

“Personal Disaster doesn’t equal Personal Sin!”

1. **Intro:**

- 1.1. **Outline:** Is there **Justice** in this world? - Are you concerned with **Human Needs**?

2. **IS THERE JUSTICE IN THIS WORLD???** (1-9)

- 2.1. **Read** 1-5 then add contemporary examples:

2.1.1. “Do you suppose that those **Amish girls** in that little schoolhouse were worse sinners than all *other Pennsylvanians*, because they suffered such things?”

2.1.2. “Or those **2,749** on whom the **twin towers** in **Manhattan** fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all *other men* who dwelt in **New York**?”

2.1.2.1. **God’s judgment upon them?** Some said yes!

2.1.2.2. What did Jesus say?

2.2. **THE GALILEAN SLAUGHTER!** (1-3)

2.3. The reference is to a massacre in the temple, typical of Pilate’s brutality.

2.3.1. This happened early in Pilate’s administration, & before Jesus began His ministry.

2.3.2. These Galileans were followers of *Judas of Galilee* an insurgent leader (**Acts 5:37**) [he tried to free his country from the Romans]

2.3.3. The historian **Josephus** tells us after Judas’ death his followers came to Jerusalem to the feast thinking the whole incident would be forgotten by the Roman officials. **Pilate** seems to have been informed of their presence in the city & so he had them captured & executed.

2.3.4. “**Their blood mingled w/their sacrifices**” meant they were slain on the same day as the animals which they brought to the feast.

2.4. The self-righteousness of reporters of the incident at the Temple assumed the Galileans **got what they deserved!**

2.4.1. But Jesus shows, **“Personal Disaster doesn’t equal Personal Sin!”**

2.5. I’m sure they were trying to entice Jesus to **denounce Pilate**, instead He turned their verbal gun around, pointing it back at them with a pregnant parable.

2.6. **A TUMBLING TOWER!** (4,5)

2.7. The collapse of the Tower of Siloam killed 18 residents of Jerusalem.

2.7.1. **Explain** the Towers around the walls of Jerusalem.

2.7.1.1. **3 Types:** **Stand alone**(vineyard & along highways); a **defense tower** as part of city walls; large hollow structure to make up **city gate**.

- 2.8. Many assumed the **construction accident** at the tower was a **divine judgment** on workers willing to be paid with divine money. (Shepherds Notes)
- 2.8.1. Jesus pointed out that in both cases **the victims** of these tragedies were not especially evil!
- 2.9. **Q:** How should we respond during a tragedy/crisis? [*Listen, Love, Lead*]
- 2.9.1. [1] **Listen Attentively!** (1st be God's ears before you're His mouth)
- 2.9.2. [2] **Love Unconditionally!** (any race, creed, religion)
- 2.9.3. [3] **Lead Sensitively!** (to the **One** who cares for them the most)
- 2.10. **DIGGING & FERTILIZING!** (6-9)
This parable complements the above teaching.
- 2.12. **Vineyards** were not devoted exclusively to **vines**. **Fruit-trees** of various kinds were planted within their limits. This was done when a **winemaker** desired a subtle addition of **another flavor**, such as **apple**, or in this case, **fig**, in the wine. It was common knowledge that wine carried within its bouquet and taste, a hint, or subtle bouquet, of its neighboring plants and those plants that made use of the soil prior to the vine.¹
- 2.13. The owner had **every right** to expect fruit after 3 years.
- 2.13.1. In this case I don't believe he is speaking to **believers** bearing the **Fruit of the Spirit** but to **unbelievers** who should bear fruit worthy of **repentance** (e.g. Mt.3:8 repentant fruit? i.e. humility, brokenness)
- 2.13.2. He ordered it cut down, not only because it was **useless** but also because it **exhausted the soil**.
- 2.13.3. The vinedresser **interceded** to give the tree 1 last opportunity.
- 2.13.4. A **visible change** must be seen in the life of one who claims to trust Messiah. If there is **no** visible change that person, like the **figless fig tree**, is judged.²
- 2.14. The parable's point...although God is patient & forbearing, **continued refusal to repent** spells **certain doom**!
- 2.14.1. No issue is **more urgent** than the need to **repent**; the alternative is **inevitable judgment**!
- 2.15. The real question isn't "Why do people die in tragic & seemingly meaningless ways?" but "Why does God keep me alive?"
- 2.15.1. Instead of asking, "**Why did others die?**" we should ask, "**Is it worth it to God for me to be alive?**"
- 2.15.2. **Am I really worth it? Am I bearing fruit, or just taking up space?**
- 2.15.3. **Q:** Why should The Keeper of the vineyard plead for **it** 1 more year?
- 2.15.4. **Q:** Why did He plead for **you & I** the year before we were saved?
- 2.15.5. **Maybe this morning** he is pleading with the Father **for you**?

