November 1, 2026 - Luke 13:1-9 - "This Year Also"

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 01 November 2026

Preacher: Carman Arroyo

[0:00] Please turn with me to the Gospel of Luke, chapter 13. Luke, chapter 13, beginning in verse 1.

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. Or those eighteen on whom the Tower of Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem?
No, I tell you, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. And he told this parable, A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none.
And 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?
[1:10] And he answered him, Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. Then, if it should bear fruit next year, well and good.

But if not, you can cut it down. And this is God's word. Thanks be to God indeed. Good morning, church. Good morning again. Good morning.
For those of you that don't know and missed the welcome today, my name is Carmen, and I'm one of the pastors here, and it is an honor and a privilege to be up here again to bring you God's word this Sunday morning.
And so, we're finally getting back into Luke. It's been quite a year since we've been in Luke, and we just finished up Habakkuk, and we'd left off in Luke over a year ago.
And a lot can happen in a year, can't it? Yep. And so, I want us to go ahead and try to reorient ourselves to kind of get an understanding of where we are in chapter 13.
[2:18] So, let's go ahead and go back to the beginning of Luke, where it says, In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.

No? All right. You guys are awake. Good. All right. Let's go. That's not the beginning of Luke. Let's actually go back to the beginning of Luke. And we'll see in chapters 1 and the beginning chapters, we start to see the foretelling of John the Baptist's birth, the foretelling of Jesus' birth.
And then you see a glimpse into Jesus' boyhood, and then you see him start to go out and start his ministry. He starts seeing other people, baptizing them, getting baptized and healing the sick and touching the unclean and doing all these things, all the way up to chapter 9, when he faces, sets his face towards Jerusalem.
And there, that's where he starts his walk towards the cross. And it's this time in between that chapter 9 where he set his face to Jerusalem, to the cross where he starts encountering more people, and the warnings get more urgent.
And we'll see that as we go through all these things in chapter Luke, that he starts to talk about his death, sending out the 72, the cost of following him.
[3:54] He starts talking about Martha and Mary, the light inside of you. He talks about the Pharisees and the lawyers. Woe to you, you Pharisees, you hypocrites.

And we get to chapter 12, which sets the scene of today's text. We see that Christ is surrounded by thousands of people.
We see him after he's already called and rebuked the Pharisees and the lawyers. But here in chapter 12, he starts to talk about having no fear.
Do not fear man. To acknowledge Christ before other men. We see here that he talks about us to not be anxious, to not worry.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

And we see that you also must be ready. You must be ready because a time is coming. A time is at hand. And that he has not come to bring peace, but division.
[5:00] Mother against daughter, father against son. And then he goes on. And he rebukes them again and warns them, saying that you can interpret the time and the seasons.

You can know when the crops are going to fade. When the seasons are going to fade. But you can't see the time is coming. The time at hand.
In which you will be called before judgment. So settle with your accuser before you go to see the judge. Settle because the time is coming and you will not know when it will come.
And it is here that Luke sets this scene in chapter 13. And at that time, at that very moment, he says, there were some present at that very time.
And we see this crowd coming in. We may have seen them. They may have seen Jesus. And they may not have known what he was doing. But they make this claim.
[6:01] And this claim, we see that there's an underlying assumption with it. There's an underlying question with it.

This coming from a season where we just spent weeks going through Habakkuk. And we know that there are terrible things that we see.
There are things that we see all over this world. Tragedies. And it all surrounds a question. Why? Why do these things happen?
Why is there evil in the world? Why is it that some families are able to have children and others aren't? Why is it that some people are able to live a long, old life and some are cut short?
Why is it that some homes are able to stay together while others are being split apart? Why? Why? Why? Why? Why? And we see that taking these questions and this lament and this fear and this anger and this anxiousness is something good that we can do.
[7:20] This is done in Habakkuk. And it's righteous for us to do so. But this question, this claim that's presented to Jesus isn't just why.

