

The Message No One Wants to Hear – Repent or Perish

Welcome to Redemption Church in Plano TX. My name is Chris Fluitt.

I was supposed to start a new sermon series today called “fierce love.” I felt the Lord talk to me to push it back... The Lord has something else for us today.

I am completely nervous about this message.. It has been said that the worst place to stand on an issue is in the middle. The one who stands in the middle gets it from both directions. Today I ask for grace from you all as I take a stand and deliver a message no one wants to hear.

The Message no one wants to hear

We are going to be reading in our Bibles in Luke 13 today. I would love for you to follow along with me in your Bible.

Our world is full of issues. People will insist that you take a stand on issues... People will not be happy until you take their stance on issues. This is human nature...

Covid-19 issues

- We aren't doing enough to stop it
- We are over-reacting

Politics

- Red or Blue
Pro-choice or Pro-life
Socialism or Capitalism

This year the tragic deaths of black men at the hands of white men have been caught on video. The deaths have been senseless, hateful, and posted to be seen on your Facebook newsfeed. Ahmed Arbery & George Floyd need justice. Such awful things should not happen in America and there really shouldn't be an argument about that... but there are arguments...

- Protests or riots
Back the blue vs police are the problem

We have these issues... and then we have factions of people surrounding the issues and they are all pointing at you and asking you to choose to take a stand... What stand will you take?

What stand would Jesus take? A situation like this arose in Luke 13.

Luke 13:1 (NIV) Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices.

People bring a multi-layered issue to Jesus. They want to know where he stands on the issues.

This issue contains

Injustice, abuse of power, racism

Pilate, the roman governor, had evidently ordered the killing of Galilean men. Pilate had no jurisdiction over the area of Galilee. Herod had rule over the area of Galilee and it seems likely that Pilate used his power to have men from Galilee killed when they walked into his territory.

The Galileans came to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices and it was there that Pilate must have had them killed.

These Galileans had done nothing wrong, yet they found themselves in the middle of a power struggle between two rulers named Pilate & Herod. These innocent Galileans suffered injustice and lost their lives. And now a group of people want to know where Jesus stands on the issue... Jesus where do you stand on this issue? ...but it is not the only issue.

The Galileans had come to offer the blood of a lamb and gain forgiveness of their sins. Yet their sacrifice had become impure when their blood mixed with the blood of the sacrifice. Remember that this was a religious system where if you accidentally touched the Ark of the Covenant you would die... if you accidentally did not keep a commandment you could still be punished...

So these Galileans not only lost their lives, but their own blood caused their sacrifice for sin to be nullified... Jesus where do you stand on this issue?

Jesus who will you condemn in this?

Will you condemn Pilate of his hatred, injustice, murder, and racism?

Will you condemn those who fall short of full obedience? Will you condemn those who are unholy and bring their state of unholiness into contact with God's holiness?

Jesus where do you stand on this issue?

Often Jesus was asked tricky questions to try and get Him to say something that would get him arrested or divide his base, his followers.

If Jesus publicly speaks out against Pilate, Pilate could have him killed for insurrection against Rome.

If Jesus publicly speaks out against the Galileans, he could lose a great number of his followers and disciples who are from the area of Galilee.

The Pharisees often brought questions to Jesus with the purpose of entrapping Him and dividing His followers.

We can't really help it as humans. We have opinions and we like to hear others have the same opinion. We often get upset when people have different opinions and take different stands than we do.

So the crowd was really interested in what stand Jesus was going to take...

Depending on how Jesus answers this... it is likely 50% of the crowd will like his answer and 50% of the crowd will not like his answer... and yet Jesus pulls a 'wild-card' when He gives them an answer that 100% of the people do not want to hear.

The Message no one wants to hear

Look at the stand Jesus makes here in Luke 13.

Jesus does not point at Pilate. Jesus does not point at the Galileans. Jesus points at YOU!

Luke 13:2-3 (NIV) Jesus answered, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish."

Jesus does not point at Pilate...Jesus does not point at the Galileans.. Jesus points at us and says, "Repent."

When people thought about the questions... when it was asked and everyone hushed to hear the answer... no one expected Jesus to take this stand. It was the message that no one wanted to hear.

Was Jesus wimping out?

Was Jesus afraid to face Pilate?

No! Jesus looks Pilate in the eye later and tells Pilate that he has no power, but only that authority that's been given to him... (John 19:11)

Was Jesus afraid of dividing His followers?