¹Freeman, J. M., & Chadwick, H. J. (1998). *Manners & customs of the Bible*.

² Walvoord; The Bible Knowledge Commentary.

- 2.15.5.1. "Father, let *him/her* have 1 more **sickness**; 1 more conviction on the **conscience**, 1 more **failure**, 1 more **breakdown**. Maybe then they will **yield**, their **heart softened**?"
- 2.15.6. Oh & remember in the parable, the **gardener** only **asks** to have the tree spared, but **Jesus pleads**. And not only with His **mouth** but with his pierced **hands & feet, & side!**
- 2.15.6.1. **And those pleas have moved the heart of God, & you are still spared!** [Spurgeon]
- 2.16. **Dig & fertilize** – I learned a wonderful fable this week.
- 2.16.1. A bird froze in flight & went thud to the ground. A cow came along & dumped (what cows dump) right on the bird. This warmed & then thawed the bird out. The bird started to whistle & a cat heard him dug him out of the dung...& promptly ate him.
- 2.16.1.1. [1] Not everyone that **dumps on you** is your **enemy**!
- 2.16.1.2. [2] Not everyone that **digs you out** of manure is your **friend**.
- 2.16.2. **Maybe this is your year?** Do you feel Gods shovel digging up things in your life & bringing them to the surface? - Temperature heating up these days? - Does your life stink? [repeat 1 & 2; & share #3]
- 2.16.2.1. [3] **While in manure, keep your mouth shut!**
- 2.17. "If **yesterday** is a canceled check, & **tomorrow** is a promissory note, then **today** is the only cash you have, *invest it wisely!*"
- 2.17.1. Repent while there is opportunity!
- 3. ARE YOU CONCERNED WITH HUMAN NEEDS???** (10-17)
- 3.1. **A WOMAN GLORIFIES CHRIST!** (10-13)
- 3.2. (10) She was in the **place of worship** at the right time.
- 3.2.1. If anyone had an excuse to be absent, it was her.
- 3.2.1.1. Yet often the most **infirm** are the most **regular**.
- 3.2.1.2. Satan bound her for 18 years but she wasn't going to miss worship! ☺ [show that to your kids/husband next time]
- 3.2.2. **Q:** What would she have missed if she wasn't there that day?
- 3.2.3. Some have called this "**morbus sabbaticus**" or **Sunday sickness**.
- 3.2.3.1. It attacks at certain hours on Sunday, but recovery is rapid. Symptoms vary, but patient can always sleep well night before & can always eat hearty Sunday dinner or brunch shortly after acute attack! It is generally called "**indisposition**"...indisposed toward church! [but not this woman!]
- 3.3. **A spirit of infirmity** – literally a spirit which had caused infirmity(disease).
- 3.3.1. Indicating **supernatural power** behind physical trouble.
- 3.3.1.1. It isn't always this way.

