

**The Vineyard**

**Matt 21:33-45**

**Scripture Ref:** Isa 5:1-2; Ps 67:2; 1 Chron 36:15-16; Acts 7:51-53; Heb 13:12; Ps 118:22; 1 Peter 2:4-8; Heb 13:11-12; Heb 9:11-15

1. Update – pray and fast
2. Last week we started a series of three parables that Jesus gave to the religious rulers:
  - a. A parable about two sons; A parable about some wicked tenant grape farmers; and a parable about a wedding feast.
  - b. Last week we looked at the two sons, and how they represent those to whom the truth has been presented:
    - i. One group is outwardly rebellious against God, but eventually repents and accepts the will of the Father – which is to accept Jesus Christ His Son.
      - a) That group is us!
    - ii. The other group is outwardly obedient, but never accepts Jesus Christ as Lord.
      - a) That was the religious leaders
  - c. But we also took stock of our own walk, and examined ourselves as to whether we might be acting the part – playing the “Good Son” role,
    - i. But inwardly resisting God in some area.
  - d. I believe God did a great work in many hearts last week.
3. This week we will look at the second parable: **The Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers**

33 “Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. 34 Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. 35 And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. 36 Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them.

4. **As we have learned about parables, we need to identify who the characters represent**
  - a. **In this parable Jesus describes a landowner who plants a vineyard. This setting has an interesting parallel in Isaiah 5:**  
*Now let me sing to my Well-beloved a song of my Beloved regarding His vineyard: My Well-beloved has a vineyard on a very fruitful hill. He dug it up and cleared out its stones, and planted it with the choicest vine. He*

*built a tower in its midst, and also made a winepress in it; so He expected it to bring forth good grapes, Isa 5:1-2*

- b. Interesting – this setting is exactly the same as the parable Jesus is describing.**
- c. This is a picture of God bringing Israel out of Egypt, and placing them into the “promised land”, a place that had houses and wells and vineyards built by others,**
- d. And Israel was given the “vineyard” to produce fruit!**

*That Your way may be known on earth, Your salvation among all nations. Ps 67:2*

**5. But – the nation, instead of being a light to the world, and making known salvation to all nations,**

- a. Hey became self-righteous, and actually persecuted the “servants” that God sent to them – as Stephen noted in his condemnation of the Pharisee’s:**
- b. Elijah was severely persecuted by Ahab and Jezebel,**
- c. Jeremiah was attacked by his own brothers, beaten and put into the stocks by a priest and false prophet, imprisoned by the king, threatened with death, thrown into a cistern by Judah’s officials, and opposed by a false prophet.**

*And the LORD God of their fathers sent warnings to them by His messengers, rising up early and sending them, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. But they mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, till there was no remedy. 1 Chron 36:15-16*

*"You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it." Acts 7:51-53*

**6. What a parallel to how Jesus was treated. But now the parable shifts,**

37 Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ 38 But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.’ 39 So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him.

**7. In the same manner, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was sent to the nation of Israel,**

- a. **And instead of being welcomed as the heir, he was cast out of the vineyard and killed:**

*Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. **Heb 13:12***

40 “Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?”

41 They said to Him, “He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons.”

- 8. The religious leaders reply was – just. They looked at the scenario Jesus had just laid out and rightly judged that they men needed to be help accountable for their actions, and that the vineyard should be handed over to someone who would properly oversee it.**

42 Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures:

‘The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes’? **(Ps 118:22)**

“Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it...”

- 9. What you have here is a prophecy from the Lord that the gospel message, the “kingdom of God”, will not be received by the nation of Israel, it will be rejected,**
  - a. **In spite of what the leaders of Israel had done to the prophets, God in His grace still sent His only begotten Son into the vineyard of Israel.**
  - b. **Notice that the tenants did not assume that the son and heir was just another servant—they recognized him! They *knew* he was the son, and they plotted to kill him.**
  - c. **The Lord Jesus Christ was not rejected by Israel because of ignorance. The Jewish leaders clearly understood His claims to be the Son of God and the promised Messiah, but they would not acknowledge His claims.**
  - d. **And they would not submit to His teachings, His righteous standards, or His authority. Instead, they plotted how to do away with Him, threw Him out of the vineyard and crucified Him—“outside the camp” of Israel.**
- 10. These prophetic words “Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it “**
  - a. **came true not too many years later. In 70 AD, the Roman armies surrounded Jerusalem, destroyed the Temple and scattered the Jewish people.**

**b. The Gentiles were brought into the place of God's favor and the newly-formed church began to produce spiritual fruit as the gospel of Jesus Christ was proclaimed to all the world.**

**c. You and I – living stones – built up into a spiritual house**

*... you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame." 1 Peter 2:4-6*

**11. There will at last come a time , in God's season, which will be the "season of harvest," and God will send not messengers but his only Son, for the final harvest.**

**a. This will be the last and definitive sending of the Son to the vineyard. The angels who accompany him cannot be beaten or killed like the prophets of old, and no one will any longer be able to plot the death of the Son, the Heir.**

**b. For He will come in all the power and glory of the Father, and He will gather to Himself all those who were faithful to Him, even at great cost. To these He will give the Kingdom of Heaven, which they will tend in joy, drinking the spiritual wine of gladness forever.**

***INTO COMMUNION***

**12. Hebrews 13:11-12 says,**

*For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. **Heb 13:11-12***

*But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. 12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. 13 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, 14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? 15 And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.*

**Heb 9:11-15**

***And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."***

**13. For anyone whom rejects the gospel, "but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder" – there is another OT reference:**

*"You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome. This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.*

**Dan 2:31-35**

*He will be as a sanctuary, but a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel, as a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble; They shall fall and be broken, be snared and taken."*

**Isa 8:14-15**

*Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.*

**Eph 2:19-22**

45 Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them. 46 But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitudes, because they took Him for a prophet.

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