

THE PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM - IX & X

The Parables of the Two Sons and Vineyard

Text: Matthew 21:28-46

Key Word: Entrusted

Key Thought: We Have Been Entrusted with the Blessings of God Through the Authority of Christ

Jesus made it a point to visit the city of Jerusalem. On His first visit He entered the city as King but chose to set up a Kingdom that was not of this world. On the second visit He came as their Priest and cleansed their Temple. He now enters the city as the Prophet, with a strong message from God.

Jesus entered the city with complete control of the situation. The chief priests and elders had come to challenge His authority.

*"By what authority are you doing these things?"
they asked. "And who gave you this authority."*

Matthew 21:23

Jesus met their challenge with a series of parables. We will address two of them today since these two link so closely with each other.

I. THE PARABLE OF THE TWO SONS **II. THE PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD**

I. THE PARABLE OF THE TWO SONS

Jesus meets their two questions with a single one.

"What do you think? . . ."

Matthew 21:28

Our Lord was a Master of speech. He reached down into the depth of their lives and had them surrender a plea of guilty and even led them to choose their own punishment without them realizing what they were doing until He had finished. They were trying to serve without salvation. God never requires service from those who do not belong to Him.

I. THE PARABLE OF THE TWO SONS

A. The Two Sons

It's very clear that both sons heard what their father said. One refused to obey but afterwards repented while the other promised to obey but failed to follow through with his verbal commitment.

1. **First Son** - The reply from the first son was very abrupt.

"I will not."

Matthew 21:29

He was very rude to his father especially in a culture that strongly frowned upon this kind of action. **He represented those who have neither THE PROFESSION nor THE PRACTICE of faith in God. They neither fear God nor pretend to fear Him.** One thing admirable about them is they are NOT hypocrites. They are consistently opposed to God. They are sinners and do not try to hide the fact.

This son placed himself originally in a very unsafe position. **Rebellion will always lead to insecurity.** The ultimate action of this son is expanded upon. He was blunt originally but later repented of his sin.

2. **The Second Son** - The reply from the second son was shrewd.

"I will, sir"

Matthew 21:30

There is no word "go" or "will" in the Greek text. In other words he was saying "***I, sir.***" He was saying one thing but intending to do something totally opposite. He was not consistent. There was contradiction between **his word** and **his will**; between **his promise** and **his performance**. **He concealed his intent to disobey.** His language was one of **lies** not **love**. **He represents those who say, "Lord, Lord" but are not willing to accomplish the Father's will.**

This son also placed himself in a very unsafe position. He was very cowardly and false in his ways. Words come easy. **Proper action determines and exposes the desire of our hearts.** This son never changed. He remained sinful.

I. THE PARABLE OF THE TWO SONS (Contd.)

B. The Two Classes

These two sons represented two different classes of people.

1. The First Class - The first son represented the publicans (tax collectors), sinners and harlots. Under the influence of John the Baptist, many of the outcasts of society turned to God. Originally they were very opposed to God but then they had a change of heart that eventually affected their actions.

I have watched many people who have strongly opposed the Word of God, who, after taking time to come under its influence have changed their mind.

*** At an open-air Gospel meeting a preacher asked for testimonies. While this was going on, a sceptic was passing by just when the testimony of a saved drunkard was being given.

He stopped and listened. The former drunkard was telling how Jesus had wrought a miracle and saved his soul and life.

The sceptic scoffingly made a few remarks to those standing near him. He said, *"it is nothing more than a dream, religion saving a man in this manner; just a dream, and nothing more."*

No one answered him at that time but God had a way of dealing with him.

Among the listeners was a little girl about 10 years old. She had known the misery of a drunkard's home. She could not help but hear the remark of the sceptic. She went up to him and said,

"Please, sir, if it only is a dream, please don't wake me up - that is my daddy." ***

2. The Second Class - The second son represented the Pharisees, Sadducees and Scribes, who wore the robes of their religion, but were far from God. They named the Name and wore the Sign but inwardly they were ravenous dogs. They could NOT be trusted.

They remind me of the people in the days of Joshua as he was taking the position of their new deliverer after Moses had died.

"Whatever you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go.