Because underneath it, there's a much more dangerous question, an assumption. The assumption being, what did they do to deserve this?
Were they worse than the rest of us? And so, today we'll be looking at that claim.
Today we'll be looking at that underlying question as to what did they do to deserve this? And so, but I want us to see what Christ does. And I want us to recognize what we're seeing ourselves.
Is that every time we pay attention to someone else and what they're going through, the tragedies all over the world that directs our attention away from the most important thing.
[8:29] It gives us an opportunity to hide. What about you? When you see all of these things, what are you doing with the time that Christ has given you?

And so, today I'll be breaking up this passage into three sections. And in the title, I've named this sermon this year also.
We'll be looking at first the claim. And then we'll look at the rebuttal. And then we'll look at Christ's closing statements. And leaving today, I want you to know and walk away with this.
That tragedy summons you. Repent when there's still time. Before we dive in, let us go ahead and pray.
Father, you're gracious, you're merciful, you're long-suffering.
[9:39] Just as we sang this morning, just as we pour out our hearts to you, just as we've finished Habakkuk and we've brought our lament and our anger and our fear, Father, we come to you again and we are honored and thankful for your word, for your son.

Father, I pray that today the words that are spoken are not only edifying to everyone here, but glorifying to you that point to your son and the peace and the mercy that is found within him.
Father, we thank you. We lift all this up in your son's holy name. Amen. Amen.
So, let's go ahead and begin and see where we just left off. Closing chapter 12. Thousands around Jesus.
And start of chapter 13. I want us to look at this and picture it. Can you see it? The crowds. It may have just been some people that were walking by and saw like this congregation of people surrounding this man.
[10:50] They were like, ooh, what's going on? They might have been walking home from work or whatever and then they saw this and they stopped. Others might have went there to try to stump him.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

They've heard of this famous new rabbi, this famous new teacher. What's this guy all about? He can't truly know the law as good as I can. They might have went with their own agendas.
There are things that are happening in the news, in their communities. They want to know what this Jesus has to talk about this. What he has to say about this. And so we see here in verse 1, they present this claim which reads, there was some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.
We read that and we get the understanding that there was a murder, that there was people who were slaughtered, that blood was mixed in with their sacrifices.
But I want us to make sure that we are actually understanding how in-depth and how horrendous it actually was. So let us go back and look and see that this news that was able to stir up the people and they were able to present it to Christ was something that was not only a defilement to others, but also a defilement against their holy God.
[12:22] These people who were coming together, they were normal worshipers. Some scholars suggest it must have been during Passover when other commoner non-priests were able to go into the temple to provide or to give a sacrifice to the Lord.

Now remember, the sacrifice isn't something that they just had lying around their house. It had to be the best. It had to be the first. It had to be no blemish. And it had to be something that was given to the Lord in a way that followed all the laws that we see in the Old Testament.
And we see here that this wasn't just a murder. It was a desecration to other Jews and to their holy God.
And thinking about this more, could this ever happen now? It does.
We see the news today. We see Christians being slaughtered in their house of worship all over the world. We see it in Syria, Nigeria, Pakistan.
[13:42] We see it all over. And some of you might be thinking like, well, no, that's over there. That's another part of the world. That's not here. That couldn't happen here in the United States.

It has. Let's go back to May 1866. Memphis, Tennessee. It was the Memphis Massacre riots where the government, the police officers, joined white mobs to terrorize and go around the city, lynching and burning down school buildings, houses in every single black church.
This is all in response because in the South, the black congregation wasn't able to meet unless there was a white supervision there.
The anger, the frustration, the scars still are evident in today's society. That's the kind of issue this was for the Jews.
Are you guys uncomfortable yet? Good. Because now you're starting to see the anger, the frustration, the call for justice, the demands, and then the underlying question still rattles in their brains.
[15:18] What did they do to deserve this? What did those Galileans do to deserve this? And we still do this today because this is a problem that has been his oldest time.

