

NEXT STEP: STUDY & SHARE

READINGS

Ezekiel 33:7-11

Psalm 63:1-8

O God, eagerly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you. (v1)

1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Luke 13:1-9

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Eternal God, your kingdom has broken into our troubled world through the life, death, & resurrection of your Son. Help us to hear your word & obey it, & bring your saving love to fruition in our lives, through Jesus Christ, our Savior & Lord, who lives & reigns with you & the Holy Spirit, one God, now & forever. Amen.

SERMON TEXT- Luke 13:1-9

¹At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. ²[Jesus] asked them, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans?” ³No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. ⁴Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? ⁵No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.” ⁶Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; & he came looking for fruit on it & found none. ⁷So he said to the gardener, ‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, & still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?’ ⁸He replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it & put manure on it. ⁹If it bears fruit next year, well & good; but if not, you can cut it down.’”

LISTENING TO . . .

GOD- *Christian life is rooted in the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit*

1. Fig trees (*Ficus carica*) generally don't require soil amendment, or irrigation, or even pollinators. What makes this parable such an effective illustration of God as “gracious & merciful, slow to anger, & abounding in steadfast love” (*Joel 2:13*)? See *Ezekiel 33:7-11* (really, the whole chapter); *2 Peter 3:9*
2. God certainly expects good fruit (works) in the lives his believers. Lutheran doctrine teaches this clearly, too. See *Luke 3:8-9, 6:43-44, 8:14-15; Romans 7:4-5; 2 Corinthians 8:8-15; Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 5:9-11; Colossians 1:6-10; James 3:17; 2 Peter 1:3-9; Formula of Concord- Solid Declaration IV:8-14; FC available bookofconcord.org* Does A) God need them from us or B) do we need to offer them to him? Does God accept them A) because we're good people or B) for Jesus' sake? Are we supplying something A) God lacks or B) something our neighbors & the world around us lack? Support your answers with biblical & doctrinal evidence. Use your Lutheran Study Bible by Concordia Publishing House.

EACH OTHER- *Sharing & growing with our brothers & sisters in Christ*

3. Jesus point in vv3, 5 is that without repentance, all will perish (*cf. John 3:13-17*); he's not commenting on the particular guilt of the deceased (*cf. Job 42:7; John 9:2, 3*). How can your suffering lead others to repentance? See *Titus 2:7-8; 1 Peter 2:12-24, 3:8-18; Hebrews 13:18*
4. St. Augustine compared the manure to the sinner's sorrows & repentance. What are some areas in your life where your repentance is still raw, perhaps even fearful? How can they give you the compassion to help others facing similar life circumstances? Be specific.

NEIGHBORS- *Bearing fruit for those not yet our brothers & sisters*

5. Consider Jesus' corrective about the connection between suffering & immortality. When have you received better (or worse) than you deserved, especially in the big picture? How does that recalibrate your attitude toward your neighbors?
6. In the midst of tragedy, how might one's good works (or works of mercy) serve- not exploit!- the victims while showing & telling of something greater (*cf. #2*)? Come up with specific examples from your community or neighborhood. What stops you from doing such for your neighbors?

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First Sunday in Lent
Series: Repent!

03.06.22
Rev. Jared Stillions, STS

No Pleasure in Your Destruction

God isn't out to get us; well, maybe to get us to turn around

-Notes-

KEY VERSE: He replied, 'Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it & put manure on it. (v8)

-NEXT STEPS MEMORY VERSE-

Jesus began to proclaim, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near. (*Matthew 4:17*)

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