17. Just as we fully obeyed Moses, so we will obey you."

Joshua 1:16,17

II. THE PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD

Jesus goes on to give them "*another parable.*" This parable is recorded only in the Synoptic Gospels (Mark 12:1-12; Luke 20:9-19). **He had used the sword of His tongue, now He was going to twist it into the wound.** He had **exposed the Pharisees as deceivers;** now He was going to **condemn them as murderers.**

A. The Landowner

There is no doubt that the "*landowner*" represented God the Father. He was the One who planted the vineyard, so therefore He had full rights to its produce.

B. Vineyard

Jesus again uses language that they would clearly understand. The vine was the noblest of all plants. It also needed the most care if it was to repay its owner richly. Israel was often spoken of as a vineyard.

*"My loved one had a vineyard on a fertile hillside.
2. He dug it up and cleared it of stones and planted
it with choicest vines. He built a watchtower in it
and cut out a winepress as well. Then he looked for
a crop of good grapes, but it yielded only bad fruit .
..
7. The vineyard of the LORD Almighty is the house
of Israel."*

Isaiah 5:1,2,7

C. The Wall (Hedge)

The thick hedge of thorns was used to keep wild boars and thieves from entering.

D. The Tower

The tower was the place where the guards dwelt during the time when the fruit was ripe (the harvest time) to keep watch for thieves. It also served as a lodging for the workers at night. **The landowner always kept the fruit as His top priority.**

II. THE PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD (Contd.)

E. The Winepress

Every vineyard had a winepress. It was either hollowed out of rock, or built of bricks. One section was a little higher than the other, and was connected with a channel into the lower trough. The grapes were pressed in the higher trough and the juice ran off into the lower trough.

F. The Farmers (husbandmen) or Tenants

The landowner would leave the vineyard with those who worked for Him. **The Chiefs and Princes of Israel were placed in the Temple to do their best to bring forth an abundant crop of souls. They betrayed the trust put in them.**

After planting Israel and delivering them from Egypt; giving them the Law; possessing Canaan; God is not seen in the same way. It was as if He left the nation for a time to let them produce a fruit of righteousness.

G. The Servants

At times when a harvest was expected, God would send an array of prophets who were His ambassadors. They arrived to inform the nation of its obligations to the "***Landowner.***"

But the privileged "***husbandmen***" (*farmers*) abused their blessings. **They mistreated those who came to rightfully claim their Master's reward.**

Isaiah was sawn asunder; Jeremiah was stoned; Amos was murdered with a club; John the Baptist was beheaded; Stephen was stoned to death. **It proves that the worst crimes are often perpetrated by those who are the most privileged.** The Landowner seemed so patient during this time.

H. The Son (Heir)

When God sent His only Son it was a powerful message of mercy, patience and forgiveness. The chief priests and teachers of the Law knew that Jesus stood between them and their hypocrisy. **Jesus fearlessly confronted His foes and prophesied His death in their attempt to seize the vineyard for themselves.**

II. THE PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD (Contd.)

H. The Son (Heir) (Contd.)

Peter made it clear what they had done,

"This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross."

Acts 2:23

I. The Sentence

God used the Roman armies to tear the vineyard from the husbandmen. He gave it over to others who could be trusted with it. **He gave it to the Church.** By doing so He answered once and for all the question about His authority. **It is now OUR responsibility to become very concerned about fruitfulness in the vineyard that is under our care.**

The day is soon coming for the Lord to return. We need to ask ourselves the question of how we fit into this parable? Will God be pleased with our actions. Have we been working for Him or are we simply enjoying His blessings? **Our reward will depend upon our motives for serving.** If we are working only to consume our own desires then we will meet a horrible end.

Keep your motives pure before God. Don't get trapped into the religious thinking of our day. It will only bring temporary pleasure. What is God's belongs to God! Never try to take what is His. His authority will be seen very clearly in the short time we have on this earth.

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A. The Two Sons

1. First Son - *Matthew 21:29*
2. The Second Son - *Matthew 21:30*

B. The Two Classes.

1. The First Class -
2. The Second Class - *Joshua 1:16,17*

II. THE PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD - *Mark 12:1-12; Luke 20:9-19*

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B. Vineyard - *Isaiah 5:1,2,7*

C. The Wall (Hedge)

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E. The Winepress

F. The Farmers (husbandmen)

G. The Servants

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I. The Sentence