

## Marine View Church Sermon-Based Small Groups

Week of March 2, 2008

Luke 13:1-9 – The Barren Fig Tree

### Starting Together

- If you have new group members, introduce yourselves to one another.
- The news has been filled recently with stories of disasters and tragedies. Which one has made the greatest impression upon you? Explain why.

### Studying Together

- Read aloud the passage: Luke 13:1-9. What insight is particularly meaningful to you from this week's text or message?
- During the days of Jesus' ministry, Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea, was responsible for the deaths of Galilean Jews who were offering their sacrifices at the Jerusalem Temple. When Jesus is informed of this (13:1), what does his response reveal about the informants' beliefs regarding sin and suffering?
- According to Jesus, in what way are people's misfortunes related or not related to their sin?
- What direct warning or command does Jesus give (13:5)? What must be involved in a faithful or obedient response?
- In Jesus' story, who or what is represented by the fig tree, the vineyard, and the fruit? To whom do the vineyard's owner and its caretaker correspond? (Cf. Lev. 19:23; Is. 5:1-7; Ho. 9:10; Luke 3:8)
- How does Jesus' story end? What is Jesus teaching by ending his story this way?
- How are both judgment and mercy revealed in Jesus' story?

### Living Together

- How does Jesus' response to the people in this passage compare to your own understanding of why bad things happen to seemingly good or innocent people?
- What fruit is the Lord calling you to produce in your life in the next year? What steps toward caring for the soil of your life can you take so that you are more fruitful?
- If, like the fig tree, you were given "one more year" to turn things around in your life, what would you do? How would you need the support of others in this?

### Praying Together

- **Application:** Ask for God's help in applying today's passage to your life.
- **Personal requests:** How can this group pray for you?
- **Ministry (within the church):** Pray for our third-grade communion instruction and worship service on March 14. Ask God to use this special time of receiving first communion to minister his grace to families through the sacrament.
- **Outreach (to the world):** Pray for the March 3 registration day for Marine View Christian Preschool, that God would bring families who don't know Jesus but to whom our dedicated staff can share the gospel.