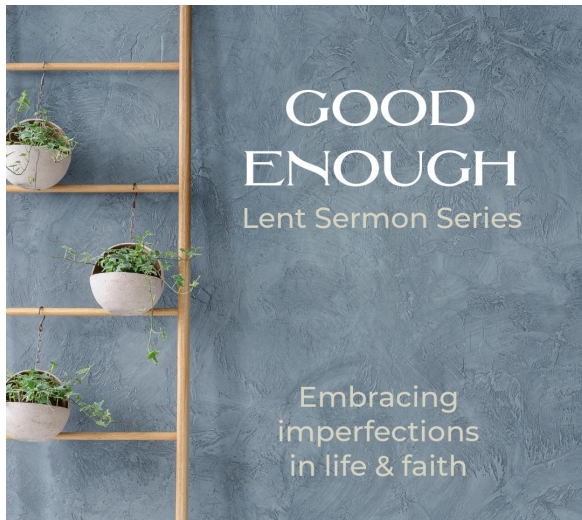


GOOD ENOUGH: Lots Of Things Can Be Medicine

March 20, 2022

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Luke 13:1-9

At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. He asked them, 'Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.'

Then he told this parable: 'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. So he said to the gardener, "See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it

be wasting the soil?" He replied, "Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig round it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down." '

REFLECT & DISCUSS

1. Read the passage slowly. Then take a deep breath and read it again. What word, phrase or image stands out to you?
2. Jesus dismisses the logic of divinely deserved cruelty. Those who suffered political and natural disasters are just like the rest of us: fragile, finite, and subject to the horrors of human life. How do you feel about this teaching? What is the deeper point Jesus is trying to make?
3. In a resource-scarce context, keeping an unproductive tree would be foolish. What do you make of the parable where the tree is spared for a time? How does it illuminate God? What do you think Jesus was trying to accomplish by sharing it?
4. The gardener offers the tree time to soak in the manure's nutrients. Perhaps there is fruitful healing in taking time to compost the "crap" of life: failure, grief, rejection, suffering. What would it mean for you to slow down and compost life's pain?

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