

“PAIN IS GOD’S MEGAPHONE TO GET OUR ATTENTION” – C. S. LEWIS

Luke 13:1-5

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

How to prepare for and respond to tragedy

1) Look to Jesus who is not shaken by tragedy in a broken world – Luke 13:1-5

- Moral evil: Pontius Pilate... – 13:1-3

“Half the harm in this world is due to people who want to feel important” – T. S. Eliot

- Natural evil: Collapse of a tower – 13:4

2) Jesus leads us away from misguided responses – 13:2-5

- Direct correlation between sin and punishment (the most prevalent view in Jesus’ day).

- Job – “*The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away*” – Job 1:21

“*They comforted and consoled him over all the trouble the LORD had brought upon him*” – Job 42:11

- The man born blind – John 9:2

- Paul bitten by a viper – Acts 28:3-4

Counterexamples

- Sodom & Gomorrah – Genesis 18-19

- Great Tribulation – Revelation 9:20a-21 *“The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands...²¹ nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.”*

- Jesus corrects this idea: you’re all guilty – 13:3 *No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.*

“Such a proposition seems so foreign because the modern mind no longer believes in sin.” – C. S. Lewis

3) Tragedy should point us to repentance – 13:3, 5

“God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks to us in our conscience, but shouts in our pain: It is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world” – C. S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*

- Tragedy is a reminder of God’s mercy and a prompt to share the Gospel.

The Parable of the Barren Fig Tree

And he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. ⁷ And he said to the vinedresser, ‘Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?’ ⁸ And he answered him, ‘Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. ⁹ Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.”

- Tragedy should cause us not to wonder why certain people died but rather, why the rest of us are still alive.
- When loved ones & friends die “early” we should thank God for the time that we had with them, rather than grow bitter over the time we feel was stolen from us.
 - The man who was born blind – John 9:3 *It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him.*
 - Job 42:10 *The Lord restored the fortunes of Job when he prayed for his friends, and The Lord increased all Job had twofold.*

“God may place you in the furnace in order to be a blessing to someone else” – Junior Hill

Q: Why doesn’t God just destroy evil?

A: “Why does God not destroy us when we do wicked things?” – Robinson Crusoe