

**Message #67****Luke 13:1-9**

Not long ago, I saw a politician holding a rally in which he was speaking out against guns. This specific politician said we need to get rid of guns. By the way, tonight's exposition in I Samuel features a godless political group known as the Philistines, who seek to take the weapons away from God's people. As the camera moved off him a bit, you could see he had bodyguards who I am certain had guns. In his mind it was okay for people protecting him to have guns, but it was not okay for people to protect themselves. Do you know what the Bible calls that person? The Bible calls a person like that a Pharisaical hypocrite.

I watched an interview with a family that owns a home near the southern border in the United States. They were asked whether or not they thought we needed a wall to protect them and they said yes. The reason why they were interviewing this person is because a politician was down there saying we don't need a wall. Now the irony of that is this specific politician lives in a gated community that not only has a secure wall around it, but armed guards inside to protect it. Do you know what the Bible calls that person? The Bible calls a person like that a Pharisaical hypocrite.

**The most dangerous area of all to be a Pharisaical hypocrite is not in the arena of guns or walls; it is in the arena of spirituality.** There are those who are very quick to judge others, but they are not willing to judge themselves. There are those who love to heap on their rules and traditions and laws and codes, but behind the scenes they are phony Pharisees.

I knew of a minister who had been saved out of a rugged past. He was invited to speak at a church and the guy running the sound said to him, so they are going to let you into this church to speak? My pastor friend knew the reputation of the man running the sound in the church. The sound man is known for having cheated on his wife multiple times. He is the one who should not be running the sound system. That is a Pharisaical hypocrite.

**There is nothing that Jesus Christ hates more than self-righteous hypocrisy.** It is a deadly and damning sin. There is nothing wrong with calling sin, sin. There is nothing wrong with confronting sin, but if one is not willing to deal with sin in one's own life, there is something drastically wrong. **Jesus Christ hates Phariseeism.** He detests one who makes judgments about others, but is not willing to judge himself.

Keep in mind that at this point Jesus has started verbally blasting the crowds (12:54). They had been following along with Jesus Christ physically but quite frankly they had rejected Him spiritually. Jesus just told them that they could read weather signs, but they could not see the signs of who He was, the God/Savior/Messiah/King. So Jesus warned them that they had better settle their own account before they get before Him.

Now instead of the people saying, you know He is right, they were judging themselves to be better than others that they really thought were bad sinners. That is what hypocrites do. They judge others but not themselves so what Jesus says here is this:

**SELF-RIGHTEOUS HYPOCRITES WHO JUDGE OTHERS BUT DO NOT CONTINUALLY JUDGE THEIR OWN SIN WILL ULTIMATELY SUFFER THE SEVERE JUDGMENT OF GOD.**

There is no question that judgments are to be made concerning various things. There are times that judgments are to be made in the church (i.e. I Cor. 5). But one making the judgments had better make certain that he has carefully judged his own life because if he doesn't, God will!

In this text of Scripture, Jesus gives two reasons why a self-righteous hypocrite who is judging others will face the severe judgment of God.

**REASON #1 – Because the self-righteous hypocrite refuses to repent. 13:1-3**

A self-righteous person loves to chip in his two cents about the sins of others, but he does not want to deal with sin in his own life. A hypocrite does not want to face himself. To make this point, Christ uses two illustrations:

**Illustration #1 - The illustration of the executed Galileans. 13:1-3**

Here is a brutal account of something that Pilate did that was absolutely evil. This event happened during the days of Jesus Christ and some of the people who had firsthand knowledge reported it to Jesus Christ.

The Apostle John informs us that every year the Galileans went to Jerusalem to participate in the Jewish festivals (John 4:45). Alfred Edersheim explains how the Jewish leaders viewed these Galileans: "There was a general contempt in Rabbinic circles for all that was Galilean. ...The people of Galilee were especially blamed for neglecting the study of their language, charged with errors in grammar, and especially with absurd *mispronunciations*, sometimes leading to ridiculous mistakes. 'Galilean-Fool!' was so common an expression, that a learned lady turned with it upon so great a man as R. Jose, the Galilean, because he had used two needless words in asking her the road to Lydda" (*The Life and Times of Jesus The Messiah*, pp. 225-226).

The Jews thought very lightly of the Galileans. What happened to some Galileans was atrocious. Apparently there were several Galileans in Jerusalem for the sacrificial ceremonies. Pilate, the governor of Judea (Luke 3:1), who had been appointed by Rome, went into one of his tirades and executed several Galileans and mixed their blood with the animals that were being sacrificed.

**Verse 2** makes it clear that the hatred and prejudice was so great against the Galileans that the Jews considered them to be terrible sinners far worse than others and the proof was they had suffered this horrible death. In their way of thinking, they got what was coming to them. They were horrible, evil sinners far worse than the average Galilean because they were there in Jerusalem and trying to worship God.

People right with God want sinners to come worship God. They want people to get right with God, but not this crowd. Not once do they mention the fact that Pilate was an evil man who did evil. Instead of them putting the blame where it belongs, on Pilate, they blame the Galileans.

I want to bring out something here that I think is significant. Jesus was alive when this happened and could have stopped this. But this is critical to see and understand. He did not stop this evil sin or any other evil sin. Why? **Because the first time He came, He did not come to destroy sinners; He came to save sinners. The next time He comes, He will stamp out all evil and all sin.**

In **verse 3**, Jesus gives three very pointed messages to the Jews that refute their theology and expose their hypocrisy:

**(Message #1) - The Galileans were not executed for their sin. 13:3a**

The word “no” means these Galileans did not suffer this fate because they were terrible sinners. They suffered because of evil Jewish hatred and an egotistical evil politician.

