



## 2. Tragedies

Focus: The only true tragedy is unrepentance.

Read the scripture, then discuss the following questions. Luke 13:1–5 (NIV)

*Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. <sup>2</sup> Jesus answered, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? <sup>3</sup> I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. <sup>4</sup> Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? <sup>5</sup> I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.”*

1. When a building, bridge, or other construction fails, what questions do people quickly ask? Why do you think these questions are so often asked?

*[Common answers are: Whose fault? Why? What did the victims do to deserve this?]*

When the I-35W bridge collapsed in Minneapolis in 2007, 13 people died and 145 were injured. An extensive investigation attributed the probable cause of failure to a design flaw from the 1960's. Why is it so important to follow up tragedies with investigations?

2. What does Jesus say in this passage is wrong with assuming victims of a tragedy “deserved it”?

*[Jesus says that all people are equally sinful.]*

3. In the days when Jesus was in ministry, towers always had a functional purpose. If you think about it, this passage in Luke records a workplace tragedy which involved a mass casualty loss of life (18 persons). If you have ever experienced a workplace tragedy where someone, or several people, died or were gravely injured, you know how such experiences stay with both you and the community the accident happened in. How does Jesus model how to live with the lingering community fallout of tragedy?

*[Focus on the universal need for repentance and God's grace and mercy.]*

*[Do not fall into the trap of blame and accusations which compare people and cause division.]*

Prayer: Lord Jesus, we live in a world where pain, suffering, and sin exist. Lord, when we grieve, enable us to both lift our woes up to you and share them with each other. We confess we are all sinners in need of a savior; help us to live our lives righteously in response to your saving grace and mercy. Amen.