Luke13:1-17

“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 he 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 hallow structure to make up city gate.
Many assumed the construction accident at the tower was a divine judgment on workers willing to be paid with divine money. ([Shepherds Notes]

Jesus pointed out that in both cases the victims of these tragedies were not especially evil!

Q: How should we respond during a tragedy/crisis? [Listen, Love, Lead]

1. Listen Attentively! (1st be God’s ears before you’re His mouth)
2. Love Unconditionally! (any race, creed, religion)
3. Lead Sensitively! (to the One who cares for them the most)

This parable complements the above teaching.

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

The owner had every right to expect fruit after 3 years.

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)

He ordered it cut down, not only because it was useless but also because it exhausted the soil.

The vinedresser interceded to give the tree 1 last opportunity.

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

The parable’s point…although God is patient & forbearing, continued refusal to repent spells certain doom!

No issue is more urgent than the need to repent; the alternative is inevitable judgment!

The real question isn’t “Why do people die in tragic & seemingly meaningless ways?” but “Why does God keep me alive?”

Instead of asking, “Why did others die?” we should ask, “Is it worth it to God for me to be alive?”

Am I really worth it? Am I bearing fruit, or just taking up space?

Q: Why should The Keeper of the vineyard plead for it 1 more year?

Q: Why did He plead for you & I the year before we were saved?

Maybe this morning he is pleading with the Father for you?

²Walvoord; 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 dig 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!”

3. ARE YOU CONCERNED WITH HUMAN NEEDS???

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 infirmed 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! I 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 woman’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!

3.7. 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
⁶Spurgeon At His Best; #1835