

The Landowner

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: Matthew 21:33-45

Jesus often used parables in His teaching – using an everyday illustration to describe a spiritual truth. In this parable, Jesus described the conflict between a landowner and the vine-growers who rented the land. As we study this, we are going to attempt to identify the MAIN point. Once we do that, we will see how we can apply this in our lives.

Context

- This was after Jesus made His “triumphal entry” into Jerusalem (Matthew 21:1-11) – His last visit to Jerusalem; He was praised as He entered the city (Matthew 21:9)
- When He came into the city, He cleansed the temple and healed the blind and lame (Matthew 21:12-14) – the chief priests and scribes saw this and “became indignant” (Matthew 21:15)
- When Jesus returned to the temple, the chief priests challenged His authority (Matthew 21:23-27) – yet they were not able to contend with Jesus
- Jesus then gave the parable of the two sons (Matthew 21:28-31) – the conclusion was that the tax collectors and prostitutes would enter the kingdom before these rulers

Basic Point

- In the parable, there was a landowner who prepared a vineyard (Matthew 21:33) – he rented it out to vine-growers and went on a journey; he expected to receive his produce; the landowner sent slaves to receive his produce, yet the vine-growers reacted with hostility
- After this, the landowner decided to send his son, assuming that he would be respected by them – instead, the vine-growers saw this as an opportunity to dispose of the heir; they reasoned that if they killed the son, they could “seize his inheritance”
- The main point of this parable is that in the Lord’s kingdom, we must always remember that we work for Him

Examination

- We have already discussed the first part of the parable – the landowner planted the vineyard, rented it to vine-growers, his slaves were rejected, and his son killed; landowner (God), renters (chief priests, elders, Pharisees), slaves (prophets), son (Jesus)
- Jesus asked, “When the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers?” (Matthew 21:40) – they knew the answer; he would bring an end to the vine-growers and find other renters (Matthew 21:41)

- Jesus then cited Psalm 118:22 (Matthew 21:42) – also cited elsewhere (Acts 4:11; 1 Peter 2:7); refers to Jesus; the kingdom would be taken from the rulers and given to others who would produce fruit (Matthew 21:43); those who were punished would be scattered like dust (Matthew 21:44)
- The chief priests and Pharisees knew Jesus was talking about them (Matthew 21:45) – they rejected the Son of God; they would be punished and scattered (foreshadowing the destruction of Jerusalem); the kingdom would be opened to others (foreshadowing the establishment of the church)

Application

- The Lord expects us to be working in His kingdom (cf. Matthew 20:1) – bearing fruit (John 15:5, 8; Colossians 1:10)
- Our labor is not for ourselves, but for Him (2 Corinthians 4:5) – the kingdom is not for our personal gain (cf. 1 Peter 5:2-3)
- We must always remember that the church/kingdom is the Lord's, not ours (Matthew 16:18; Acts 20:28) – we are carrying out His work, not trying to gain followers for ourselves (1 Corinthians 1:11-17)
- God will hold us accountable for our work (2 Corinthians 5:10; Acts 20:26-27) – His treatment of the Jews serves as a warning for us (Romans 11:17-22)
- The kingdom is open to all who will do the Lord's work (Acts 10:34-35)

Conclusion

- The Lord has made all the necessary preparations to establish and open up His kingdom
- Let us be diligent in bearing fruit for the Lord – remember that we will give an account for how we have done this