**(Message #2) - The Jews are the ones who need to repent. 13:3b**

That word “repent” used here and also in **verse 5** means to change your thinking. In this context it means to change thinking about one’s own sin and evil. The present tense of the verb indicates that Jesus Christ is telling these people that they need to continually change their own thinking about their own sin.

**(Message #3) - The Jews who do not repent will likewise perish. 13:3c**

The words “likewise perish,” which also shows up again in **verse 5**, is a word that refers to losing life in a similar manner. Jesus is warning the Jews if you don’t change your mind about yourself and your sin, you too will suffer physical execution at the hand of the Romans like Pilate.

It is no coincidence that in A.D. 70, Titus and his Roman military moved in and literally leveled Jerusalem and physically killed over one million Jews. Their blood was not only mingled with the animal sacrifices, their blood was mingled in the destruction of the entire city.

Self-righteousness is a dangerous evil sin. Pharisaical hypocrisy will bring a ferocious judgment of God. It always has and always will.

**Illustration #2 - The illustration of the accident in Siloam. 13:4-5**

The tower of Siloam was a tower located inside the southeast portion of Jerusalem’s wall. More than likely this is the same tower referred to by Nehemiah, who lived about 450 years before Christ (Neh. 3:15, 26).

There was a projecting tower that was near what was called “the Water Gate” (Neh. 3:26). Probably due to age and neglect, that tower collapsed and 18 people were known to have been killed.

Now the Pharisaical Jews gave their own interpretation to the event. They viewed this as a judgment of God and immediately thought that this tower fell on those 18 because they were the worst sinners in Jerusalem. They believed that the falling tower was a judgment of God on the 18 worst sinners. Jesus again gives three messages to the people:

**(Message #1)** - The eighteen were not killed for that reason. **13:5a**

**(Message #2)** - You are the ones who need to repent. **13:5b**

**(Message #3)** - Those who don't repent will likewise perish. **13:5c**

Again in A.D. 70, some of these same people would suffer far worse than a tower accident. They would be slaughtered right in their home.

From these two illustrations we want to make some observations:

- 1) Jesus Christ did not stop these catastrophes because that was not His purpose.
- 2) Pharisaical hypocrites view catastrophes against someone else as a judgment of God for sin.
- 3) Pharisaical hypocrites are not right with God and do not know the mind of God.
- 4) Pharisaical hypocrites need to repent of their own sin.
- 5) Pharisaical hypocrites are heading to their own severe judgment.
- 6) Catastrophes should cause all of us to analyze ourselves and our relationship with God.

Back in 2005, a pretty young 18-year-old girl from Alabama went to Aruba in the Caribbean for spring break. She never came home. She was brutalized and killed. I was in a waiting room years later and overheard a conversation about it between two people. The essence of the conversation was this: The girl should have never been there. She was probably drunk and flaunting herself and that's what happens. She got what she deserved.

Now I will agree that spring break is not an environment for godliness. I would agree that it was not a place where a young girl should be. But do you think that what happened to her was because she was worse than other girls or guys? Do you think she deserved that? Do you think the sin of an 18-year-old girl is worse than the adultery of a man at church running the sound system?

The Jews thinking was these bad things happened because these people are the worst sinners of all. Jesus says, no way. You have your own sin problem.

**REASON #2** – Because a self-righteous hypocrite does not ever produce good fruit. **13:6-9**

A self-righteous hypocrite is a barren person who will not ever produce good fruit. Self-righteous hypocrites don't really accomplish anything for God. They make no real impact, no real difference and they bear no real fruit. Their life and existence is a total waste.

Keep in mind this person pretends to be right with God and pretends to be interested in judging sin. They are a sham show. They are not right with God and they will not ever produce righteous fruit.

Now to make this point, Jesus tells a "parable." The word parable means to compare or place beside. Christ takes an earthly illustration and uses it to compare it to a heavenly and spiritual truth. A good definition of a parable is "an earthly story designed to communicate a heavenly truth."

Now when we interpret a parable, we must make certain that we don't make it say what it doesn't say. We must interpret the parable in light of the context.

Based on the context, we may assume the following:

- 1) The "Certain man" (**13:6a**) is God the Father.
- 2) The "fig tree" (**13:6b**) is Israel.
- 3) His vineyard (**13:6c**) is the entire Gentile world.
- 4) His vineyard keeper (**13:7**) is Jesus Christ.

Based on this, here is what Jesus is saying:

God put the nation Israel into this world to bear fruit. Jesus Christ came to this world and for nearly three years He traveled through Israel looking for any form of pure fruit and He found none. For nearly three years He looked for some sign of true righteousness and He did not find any. He found religious pretenders and play actors.

God the Father was fed up with the nation and wanted to cut her down, but Jesus Christ interceded for Israel and asked for just a little more time before He would send destruction. Christ wanted to do everything He could to get this nation on the right track, but if she didn't respond, God would unleash His judgment.

Christ went to the cross and raised from the dead and He gave special powers to His apostles to demonstrate His truth. Israel still would not respond. So in A.D. 70, severe judgment came and the fig tree was left barren (Matt. 21:19) and Israel's house was left desolate (Matt. 23:38).

There are some powerful lessons to glean from this text:

- 1) God's people are to have a real righteousness that does bear fruit (i.e. John 15:1-8).
- 2) Self-righteous hypocrites do not ever bear fruit.

- 3) Self-righteous hypocrites need to repent.
- 4) God graciously gives sinners, including hypocrites, time to repent.
- 5) God will send severe judgment to those who refuse to repent.

God wants every individual to face his/her own sin so they may be right with God. Do not ever try to make other sinners worse sinners than you are. Deal with your own sin or you will perish. That is what Jesus taught this crowd here.