

Lent 3 March 7

Luke 13:1–9

Sermon Title: Sin is a sin, Repent

There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

And he answered them, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise

perish. Jesus was answering the crowd that there are no different degrees

of sinner and the way someone dies does not indicate it anyway. All have sinned and need to repent. Suffering and destruction in this world is due to

sin in the world but not that anyone is a worse sinner. Pat Robertson

claimed the individuals who went through the hurricane in New Orleans and

the victims of the earthquake in Haiti were worse sinners than others and

they deserve it. Our Lord points to an event that many Jews knew of and

they were thinking the same thing, “Wow those Galileans were worse

sinner because look at what happened to them.” Jesus says, “No they

were not worse sinner. You are missing the point, you are a sinner also.

Unless you repent you will perish, also.” So Repent and believe in Jesus

Christ, PAUSE..... in Him you find forgiveness of sins and eternal life. This is the GOOD NEWS for the unbelieving world, the world dying in sin and for **you**. All who are unbelieving and unrepentant are doomed to destruction. The first step in the process of repenting and believing is that God's Word convicts you to repent and believe because of the "fear of God." When the Word of God with the Holy Spirit drives the law to the very bottom of your soul and fear is generated by the law. The fear is 'that I am a sinner who deserves God's wrath and eternal punishment.' In midst of that fear, "Grace-faith" takes root in you and causes you to repent of your sins and turn to Jesus for the forgiveness of sins, and trust in Him that He died for your sins and rose on the third day to assure you forgiveness and eternal life. PAUSE

Now for us, the believers, Luther states in Thesis 1 of His "95 Theses," *Our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, when He said Repent in Matt 4:17, willed that the whole life of believers should be repentance.* For you, the believer in Christ, repentance should be part of your life daily. Not being repentant, you may fall into a sin, when you think you are more righteousness because you have believed for "a very long time." Or, you have become too comfortable in what you are doing and that you do not

fervently ask Jesus to forgive a sin in your life that needs to be addressed. Luther reminds you that your life is one of constant repentance. Remember you were a sinner, saved by Christ. Your worth is in Christ, not in your works. You are saved because of Christ. A repentant life of a believer should generate in your life a continual appreciation toward God because you remember your previous state of ugly, darkness, dead in your sin before you were made alive in Christ. A repentant life, God is able to prune off sins easier from your life that hinder your grow in Christ or producing fruits that God has willed for your life. A repentant life allows one's life to show forth God's fruits rather than getting in the way of God.

The fig tree is good example of bearing fruit in Christ. The digging around the tree and adding manure is the process of exposing sin by the Law. It is painful and many avoid this process because it is too painful. As soon as the law convicts you, the Gospel is there in its sweetness and with its healing salve. The Gospel is applied to exposed sins and so fruit may be produced by the power of the Gospel. Faith is produced and or strengthened by hearing of the Gospel. The faith you are given will cause you to reach out to God and will not let go of God but clings to God's promises. This is faith that clings to the promises of God, when all that you

have are the promises of God. Like the centurion who said to Jesus, “Only say the word, and my servant will be healed” (Matthew 8:8). Faith trusts that the word of Jesus is sufficient. This is the repentant life of a believer, to continue each day by drowning the “Old Adam” in the baptismal waters each day. As the devil comes tempting you that you have failed to be “right with God,” you cling to the promise of God in your baptism that you are a child of God. Living the repentant life means to struggle with the sinful flesh that is with you, and when you fail you confess and your faith clings to Christ’s promises of forgiveness and salvation. Faith is the fruit and the fruits of faith are what God the Father is looking for on the tree.

The faith of Jesus is at the heart of your faith and is your faith. Christ trusts for you. He prays for you. He cries out for you. He suffers for you. He dies for you. He embraces you so that we will never be forsaken in your time of need; you will never be alone in the hour of your death; you will not be abandoned in the Day of Judgment. Jesus is there, joined to you and you to Him in baptismal faith. He is with you, always, promising never to leave or forsake you. The fruits that God the Father is looking for in you are really Christ’s fruits given to you by His Works and His fulfilling the Law for you.

God has accepted Jesus' death on the cross as full payment for your sins, and He vindicates you in Jesus. "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1). You are reconciled to God in Jesus. You are justified in Jesus. You are safe in Jesus. And you are never barren of God-pleasing fruits in Jesus.

And may the peace of God, which is beyond all human comprehension, keep your hearts and minds through your faith in Christ Jesus. Amen