

God's Patience with Us – July 6, 2022

We question why bad things happen. Covid. 9-11. Columbine. Sandy Hook.

Marjorie Stoneman Douglas. Pulse night club. Uvalde, Tx. Highland Park
Some think “bad people get what’s coming to them; Got what he deserved”
That was at the heart of a conversation with Jesus – **Luke 13**.

Jesus knows our thoughts. They don’t say it, but – terrible people, terrible end?
“worse sinners?” – Jesus says no! No degree of sin. All sinners.

Q: What’s our theology on sin and tragedy?

How do we respond to people about such events?

Jesus uses it to focus on a bigger issue – their eternal souls.

“Unless you repent, you too will all perish.”

What does Jesus mean by **perish**?

Perish defined as: suffer death, typically in a violent, sudden, or untimely way.
But Jesus is talking about more than a physical death; b/c Jesus implies that *if we repent, we will not perish*. **Perish is more than physical death**.

B/c Jesus connects death w/ sin, and says it can be escaped if we repent;
He means final judgment... something beyond death.

Perish is the opposite of eternal life.

John 3:16 – “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him **shall not perish but have eternal life.**”

John 10:27-28. Jesus says, " My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow Me. **I give them eternal life, and they will never perish.**"

- Those Galileans were taken off guard & experienced a horrible end.
- They didn’t anticipate the end being so bad.
- Jesus is saying – if we don’t repent, we too will be surprised. We don’t know what’s in store in eternity; Hell is more horrible than we think it is.

What does Jesus mean by **repent**? Look at 2 teachings of Jesus from Luke:

1 - Luke 11:32 – “The men of Nineveh will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they **repented** at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.”

Jonah 3:5, 8: “The Ninevites believed God. A fast was proclaimed, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth.... The king made a proclamation: ... “Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them **give up their evil ways** and their violence.”

2 - (Luke 16:19-31, Rich Man & Lazarus) – v. 30-31 – The rich man asked to send Lazarus to his family to warn them; said: “if someone from the dead goes to them, they will **repent**.” Answer No. “If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not **be convinced** even if someone rises from the dead.”

Repent is more than just having regret or remorse.

It's more than a changed mind ... it's a Changed life.

Repenting is really part of faith – believing in God & His word. It's believing that living to please God will bring more joy than the Devil's empty promises.

It's **being convinced** that how we live now matters... for eternity.

It's turning to God and living a life that says thank you for dying for me.

The Parable of the Barren Fig Tree – Luke 13:6-9

This story shows the patience of God with us.

“leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it.”

God gives us opportunity after opportunity to change our ways.

- We believe in God, but do we live it out? **For You in 2022.**
- Are we lights that shine for Him? Do we produce fruit?
- Do we live to please Him, or ourselves?
- Do we live different than non-believers?

This conversation with Jesus is both a warning, and a reason for joy.

We have only so much time. Don't know how long we have on Earth...

but God loves us, is patient w/ us. **He is fertilizing us.** Nurturing.

He doesn't want to quit or give up. Gardener with hope.

2 Peter 3:9 - “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”

Sometimes our lives are short because we've served our purpose.

Some lives are extended because they have not yet done theirs.

Song of the week – “Back to God” – Reba McEntire