We see in Job when everything that was taken from him, his friends came to him and they were like, well, you must have done something. You must have done something to deserve this anger from God.
And we see this all the way going through into John chapter nine when we had the blind man and his parents saying, what did they, what did his, or I'm sorry, and the people around him saying, what did his parents do?
What did he do to deserve this blindness? This is still something that is evident in our society today. How often do we ask when we see tragedy?
Well, I wonder what they did. I wonder what they did to deserve that. And we get into this frenzy. We get into this mode where we have to find something that's different about them from us to make us feel better.
[16:31] We start scourging the internet. We start looking to see where were they at? Were they in the wrong side of town? Were they doing something that they weren't supposed to be doing? Were they breaking the law? Was this something that's different than me?

And then when we find it, there's a sigh of relief because they're not like us. They're not like me. I'm different.
I have to be better somehow. They don't worship like me. They don't believe the same God as I do. They don't have the same values as I do.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

What did they do to deserve this? That's what we ask.
But we see, church, we look at verse one and we look at verse two and we see that Christ didn't take the bait. Christ didn't comment on Pontius Pilate.
[17:33] He didn't comment on Rome. He didn't comment on the murders or anything like that as to why. What does he do? He turns it around on them.

Let's go to verse two. And he answered them, do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way?
A question with a question. I can't stand that. When I have a question and I ask a question and then someone goes ahead and is like, well, what do you think?
I'm like, what do you mean? I'm asking you a question. I want a response. I don't want another question. I had professors that did that and there's a particular preacher that we went and visited in D.C.
Whenever you asked him a question, he would answer with a question and made you answer your own question that he questioned about you wanting an answer to. It was annoying.
[18:40] But, don't misunderstand what I'm saying. I'm not saying that Christ is annoying. Okay? I'm not saying that. I do want you guys to see though that this question that Christ is asking exposes something a lot deeper in our hearts.

and something much deeper than this blatant face value question has. And it expresses something that we have to grapple with ourselves.
And so, again, we see this. We see this answer to a question with a question.
and then we start looking at our world today and we start to think, we start to see when we see the news articles show up, so-and-so was shot today, such-and-such was murdered, this child suffered this, this family suffered that loss, and we start to think, I wonder what they did.
I wonder what they were mixed up in. They probably had it coming. Why would they go on that part of town?
[20:14] Why would they act that certain way? They just should have followed the law. Do we see how wicked that starts to sound?

Do we see how disgusting and unloving that starts to sound? We're talking about human souls that have been lost, and we immediately start to ask, I wonder what they did to deserve that.
You see, church, we live in a fallen world ever since Adam. We live with the wickedness of man. We live with the inability to turn ourselves away from our wickedness on our own to be the righteousness and rejoin ourselves to God. And so now we are suffering the consequences of this original sin, of this wickedness in every single aspect of our lives.
And you see it displayed in broadcast all throughout the news articles, all throughout Facebook, all throughout the world, 24-7, every single day.
[21:29] The wickedness of man is real. And so what we start to do naturally is we start to sort this wickedness.

We start to sort these sins. We start to try to label these other sins as not as bad as my own. These sins are grave and grievous.
These aren't as bad as what I do. This isn't as bad as the little white lie that I said. This isn't as bad as the videos that you're watching when no one's looking.
This isn't as bad as not showing up for your family or loving your wife or submitting to your husband. this isn't as bad as me skipping church or this isn't as bad as me idolizing something else instead of idolizing the God and the creator who created all things.
That's not as bad as killing someone. That's not as bad as cheating. That's not as bad as doing X, Y, Z whatever you want to put into it.
[22:38] We sort the sins. But we have to ask, by what standard are we measuring this assortment of sins?

How are we measuring up these sins to others? Because scripture tells us, for none are known not one, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.
All of us have sinned. sinned. And the scripture also tells us, for the wages of sin is death.
Not some sin, not grievous, heinous, evil sin. All sin deserves death.
Because we can always find someone worse off than us. We can always point the finger and be like, well, I'm not like that person.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

[23:51] But let's point it back to us. You will not be able to stand before a holy God and say, I'm not as bad as that person. You are not going to be able to stand in front of him and say, this person's sins aren't as bad as mine.

