur-eternal death. So repent while there is still time!
- It is easy to look down and around at others without taking a close look within at yourself!
- The only way to avert lasting harm to oneself is through trusting in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Receiving eternal life is the only way to ensure one's wellbeing in the future.

3. **Don't _____ up on people too _____** (v. 6-9).

- Jesus gives us a parable about a "no give up" gardener!
- The fig tree is a symbol for the nation of Israel in the Bible.

¹ Quote from NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible.

Scripture Insight: three years. Fig trees sometimes took four or five years to yield fruit. *Cut it down!* The cutting probably also implies uprooting, commonly done to allow other plants (here perhaps more vines) to grow.²

- Notice the actions of the gardener:
 - He was p_____ -he asked for more time.
 - He was d_____ -he dug around the fig tree.
 - He was s_____ -He fertilized the fig tree
 - He was r_____ -He was willing to move on if the project was fruitless.

4. **Don't take God's _____ for _____** (v. 9).

- There is a warning in this parable: If the fig tree does not bear fruit...after extra time (one more year), after extra effort (digging around and fertilizing the fig tree), then the tree was to be cut down.

2 Peter 3:9; The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

- Don't take God's mercy for granted because we are not promised tomorrow.

Christ Connection: Jesus is the Vine and we are the branches. If we are in Jesus, we will bring forth fruit. If we are not in Jesus, we will eventually wither.

Today's Big Idea (A short summary): If you want to bring beauty out of brokenness, start with changing yourself! Repentance is changing your mind that leads to changing your lifestyle.

Action Steps:

1. Practice **repentance** in your daily life. Turning from sin and turning towards Jesus.
2. Practice **patience** with others. Don't give up too easily on those God has placed in your life.

² Quote from NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible.