

I. Introduction.

II. We live in a dangerous (fallen) world. Gen. 3:17f Romans 8:20-22

- A. Such tragedies reveal the true state of the world.
 - 1. *Natural* disasters are commonplace.
 - 2. Man inflicts horrific suffering on man.
 - 3. We live in a world of death. As many people die every day as died in the earthquake and tsunamis. Rom. 5:12
- B. Your security is an illusion. Isa. 25:12 Luke 12:15-21
- C. Christ has come to redeem this cursed world. Ro. 8:18-25 Rev. 21:4-5 22:3

III. God is sovereign over all things, even calamity. Isa. 45:6-7 46:8f Eph. 1:11 Rom. 8:28f

- A. God is sovereign over *natural* disasters, evil men, and Satan. Job 1:15-22 2:10 42:11,2
 - 1. Job experiences terrorism, natural disasters, and physical affliction from Satan. Job 1:15-19 2:7
 - 2. Job recognizes that ultimately all these things come from God. Job 1:20-22 2:10
 - 3. Satan can't act without God's permission. Job 1:12 2:6 42:2 Luke 22:31
 - 4. God is sovereign over the earth, the wind and the waves. Ps. 60:2 89:8-9 Lu. 8:24
 - 5. There is no such thing as a *natural* disaster. God is in control. Eph. 1:11
- B. God's absolute sovereignty is of great comfort to believers. Romans 8:28f
 - 1. We do not live in a world of blind chance and luck.
 - 2. God's sovereign love for us doesn't mean, however, we will be spared from affliction. Rom. 8:35-36 Heb. 10:34 I Pet. 4:13 5:9 Luke 22:31 Job 1-2
 - 3. We are assured that God has a good purpose for us in whatever happens. Ro. 8:28
 - 4. God will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we can bear. I Cor. 10:13
 - 5. We know that absolutely nothing can separate us from God's love for us. Ro. 8:37f

IV. How can God be good and just when He allows such calamities to happen? Luke 13:1-5

- A. Jesus dealt with a similar question. Luke 13:1-5
 - 1. In Jesus' day people wondered what the victims did wrong to deserve this?
 - 2. In our day, people want to know how God could allow bad things to happen to *innocent* people.
- B. Jesus' answer may surprise you.
 - 1. He does not try to defend, or even explain God's actions.
 - 2. He denies that those who died were more guilty than the rest of humanity.
 - 3. He states that we all deserve what happened to them. Rom. 6:23 Luke 12:4-5
 - 4. He calls them to repent before it is too late. Heb. 9:27
- C. Temporal disasters are a picture of God's final judgment upon the world. *Divine Tsunami*. Isa. 24:1f II Pet. 3:10
 - 1. The Day of the LORD will bring universal devastation. Isa. 24:1-4,7-12 Re. 18:22
 - 2. This sudden destruction of the earth will be judgment for sin. v. 5-6
 - 3. There is no escape from the day of the Lord. Isa. 24:17-22 Luke 21:35

- D. We should learn from these disasters and heed their warning.
 - 1. We never have any right to accuse God of wrongdoing. Job 38:1f Romans 9:20f
 - 2. God has shown mercy in the midst of judgment: Instead of asking why this happened there, we should ask why it *didn't* happen here. Isa. 3:9 5:20
 - 3. Repent lest you likewise perish!
 - 4. Sadly people aren't getting the point (Piper). Romans 1:25 Amos 4:10 Rev. 16:9

- E. The Lord Jesus Christ is our place of refuge from judgment. Ps. 46:1f
 - 1. He has been fully judged for all who repent of their sin and believe in Him. I Pe. 2:24 3:18 I John 2:2 II Cor. 5:21 Gal. 3:13
 - 2. The faithful remnant will rejoice in the Day of the LORD. Is. 24:14-15 25:1f

V. We should have compassion upon those who suffer. Ro. 12:15

- A. God cares for those who suffer.
 - 1. He Who is sovereign is also compassionate. Heb. 4:15 2:18
 - 2. Jesus wept over the deadly effects of sin in the world. John 11:35,33 Lu. 19:41

- B. We who believe in God's sovereignty should also care for those who are suffering.
 - 1. We should have Christlike compassion.
 - 2. Calamity gives opportunity for believers to show love to one another, thereby glorifying God and uniting the church. II Cor. 8-9 I John 3:16-17
 - 3. Christ calls us to show mercy to those who suffer, even if they don't deserve it. Lu. 6:27

- C. We should have mercy both upon their bodies and their souls.

VI. Conclusion: Are you safe?

Discussion questions

1. Why shouldn't we be surprised when tragedies strike?
2. What security do Christians have in the midst of great calamities?
3. What would you say to someone who says the tsunamis were natural disasters and that God had nothing to do with it?
4. What would you say to someone who says God couldn't possibly be good if He allows such tragedies to take place?
5. According to Jesus, what should be our response when we learn of great disasters?
6. In what ways are floods and earthquakes a picture of God's final judgment?
7. What will the final judgment be like for you?
8. How can we respond to the suffering of others in a Christlike way?
9. How does Jesus make us safe from calamity?
10. What should you do for those who are suffering?