You will be there in front of him by yourself having the answer for your own sins and your own falling short.
Let us continue. as we see what Christ says next in verse three. No, I tell you, but unless you repent, you will likewise perish.
Did you get that? No, they weren't worse. The Galileans weren't worse. no, you're not better.
I want us to keep this in mind for a little bit, because we'll be coming back to it, because he says it again in a few verses.
[25:17] but he presses further in Christ's rebuttal, and we see that in verse four, Christ pushes even further and says, or those 18 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?

We see here, church, now we have to remember where we are at in Luke. Again, Christ is on his way to Jerusalem. He's getting closer to Jerusalem.
Those people, that crowd brought him a story about Galilee, somewhere far off in the country, about a man-made evil, a man-made disaster, an execution.
And he turns around and he gives them an example in their own backyard, in Jerusalem itself, in Siloam, which is just south of Jerusalem.
And we see here that he also changes the kind of tragedy because what Pontius Pilate did, yes, that was human evil, but this, this is something different.
[27:03] Eighteen lives taken away by what seems to be an accident. This was a tower, stone and mortar.

There was no villain, there was no motive. And these eighteen people, they could have been working on this tower, they could have just been walking by, they could have been drawing water from the pool, and all of a sudden, a rock and a stone comes down and they're gone.
Just like that. Were they victims of chance? We've been saying this a lot.
They were just at the wrong place, at the wrong time. it was bad luck, it was a freak accident. What are the chances of that happening?
We say it all the time, especially when we see these types of disasters where we don't fully understand why it happened. Because just last week, in Spain, over sixty souls were lost when two trains collided together.
[28:28] we ask why. What are the chances of that happening? When we see on the news that a tornado rips through a house and tears house after house after house, skips one and continues, we say, what are the chances of that?

we shrug, we shrug it off like bad luck, feel bad for him.
It's just how it happens. we see this is how the world responds. But church, I want you to hear me because there is no such thing as chance in God's world.
God's love. Because we see from the scriptures that the lot is cast into the lap, but it's every decision is from the Lord.
We have an omnipotent God who knows when every sparrow falls, every hair on your head, and he knows the greatest and the least of these. He's the creator of all things.
[29:52] And even our own confession, the Baptist confession of 1689, tells us in more plain detail about God governing all creatures and things, from the greatest even to the least.

That includes towers, and that includes swords. So then immediately people start asking, well, if God allows these things to happen, and he's holy and just and all-knowing and everywhere, then why is this happening?
He must be the author of evil. No. He's not. Because each and every single one of us has our own responsibility.
We will answer for our own sins. And Pontius Pilate will answer for every single blood drop that he has shed, and so will every other murderer, every other sinner.
And so we see that we can't explain every loss. We can't explain why some people live, why some people die.
[31:14] We can't explain why some people are able to grow old, and other people get a cancer diagnosis. Or we can't explain why one person is living a healthy, normal life and all of a sudden

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

they drop dead.

We can't explain it. Christ doesn't give us the opportunity to decode any of this. He doesn't reveal it to us in his word, but he does reveal something.
he reveals how to respond. He tells us when we see these tragedies, when we see these catastrophes, that we have a holy God that is in control of everything.
We are not able to fully comprehend everything that he is, because he is infinite and we are definite and we are able to respond in how the world turns.
And so we see that nothing is the chance and even though there are catastrophes at hand, it is under the providence of a holy God and it's never meaningless because we have to realize that whether it's a sword or stone, it's not a verdict on them, it's a summons, it's a calling to you.
[33:12] Let us continue. Verse 5 where he repeats himself and says, no, I tell you, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.