- 3.4. For 18 years she had been unable to walk erectly.
- 3.4.1. Erectness of human form is a unique characteristic! No animal completely so
 - 3.4.2. Greek word for **man** = “*upward looking*”.
 - 3.4.3. Interesting, some have **bent bodies** but **right souls**; & others have **perfect bodies** but **bent souls**!
- 3.5. Jesus **saw her, called her, said to her, & touched her**.
- 3.5.1. Jesus is in the middle of teaching. Women are on the other side of the room. Yet, he is drawn to this poor women’s need.
 - 3.5.2. **What a sharp eye!** [What do you have a sharp eye for?]
 - 3.5.2.1. Some have a **sharp eye** for **building defects**(walls off square, out of code); Some keen observer of **nature, wildlife**; Some like artists have a keen awareness for **color, shadowing, perspective**; A doctor has the knack for noticing eyes, skin coloration, a spot that wasn’t there before; A detective observes peoples behavior
 - 3.5.3. May we develop **Christ’s keen eye** to **see suffering**!
 - 3.5.3.1. **Sympathetic resonance!** {cords of sympathy, vibrate in our hearts}
- 3.6. (13) **Immediately** – this word indicates **immediateness & permanence**.
- 3.6.1. Our Savior now can affect **immediate, permanent cure** for spiritual ills of long standing!³ ☺
- 3.7. Christ still **sees; still is ready, willing, & able; still hears; still calls; still gives** - for sins **guilt**(Pardon), for sins **bondage**(Power), for sins **defilement**(Purity).
- 3.8. **THE RULERS CRITICIZE CHRIST!** (14-17)
- 3.9. This action frothed the ruler of the synagogue.
- 3.9.1. **Indignation** rather than **reflection**!
 - 3.9.2. Again proving the old adage, “*Little pots soon boil!*”
 - 3.9.3. He said **there are 6 days for work, come & be healed on those days!**
 - 3.9.4. Q: If she came back Monday could the ruler have healed her?
 - 3.9.5. Make up your mind, you **want** to see a miracle or you **don’t**?
 - 3.9.6. Q: How many needy people come to church looking for **love & help**, & go away **disappointed**?
- 3.10. (11) **Bent over** – Medical word for curvature of the spine(RWP).
- 3.11. (12) **Loosed** – (LKGNT) the perfect indicates “*you have been freed & are in the state of freedom.*”
- 3.11.1. **“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.”** (Gal.5:1)
 - 3.11.1.1. See Gal.5:1 & 13(*how not to use our freedom*)
 - 3.11.2. Yet so often we still find ourselves still **enslaved** by our jobs, the clock, our debt.
 - 3.11.3. **“If the son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”** (Jn.8:36)

³ Griffith Thomas; pg.225

- 3.11.4. “**You will know the truth, & the truth will set you free.**” (Jn.8:32)
- 3.11.5. “Whatever else Jesus came to do, 1 thing is clear - He came to set us **free!**” (Erwin McManus; Uprising, pg.11)
- 3.11.6. God has been **misrepresented** as a **divine legalist, eternal killjoy.**
One who spends His eternity making **designer straightjackets** & molding **shackles** just for you!⁴
- 3.11.6.1. But God isn’t a **warden** but a **deliverer!**

- 3.12. (15) Jesus labeled his response **hypocrisy**: “*Outward show*”.
 - 3.12.1. This man was so caught up in the **forms and traditions** that he lost sight of **people!**
 - 3.12.2. The ruler of the synagogue was a hypocrite because he treated **animals** better than he treated **people**.
 - 3.12.2.1. He would think nothing of untying his ox on the Sabbath and leading it to drink.⁵
 - 3.12.3. He would rather **hundred people** suffered than **one rule** be broken!
 - 3.12.4. He so **shackled** the people with **rules & regulations** that they were all **bowed down with burdens**, just like this woman!
 - 3.12.5. So he continues to perfect the art of being an **echo** rather than a **voice!**

- 3.13. (16) **Satan has bound** – As in Job’s case he was limited.
- 3.14. **He might bend her toward the grave, but he could not bend her into it.**⁶

- 3.15. (17) It will be no different in the end: Some will be **put to shame**, & others will **rejoice** for all the glorious things He has done!

⁴ Erwin McManus; Uprising, pg.11

⁵ Richards, L., & Richards, L. O. (1987). *The teacher's commentary*. Includes index. (683). Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books.

⁶ Spurgeon At His Best; #1835