

Sermon Text: Luke 13:1-9 Repentance and Its Fruit

Christ warns those who reject Him and His way that they are headed for destruction unless they repent.

How can we live lives of repentance from dead works to serve the living God?

1) When observing calamities, replace self-righteous theological speculation with sober religious introspection (13:1-5).

- a) Observing calamities:
 - i) Jesus received a report about an incident in Jerusalem and then He brought up a similar incident in Jerusalem that illustrated the zeitgeist of revolution in Judea in that generation.
 - ii) We see such calamities all the time.
 - iii) How do we respond when we see such things befall other people?
- b) Self-righteous theological speculation:
 - i) Theological speculation: curiously prying into the providence of God when God has not spoken; pronouncing on the secret purposes of God and the hidden motives of peoples' hearts
 - ii) Self-righteous: detached observation of "those people" and "their problems," not as one who shares in the human condition in need of redemption; usually attributing their suffering to a sinful disposition that we do not have or that is not exposed in our lives
 - iii) People in Jesus' audience may have supposed that those Galileans and those inhabitants of Jerusalem only got what was coming to them.
- c) Sober religious introspection:
 - i) Religious introspection: examining our relationship with God
 - ii) Sober: the suffering of others reminds us that we are part of a fallen humanity
 - iii) The judgment that would come upon Jerusalem in AD 70 by the hand of the Roman general Titus, with the destruction of the temple and of the city, was a judgment from God.
 - iv) Both Jesus and the Apostles further teach us that every calamity that comes in this fallen world is a reminder that there is a final judgment coming.
 - v) Therefore, we should be sobered by the evils that we observe in the lives of others. We should use them as occasions to examine our own lives.
 - vi) Jesus warns that if we do not repent of the ways of the world, then it will end badly for us, as it did for the Jews who did not listen to Jesus and perished in the resistance movement against the Romans.

2) In response to Jesus, replace barren lip-service with fruitful repentance (13:6-9).

- a) Response to Jesus:
 - i) No one can avoid the claims of Jesus. He will not be ignored. He comes to inspect our lives.
 - ii) Jesus came, as the Covenant Lord of Israel, to inspect their lives for the evidence of faith.
 - iii) Israel was not producing the righteousness of the Kingdom of God.
- b) Barren lip-service: They kept up the outward rituals of worship.
 - i) Lip-service religion is sterile and barren. It is selfish.
 - ii) The consequence of lip-service to God is severe. "Cut it down" (13:7).

- c) Fruitful repentance:
 - i) The Lord provides many external inducements to repentance (13:8; cf. Rom. 2:4).
 - ii) What is called for is fruit, evidence of a heart trusting in God and loving God.
 - iii) Israel did not repent.
 - iv) What is the fruit of repentance?
 - (1) Trusting in Christ for the forgiveness of sins that saves us from the wrath of God's judgment. Not trying to expiate our sins by our own effort or through other religious exercises.
 - (2) Loving God
 - (a) Doing what He commands.
 - (b) Acknowledging Christ before men.
 - (3) Loving our neighbors, even our enemies.
 - (a) Generosity (12:33)
 - (b) Hospitality
 - (c) Practicing justice (12:57)
 - v) Are you bearing the fruit of repentance or heading for destruction (2 Peter 3:11-13)?

Doxology: Blessed be the God and Father of our LORD Jesus Christ! According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."—1 Peter 1:3-5