He says these words, same exact words, twice. and I don't know about you, but when my Lord and Savior repeats himself, I definitely perk up and start to listen very closely.
We start comparing these two types of tragedies of man and nature, of human evil and accident, of one that happened in the countryside to the one that happened in the city, and we see that is the same answer for both.
That they were not worse and you are not better. And so the question was never what did they do to deserve it?
the question instead is why hasn't it happened to me? Because church, we all deserve the sword.
[34:49] We all deserve the stone. And the very fact that you are breathing here this morning, the very fact that you are still alive today is nothing more than a mercy.

It's time to turn. It's time to listen. And we see here that there are two words that stood out to me while I was reviewing this.
and I want us to just stop here just for a second and talk quickly about perish and likewise because we see this word you will all likewise perish.
This is something much more than just a physical death because we're all going to die because what we see is that repentance won't make you immune.
Repentance won't make you immune to that diagnosis. Won't make you immune to that accident. Faithful people suffer.
[36:19] Faithful people go through trials. Faithful people die. perish. But this word perish is something much more and it's talking about the second death.

It's talking about whether or not you will be ready to stand in front of your holy God on judgment day. Am I ready to meet him should be a question each and every single one of us asks daily.
Second word I want us to just stop real quick on is likewise because from this very moment Christ speaking to this crowd within 40 years Rome is going to surround Jerusalem.
Rome is going to fill their temples with blood. Rome is going to topple down their walls and the very people that are surrounding Christ now are going to come to an end just the way that they're reporting it to him.
Christ isn't exaggerating. So were these people worse?
[37:50] Were they worse because they didn't do something? Were they worse because they fell to the evil of man? Were they worse because they fell to an accident?

No. They weren't worse. you aren't better and we are all sinners on borrowed time.
Tragedy will summon you. Repent while there's still time. Which one would then ask how much time?
How much time do we got? thankfully Jesus gives us an answer through a parable. So we start in his closing statement.
In verse six let's read. And he told this parable. A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard and he came seeking fruit on it and found none.
[39:06] Fig trees. Who's tried to grow one? I haven't. Have you guys? Not looking at Dom. Dom has a bunch of fig trees at his house.

He killed one. Dom's like I'm never giving him anything again. Should have given that fig tree to Carmen.
But one thing I do remember though is growing up going to my uncle Frank's house and seeing everything that he had.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

He was straight off the boat Italian. I'm telling you he had the garden he had the wine press he had the wine cellar and he also had fig trees and these fig trees it took a lot it took a lot to grow them in this environment it's a little bit different here than it is in Italy and so what he would do is have these fig trees and I don't know if you remember those old school toy bins the round ones with the rope handles you guys remember he would have them in that and then they would have a specific type of soil fertilizer and then even underneath that big toy bin it would be a dolly and what he would do is he would be able to push and move this fig tree in and out of his garage every winter and spring it took a lot he would prune it look after it move it now I want us to imagine that after years and years of doing this what my uncle
Frank would do if no fig tree or no fig ever came from that tree all that devotion he didn't do it because he liked how the fig leaves look but he expected fruit so what happens to the tree very similar situation we look on to verse seven where the owner goes to the vine dresser and says 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 so this owner comes back again and again to this fig tree just for a little context [41:46] I do want us to realize that this is mentioned in the Levitical laws that for fig trees you must not reap a harvest for the first three years so what this is probably saying what some have gleaned from is that not only was this owner waiting for the initial three years but then after that when it was time for season when it was time to reap the harvest he came and for then an additional six or three years there was nothing he was patient he waited he put it in his vineyard something that's prized in that time something that's prized still today you don't put something with the best soil and the best sunlight if it wasn't important to you but that still didn't stop him from expecting fruit all this time because we have to remember church that

