Luke 13:1-9

Introduction

In this passage Jesus is confronted with a dilemma which persists to this very day; how does suffering come about? The connection between sin and misfortune is not clear cut. In some places in Scripture there is no cause (sin) and effect (resulting discipline); Job had not committed sins for which he was being punished. In the Gospel of John, chapter 9, Jesus is very clear that there was no sin which precipitated the man's blindness. Yet in other passages, Jesus tells a man to "stop sinning or something worse may happen to you" (John 5:14). This passage addresses these issues.

Scripture

Luke 13:1-9 Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. 2 Jesus answered, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? 3 I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. 4 Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? 5 I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish."

6 Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. 7 So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'For three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?'

8 "'Sir,' the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. 9 If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.'"

Closer Look

1. Jesus uses two examples to illustrate that not all misfortune is the result of God punishing sin; what problem in people is He seeking to address?

2. How does Jesus use this encounter to refocus the discussion on each of us rather than on problems of others?

3. How do people today fall into the same thinking error as the people of Jesus' day? Give examples.

4. What is a parable? What are some unique features we must keep in mind when seeking to interpret parables?

5. What is the point of Jesus' parable to His listeners in the passage?

6. How does this parable have application for us today?

<u>Scripture for the day:</u>
Monday – Matthew 5:13-16
Tuesday – Hebrews 2:14-18
Wednesday – Hebrews 5:8
Thursday – 1 Peter 2:18-22
Friday – James 2:14-19