No! Jesus divided His followers when He looked them in the eye and said they needed to eat of His flesh and drink of His blood. (John 6:53)

Newsflash. Telling people what they do not want to hear is not wimping out.

The Message no one wants to hear

Jesus gives us the message we do not want to hear.

Luke 13:4-5 (NIV) 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? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish."

The question was complicated when it was about government abuse, and religious law keeping... now Jesus adds this theological world view conundrum. Were the men killed because God in His Sovereignty decided to knock a tower down on guilty people? Or was it a free will, God rains on the just and unjust construction accident that killed the men. ...Talk about dividing an audience. The question of free will and God's Sovereignty divides a lot of Christians today.

And then Jesus could have solved that issue once and for all. He could have let us know his stance on that argument, but instead the only stand he makes is to point to all of us and say, "Repent!"

Repent – The Message We All Need to Hear

Repent. Turn from your sin and turn back to God. Confess your sin and ask God to forgive you.

This is the message we don't want to hear... but we all need to hear.

This world has many issues. We have many people taking sides... many people voicing their opinion... But what we really need is to repent.

Does Jesus not care about _____ ?

Does this mean that Jesus doesn't care about the injustice of Pilate?
Does this mean that Jesus doesn't care about the holy commands of God?

Does this mean that Jesus does not care about theology and faith questions?

Does this mean that Heaven does not care about the issues on Earth?

Does this mean the Church of Jesus shouldn't care about the issues of this world?

Scripture is clear that Jesus cares about justice.

Psalm 89:14 (NIV) Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness go before you.

Repeatedly your Bible calls God just... full of justice.
Repeatedly your Bible calls us to be just and to do justice.

Psalm 82:3 (HCSB) Provide justice for the needy and the fatherless; uphold the rights of the oppressed and the destitute.

Isaiah 1:17 (NIV) Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.

Micah 6:8 (NIV) He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

Luke 11:42 (NIV) “Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone.

The question is not... Does God care about George Floyd, violence in the streets, people being safe from disease and hunger?

God cares about justice and the Church MUST also.

Here is the point of Jesus' message in Luke 13 and our message today...

Justice starts with repentance

You cannot walk justly until after you repent.
You can't bring healing if you haven't repented.
The change the world needs can't take place without starting with repentance.

If you take a stand to heal the world... if you set out to accomplish, but do not start with repentance... you will only end up causing damage.

We have all seen movements that made a stand for change only to cause the same damage...
We have all seen people make a stand for peace only to soon create violence...
We have all seen politicians go to Washington DC to fight corruption only to become corrupt...
We have seen people make stands against abuse only to become abusive...

The Jesus who loves justice didn't start by pointing at Pilate... He pointed at us and said repent!
The Jesus who loves holiness didn't start by pointing to the shortcomings of the Galileans... He pointed at us and said repent!

If you really want to change the world, start by pointing to yourself and repenting.

Repent – The Message We All Need to Hear

Here is why!

It is all about the heart

Your heart needs to be changed through repentance before you can really bring positive change to the world.

Proverbs 4:23 (NIV) Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

If you set out to fight prejudice but have not repented of your own prejudice... you will end up spreading more prejudice. It is all about the heart!

Proverbs 27:19 (NIV) As water reflects the face, so one's life reflects the heart.

You want to change your life? You'll have to change your heart!

Ezekiel 36:26-27 (NIV) I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

Real change starts in the heart and then it is lived out!

Joel 2:12-13 (NIV) "Even now," declares the Lord, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning." Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.

Fix your heart

How is our heart today?

Repent!

Your heart is the one thing you can take control of through repentance. You will never chase down every abuse...

Good luck tracking down every racist...

You can't vote out every corrupt politician...

You could spend your whole life trying to doing this good and fail... but you can change your heart today!

Let's fix our hearts today.

Fix your heart, then go fix the world

Only after you have repented of your sin and been forgiven, are you really equipped to bring good in the world.

And when you go out to heal the world... take the world the same message that healed you!

The gospel is still the answer for the world. **Don't forget it church!**

What we all have in common – We perish without God's life

Jesus said unless you repent you will all perish. With all our differences... this is something we all share in common. We will all perish unless we repent and receive eternal life in Jesus. Unless we fix our hearts, we all perish.

Musician

Let's repent today.

Jesus can fix your heart today. Repent!

Ask Jesus to fix your heart.
Repent of racism, greed, hatred, all sin...

Maybe you have had a repented heart, but you have not been active in helping your community. Repent of that.

Maybe you have been quick to judge others... to point at them and yell... repent.