I'm not sure if any of you garden but if you start planting stuff and it doesn't reap or bear the fruit that it needs to our vegetables or whatever it does still cost you something it takes away nutrients from the soil away from other more healthier plants or trees or flowers it uses up the ground so when he comes and says cut it down who could argue he's been patient all this work and still no fruit and so we get to this parable and I'm not sure if you guys have ever read any of Christ's parables before but normally they don't mean exactly what they mean on the face value right Christ isn't giving us gardening tips he is however pointing us to something else so we have to ask ourselves who is this tree what is this tree tree and what we see here is that this tree has been a symbol all throughout the
Bible that God has identified his people of Israel as his vine and his fig tree he's sent them his law his covenants his prophets and now he's even sent his own son and his own son is looking for fruit but on this side of the cross that also means that tree is us we have years of care we have his complete work his complete word you go to church you know the verses you sing the songs you have been prayed for you have studied his word where's the fruit and we see that even though you do all of this you become familiar with who
God is but familiarity won't get you where you need to go it's not the same is turning to God knowing who God is isn't the same as saying him as Lord the devil knows who God is he believes that God exists what sets you apart from the devil and so when he looks at you are you bearing fruit?
what does he find? Does he see you confessing sins even though it's hard? Does he see you giving forgiveness when forgetting is a lot easier or giving forgiveness when forgetting is a lot easier? [46:32] Does he see you telling the truth when saying a lie would make a lot more people a lot more happy? does he see love that goes beyond words or does he just see leaves?

Let us continue. Verse 8 come with me. And he answered him this is the vine dresser. Sir, let it alone this year also until I dig around it and put on manure.
Then if you should bear fruit next year, well and good, but if not, cut it down. this year year we see this vine dresser talking to the owner not in disagreement.
He knows that the owner and his request is just. He's waited. He's been patient. But he does ask for more time.
he says that he is going to do the work. He is going to dig. He is going to feed the soil. All of this for a purpose.
[48:09] All of this so that the tree may bear fruit. fruit. I want us again to consider the care and the love that you've received in this very church or in other churches throughout your life.

That this word has confronted you. That people have prayed for you. A friend has come to you and said hard things.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

And this morning his word again is confronting you. It's mercy each and every single day that we're alive.
Or has that been lost on you? Or do you just learn to sit through it? This is just another Sunday. I'm just here because I have nothing else better to do. I'm just here because my family's here. This is just another sermon.
[49:27] This is just another day that someone's reading me the truth, the word of God. I put up sitting with this. I put up sitting with other people who claim to be Christians because they're my friends and they're my family.

But have you actually gone to Christ yourself? And so all of this the vine dresser wants to do for fruit.
What's this fruit that we should be bearing? Well thankfully John the Baptist in Luke 3 has told us. He says in Luke 3 bear fruits in keeping with repentance. Keeping with repentance. Now I know here at Steel Valley Church you hear that word a lot.
Repent, repent, repent. But I want us to really feel the weight of that word. What does it actually mean? Because there's a lot of times that we say that we repent because we've been caught in our sin or our sin has become too expensive.
[50:47] We clean ourselves up. We do whatever it is we need to do to make ourselves feel better. We maybe go to church that Sunday. We pray.

But we really don't change. We really don't have disgust about the sins that we commit. And some of us on the other hand only go that far.
Sometimes we'll even say that we have disgust for our sins. That we want to kill our sins daily. But disgust and hatred for your sin will not get you into heaven.
You have to turn towards something. you have to turn to the one who can forgive, to the one who can save. We need to turn to the Savior.
And so repentance in addition to that it starts becoming accountable. When we lie do we go to the person we lie to and confess And apologize.
[52:01] when we cheat do we go there and try to re rekindle that relationship?

And I want you guys to not misunderstand me either. That Christians were not perfect.
We were not going to be able to be this type of non-sinner. And anyone who does say that they are unable to sin anymore is a liar.
And so Christians continue to stumble. We will continue to sin. We will continue to be disgusted with it.
But a repentant heart never makes peace with sin and it returns to God again and again and again. It's day after day that we see this sin growing and are disgust forth and we turn to the only one that can truly cleanse us once and for all.
[53:18] That is repentance because we are this tree and a tree cannot bear fruit without life and Christ gives us that life.

