

Luke 13:1-9  
March 24, 2019

Like so many biblical passages, there may be a wide variety of interpretations and a text may speak to us countless different ways at various stages of our lives. Take for instance the above passage, I have at times heard this simply as a judgment passage. If you don't repent, you will die. If you don't bear fruit, you will be eliminated. Yet, that is not what I heard this week as I read the passage.

We have a sign hanging in the parsonage that Amanda bought several years that states, "Broken Crayons Still Color." I don't often think of that sign even though I pass by it and look at it many times throughout the day. Yet, as I pondered this week's passage and this message that sign kept springing to the forefront of my mind.

This text is many things but perhaps one of those things that Jesus is getting at is that we are all broken crayons. Things happen in the world and in our lives and we are quick to search for answers and make sense of what has happened in an effort to bring order to whatever it is we are experiencing at that moment that is creating discord in our lives. We may even be willing to go so far as to point some misfortune as the result of God's punishment for sin simply to create meaning out of a situation that we may not be able to explain. While Jesus doesn't say much about the two examples given in our text he does say "no" to any theology that implies these events were the result of God's divine punishment. Things happen in life. Sometimes very bad things. Such as a heinous attack by Pilate that resulted in the death of many or a tower that crumbled to pieces, fell to the ground and caused many to perish. But they were not the result of an angry God out to seek wrath on God's people for their sin.

But Jesus does remind those gathered and all who are listening of the fact we are all sinners and will all perish. We are all broken crayons. Perhaps, we are all even barren fig trees from time to time. Yet, there is hope because even broken crayons still color. Even barren fig trees still have the hope of producing fruit for the kingdom. Jesus, the eternal and optimistic optometrist, sees in us despite our penchant to set our sights elsewhere the beauty that still lies within each and everyone of us. The colors of the rainbow that exist within each of us, despite our

brokenness, and through the Spirit's indwelling which have the ability still to paint a beautiful picture over the dreary darkness that often encapsulates God's world.

Broken crayons still color. Yes, we are broken. Each of us. We turn from God. Our lights at times don't shine the way God intended them to. Yet there is hope. Jesus is the way. There is still time to shine. There is still time to color. There is still time to bear fruit. Turn to me he says in this passage. Let go of any notions you may have that you aren't good enough because you are broken, I hear him saying. Let go of theologies that say God is out to punish sinners and blot out broken crayons. Turn to me. Trust in me. Accept that you are a broken crayon and that because I am in you and you are in me your colors are still as beautiful and vibrant as they were the day God created you. Go ahead and color Jesus is saying. Color the world with the colors of God. Colors of love, justice, mercy, forgiveness, peace, joy, and compassion. Go ahead and bear fruit every day because each day we have on earth as God's people is a gift to treasure.

In closing, I took a crayon this morning (hold up red crayon broken in 2) and broke it in half. While you can't see it, the one half where the break occurred is rough and a bit jagged to the touch. There is good news alone in that given God accepts us with all our rough edges and then God can use those rough edges to color and bear fruit. God did something amazing from rough-hewn timbers fashioned together in the form of a cross. Then I took the other half of the crayon and began to color on that rough edge. The more I colored the smoother that broken part of the color became. I think that is a bit at what Jesus is hinting out here. Return to me. Repent and I will make smooth those rough edges of your colors as together we paint a beautiful portrait of God's love. (Hold up the heart I colored with that broken crayon).