

STUDY NOTES

THE WAY AND THE WORDS OF JESUS A SERIES *at* NEW CITY CHURCH

www.newcityphx.com/sermons

The following content is based on the message “What do Tragedy, Repentance, and Manure Have to Do With Each Other?” on 3/4/18 at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. The following is not meant to be a full synopsis but rather a brief look at the main ideas. To use this Study Guide effectively you must listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

Leaders using these study notes for group study and reflection should read the Biblical text thoroughly before beginning, using this resource as assistance and not relying solely on this material for insight. We encourage all leaders to pray and ask the Spirit for revelation as they lead their respective community groups.

PRAYER

Pray and ask God to lead the discussion as everyone gets to share.

SCRIPTURE: LUKE 13:1-9

SUFFERING AND SIN

Some anonymous people came up to Jesus reporting a tragedy in the temple. Pilate had killed some Galileans while they were worshipping. These anonymous people believed that the Galileans deserved the suffering because of their personal sin. They started pointing fingers and pushing blame. This is how Satan wants to divide people. People start judging others because they start believing that their way is better than anyone else.

Satan wants to take something bad and make it worse.

- *How do you see Satan dividing people after personal or collective tragedies?*

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Jesus sets the record straight. He makes sure people understand that suffering doesn't necessarily come from personal sin. Yes, there are consequences to bad decisions, but Jesus is very clear here.

Not all suffering is a result of personal sin.

- *How is this truth encouraging to you personally?*
- *Why do you need to be reminded of this truth when you see others suffering?*

WAIT, WHY AM I REPENTING?

Jesus says that those who suffered were in no more debt than anyone else—meaning we are all in debt to God. In the parable, God the Father is the owner of the vineyard. He comes to his vineyard seeking fruit. He wants his trees and his garden to flourish. He wants us to flourish. Yet, he finds no fruit on his trees (which represent us). We will have nothing to pay our debt with.

God wants holiness for us, because holiness is the greatest form of flourishing.

Satan wants us to hear that we are guilty and to feel shame for it. He wants us to feel crippled and worthless.

- *What does it do to you to hear that you are in debt to God and you have no way to pay it?*
- *How is holiness the greatest form of flourishing?*

JESUS STEPS IN FOR US

Yet, Jesus steps in and says, “Wait! Look at me! Let me work in their lives!” All seems dark and gloomy, yet Jesus stands in the gap for us. Jesus paid our debt in full, so we trust him to work in our lives. That may not always be easy because he will till the soil in our life and he might spread some manure on us, but because he wants to see us flourish. He wants to see us become more like him.

- *What does it do to you when you see how Jesus steps into the gap for you the way he does?*
- *How is Jesus currently working in your life in an area where it may be hard to trust him?*
- *Pray with each other that you would trust how God works in your lives.*