

GRACEPOINT CHURCH

Weekly Devotional

Rooted and Rising: Parables of Growth, Grace and Harvest

When Mercy Digs Around the Roots –Linda Magengenene-Moyake – 27.9.2026

Scripture

Luke 13:1-9

Open your mind and heart as you read the passage of Scripture aloud and then again quietly to yourself. Listen for God's word to you.

Spend some time in worship.

Observation

There is no historical record of the event that Jesus mentions in this passage, but from other records, it is apparent that Pilate was quite capable of behaving in this way and slaughtering people for his own benefit. Jesus also mentioned a tower which collapsed and killed 18 people. None of the people who were killed in either of these disasters was any better or more wicked than anyone else, for everyone is guilty.

Disaster happens whether a person is good or wicked. Everyone will die at some time, so people must repent of their sins now, as no one knows when the time of their death will happen. In the original Greek, it is clear that Jesus spoke of two kinds of repentance. The first was a once-and-for-all repentance; the other described an ongoing repentance. Jesus then told the following parable to demonstrate God's judgment.

Firstly, God looks for the fruit a person bears. Are they showing evidence of the fruit of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control? The man in the parable (representing God) gave his tree special care and showed patience as he waited for three years for it to bear fruit.

Eventually, the day of reckoning would arrive. The time would come for a decision. After all the care the man had lavished on it, if the tree still did not bear fruit, it was useless, and it would be cut down and cast into the fire. At the gardener's request, he gave the tree another year so the gardener could dig around it.

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Icebreaker:

When did you last ask, 'Why did a God of love allow this to happen?'

What was the occasion?

Did you come to any conclusion?

How do you feel about the incident now?

Application

- Where have you recently seen an act of mercy? Briefly describe what happened and how you felt as you watched mercy unfold.
- If God were to examine you today, what fruit would He find you producing for His Kingdom?
- *Mercy plants us:* Do you believe God has planted you where you find yourself at this time of your life – in your home, in your work, in your church? Why/why not? Are you comfortable where you find yourself? Or do you feel restless?
- *Mercy gives us purpose:* Have you found your purpose? Depending on how you answered the question about being planted, is any restlessness you may be experiencing making you want to move on (because God is calling you to move), or does it come from a sense that you are not fulfilling your purpose where you have been planted? Before you answer the next question, spend some time in silence asking God what His purpose is in planting you where you find yourself and share anything with the group you feel can be shared. Does the idea of repenting from any lack of obedience in fulfilling God's call make you want to rebel or to submit?
- *Mercy examines us:* When you think of your life, do the things you say and do bring glory to God? How? What evidence of God's work in you can you see? Are there things you no longer do, or places you no longer go? Or maybe there are things you do that you have never done before? How do you feel about the changes in your life because of Christ's presence?
- *Mercy works on us:* How do you feel about God digging around you to remove any clods of soil or things in your life that block your faith from growing and

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keep you removed from God? Are you willing for Him to do that? Why/why not?
What difference could it make in your life?

- How can the group help you with the struggles you have mentioned during this session?

Prayer

Pray quietly for a moment about the time of silence you spent during your discussion time, whether you shared anything about what happened or not. Then pray for one another regarding the issues raised during your discussion time and any other needs of the group.

Service

This week, look for opportunities where you can share mercy in the name of Christ wherever you find yourself.

Bibliography

<https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/luke-13/>



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