



Brown Community Group Discussion Guide

BEHOLD: To Know Him Is to Love Him

Repentance & Patience – Luke 13:1-9 January 30, 2022

I. An Appetizer:

This was not the easiest passage to present with a cohesive message. It seems to focus on two separate principles – a strong exhortation with a sense of urgency from Jesus to **repent** and a parable that shows a characteristic of Jesus that speaks of **patience** in the context of our need for grace. So, I will attempt to bring both ideas forth as we examine this mostly “**red letter**” passage.

This “BEHOLD” series is intended to help us to see Jesus as He really is with the expected result being a deeper love produced within us as we come to know Him more deeply.

Ponder these things to get us started:

- What is the connection, if any, between our sinfulness and what happens to us in life?
- When have you been called upon to be patient – particularly in regard to someone else’s behavior that affected you negatively?
- When have you needed patience as well as grace from the Lord?
- Did the Lord use a human being to show you His patience?
- How is your heart impacted by the Lord’s patience?
- What are you motivated to do as a result of that impact?

II. Discussion of Scripture:

Context: As we saw last week in Luke 9, Jesus has “set his face to go to Jerusalem” (Luke 9:51), and in this we saw the *peace* of Jesus. In today’s passage, His journey to Jerusalem continues. He describes His mission clearly in Luke 9:22, saying, **“The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.”** The saving work He is about to accomplish is toward those who repent and believe. In today’s passage, He issues a three-fold warning, repeated for emphasis: judgment is coming, so repent. In these warnings, and because we haven’t already perished, we see His *patience* toward us!

Luke 13:1-5 - Repent or Perish (ESV)

13 There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. ² And he answered them, **“Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? ³ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. ⁴ Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed**

them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? ⁵ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”

Context: If you are like me, you don't want to be distracted from Jesus' emphasis by the specific events that are referenced. So, I'm going to briefly share what those events likely were, thus leaving you free to focus on the exhortation Jesus brings in this passage. Verses 1-4 reference two tragic events – one the people present with Jesus mention – the murder of certain Galileans at the hand of Pontius Pilate. The other tragedy is one Jesus refers to when he responds to them - a tower in Siloam falling that crushed and killed eighteen people. This passage in Luke is the only account of either of these events.

The Jewish historian Josephus records an incident that many believe to be the murder of these Galileans. In order to construct an aqueduct to bring water into Jerusalem, Pilate used money from the temple treasury in Jerusalem. When he visited the city, large crowds clamored against his act. Pilate then sent disguised soldiers to mingle among the multitude who commenced a surprise attack, killing many of them, likely in the temple area leading to the reference of blood mingled with sacrifices. (taken from Antiquities of the Jews, Book XVIII).

The tower that fell in Siloam, mentioned by Jesus, I found this explanation from an online source called, "Got Questions."

The fall of the tower of Siloam is not mentioned in other historical records, and, since the Bible gives no more detail of the structure's collapse, we cannot be sure what the tower was for or why it fell. The tragedy was obviously well-known to Jesus' hearers. Siloam was an area just outside the walls of Jerusalem on the southeast side of the city. A spring-fed [pool](#) was there, which was the scene of one of Christ's miracles ([John 9](#)). The tower of Siloam may have been part of an aqueduct system or a construction project that Pilate had begun. In any case, the tower fell, and eighteen people were killed in the catastrophe.

Discussion: So, let's get to the meat of this passage. **Why would Jesus ask this audience if the murdered Galileans were worse sinners than the rest of the Galileans (v.2), or if those who perished under the tower were worse sinners than the rest of those in Jerusalem (v.4)**

Tragedies bring about a heightened awareness of the fragility and uncertainty of life on planet Earth, especially when we don't see them coming. We don't have to watch the news for very long before another such example is revealed. Surely there were Pharisees and others in earshot of Jesus who would have put their trust in material possessions, power and position, and political influence. Jesus wanted to debunk such prideful self-reliance. He was bringing these people (and readers today) to see that what is supposedly secure and dependable can burn up in a second. He also was going to the heart of the matter and the heart of the listener, telling them that repentance and obedience and full dependency on our Heavenly Father through faith in His Son Jesus is the only way to salvation.

- **What is the connection, if any, between our sinfulness and what happens to us in life?**

It is also clear that Jesus is teaching them to not equate tragedy with divine punishment. That's not to say there aren't times when consequences of one's action lead to negative outcomes. But He is showing that a heart turned toward the Lord in humility and faith is the needed response whenever we sin. It was a

common view then, and today, that you get what you deserve. Jesus denies this view, saying that you can't tell how sinful someone is by the amount of suffering they experience.

- **Who does this passage say will perish?** (see verses 3,5, and 9 above)
- **What does the Bible say produces or brings about repentance?** (see 1 Cor. 7:10 and Rom. 2:4)
- **What should an unbeliever's response be to Jesus' warnings?** (Repent and turn to the Lord)
- **How should a believer respond to them?** (Abide and remain in tune with God. Examine the fruit of your life)
- **What are some attributes and manifestations of true repentance and seeking after God – a true indication of a right relationship with God?**

There are many ways to approach this question, but I would offer the following as worthy of inclusion: peace that passes understanding, freedom in the Spirit to live apart from peer pressure, enticements, and enslavements, and a fruit-bearing life that includes the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22).

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

⁶And he told this parable: **“A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. ⁷And he said to the vinedresser, ‘Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?’ ⁸And he answered him, ‘Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. ⁹Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.”**

If we look at this from a believer's perspective, it is wise to see ourselves as perennial works in progress. Walking by faith is a constant journey and we don't fully arrive until Jesus returns or we are taken to be with Him in Heaven. Considering the unbeliever, the sense of urgency Jesus was emphasizing by referencing the fragility of life on earth is crucial to avoid forfeiting the gift of eternal life.

- **How is Jesus shown to be patient in this passage?** (Judgment is coming for everyone but as long as we have breath, He has shown His patience to give us the opportunity for life.)

¹²But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,”

- **How has Jesus been patient with you?**

The heart of the Father, revealed most fully through the Son, however, is that no one should perish. Thus, we can see that heart reflected in the parable of the fig tree above. A key for us as believers is that a good God might want to use us at any point in time and any place on earth to be His hands and feet – His “boots on the ground,” showing His love and kindness as well as His warning and encouragement to unbelievers to turn to Him to receive eternal life. We are sent.

III. Responding in Prayer

- A.W. Tozer said, “Has it ever occurred to you that one hundred pianos all tuned to the same fork are automatically tuned to each other? They are of one accord by being tuned, not to each other, but to another standard to which each one must individually bow.” Pray for our church family, our leaders, our staff, and our elders, as we continue to navigate changing waters together! Pray for us as we seek to all be in tune to God, and therefore, to each other.
- Pray for the many difficult medical situations around our church body. Pray for restoration of health.
- Pray for the gospel of His glorious, *patient* grace to be at the center of all we do.