



SERIES: November – December – Walking with Jesus

SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD

Monday, 11/22/2021

Scripture: Luke 13:6-9

TITLE: Necessary Endings

In coaching sessions, people often ask, “What should I do and how long should I do it?” It usually involves a person, a relationship, or a product. The answer usually is, “Depends.” Of course, people ask, “Depends on what?” I tell them, “It depends on if it’ll change anything. Will it actually make a difference? And if not, will you actually do something about it?”

Jesus had similar teaching that we should pay attention to. It’s in Luke 13:6-9 (CSB).

And he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree that was planted in his vineyard. He came looking for fruit on it and found none. He told the vineyard worker, ‘Listen, for three years, I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree and haven’t found any. Cut it down! Why should it even waste the soil?’

“But he replied to him, ‘Sir, leave it this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it. Perhaps it will produce fruit next year, but if not, you can cut it down.’”

Jesus has been giving a thorough evangelistic message. The overarching theme is we are all on borrowed time. And then He shares a parable. Parables were illustrative stories that were made up to drive a point home.

Here Jesus talks about a fig tree that was not producing fruit. This was Israel. Israel was planted in fertile soil but was not producing fruit. It was fertile soil because they had been blessed by God continually but were often rebellious and distant from God. So Jesus says that it is unlikely that giving the tree more time to produce will result in fruit. It is likely it will simply end up torn out of the ground and thrown away.

What’s the point? God is patient. God desires salvation for His creation, but unlikely many will not respond. Even those who seem to be the best candidates. Think about it. Many people today have every reason to believe in Christ, but they don’t. More time likely won’t produce salvation. But it may. More evidence may help them see Christ, but maybe it won’t. Only God knows.

But this process of assessment, commitment, and action not only applies towards our salvation and relationship with God. It also applies to all areas of our lives.

As Dr. Henry Cloud said, “Getting to the next level always requires ending something, leaving it behind, and moving on. Growth itself demands that we move on. Without the ability to end

things, people stay stuck, never becoming who they are meant to be, never accomplishing all that their talents and abilities should afford them.”

So this is my challenge for you today.

What area of life needs these three steps of assessment, commitment, and action? What relationships, processes, or activities need to these steps? What relationship deserves a careful evaluation before continuing much longer? What area of your business needs some careful consideration? What activities or processes at home, at work, or at church needs careful care?

Find one relationship, activity, process, or product and begin the steps today.