So we see again in verse nine but if not you can cut it down.
We see what happens we know what that means. And if we actually look back at that very chapter in Luke 3 we started with verse 8 if we continue with verse 9 John the Baptist says even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the lake of fire or into the fire.
God's patience is real so is his judgment. And so we come at the end of the story of the end of the parable and we notice Christ doesn't give us an ending.
He doesn't tell us what happened to the tree. He doesn't tell us whether or not it bore fruit or if it was struck down. It's very peculiar because if we continue with this and you are the tree you are also living in this year also.
[55:12] It's not ended. You're not promised another year. You're not promised another moment. The time you have is now.

And that's how we should be living. And so we see this parable come to an end. But we know that that's not the whole story.
Because if we are guilty where do we go to find mercy? And if we can't give ourselves life how are we going to be able to bear this fruit?
that's needed that God is looking for. So we see all of these things and we notice and we see other groups.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

We see other people and we start to think are they worse than us? are they better? Am I any different? Am I bearing fruit?
[56:25] Is there something? Again, no. Because all sinners are on borrowed time. But there was one who is better.

there was one who is perfectly good. And I know I was being facetious this morning about starting in the gospel of John.
But I want us to turn there. Turn there with me now. John 1. It says, in the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.
He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. Christ was everything that was made, and everything was made through him.
Every star, every fig tree, every mountain, every single thing that you can think of, you, me, Pilate, all the stones, all the swords, all of it was made in him, through him, for him.
[57:45] And you know what happened? You see the biggest tragedy of them all? We have to look nowhere else besides the cross, because Christ himself is better than all of this put together.

Every single thing in the universe, every single cloud, every single bird, every single blade of grass, every single person, and he was the one who tragically died on the cross.
In human eyes, in human turns, they looked at him and saw his broken body, and he was the one who was not a sinner. He was the one who did not have to repent.
He was the one who laid down his life, and he is the one who we see now setting his face to Jerusalem.
This is the greatest injustice and tragedy in history. He was not a victim of man. Yes, he was brutally whipped.
[58:51] Yes, he was brutally nailed to a cross. Yes, he was betrayed. Yes, he was lied to. Yes, all of this happened, but no one took his life.

He laid it down, and he was also not a victim of chance. Nothing happens without God's hand, and we see in Acts 2, verse 23, this Jesus delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.
Men's wickedness, no matter how great, cannot mute God's plans, and it did not defeat God, but God was able to use that wickedness for his own glory and for our own good and rescue us because we see that Christ of Nazareth for our sake was made to be sin who knew no sin so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
The wrath that you deserved, the wrath that I deserve was befallen upon him. He didn't deserve any of it.
the one who holds the axe was the one who stepped under it. We see even in 1 Peter, he himself bore our sins and his body on the tree.
[60:36] The barren trees deserved it. But Jesus was the one that was cut down on a tree.

But he didn't just do that. He didn't just stay in the grave because God raised him up from the dead. And he forgives and gives life by his Holy Spirit so that we can grow fruit.
And so if you belong to Christ today and you are suffering, I want you to know this, that your pain doesn't prove that God has rejected you.
your suffering doesn't prove that he doesn't love you. You're no different than any other one of us because it was on this cross that he bore!
your condemnation and that empty tomb is proof that all this suffering doesn't have the ending word.
[61:46] We see a glimpse of it when he will wipe away every tear from our eye and death shall be no more.

No more swords. No more falling stones. No more graves. So yes, tragedy does summon you. Pilate's sword summons you. The stones of Siloam summon you, but the cross of Christ summons you loudest of all because he was cut down so that you can be grafted in.
He bore the wrath so you could bear fruit. He heard cut it down so you could hear well done. So come.
If you're not in Christ today, come. Don't make the mistake of his patience being permission. Christian. Don't say that I need to clean myself up a little bit before I become a Christian.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

[62:52] Don't wait until you feel like you're worthy. I want you to turn from your sin. Trust the crucified Christ Christ. Because today you're in this year also.

Tragedy summons you. Repent while there's still time. Soli Deo Gloria Solus Christus for the Christ alone.
Let us pray. Amen.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host