

Matthew 21:33-43 The Parable of the Vineyard.

Introduction: This text deals still with the activity of Jesus on the third day after His arrival at Jerusalem. In a not-so-friendly conversation with the chief priests and elders, He gave the parable of the two sons. In that parable He tried to get them to see the error of their ways. In the parable of the vineyard He informs them that He is aware that they will not change their ways and because of this God will have to deal severely with them and with the whole nation of Israel.

I. The giving of the parable to the Jewish leaders.

- A. A certain householder planted a vineyard, verse 33.
(The planting of grape vines is to grow grapes.)
- B. He hedged in the vineyard, verse 33.
 1. We would say, "He fenced it in."
 2. He fenced it in by planting a thorny hedge.
 3. This would protect from man and beast.
- C. He dug a winepress.
 1. This was a vat for pressing the juice out of grapes.
 2. It was dug out of rock and then sealed with mortar.
 3. The grapes were trampled in the shallow end and the juice collected in the deep end.
 4. It was then dipped out and bottled in leather bags. (Uncured leather.)
- D. He built a tower. (Guards would be posted in the tower.)
- E. He rented the vineyard to husbandmen who were to pay with a portion of the harvest.
(Bottles of juice.)
- F. At harvest season he sent servants to collect, but they were abused, verses 34-36.
 1. According to Mark, they were not all sent at one time but one at a time.
 2. They were all abused and one was murdered.
- G. Eventually he sent his son, thinking they would not dare to harm his son, verse 37.
- H. But the husbandmen killed his son also, verses 38-39.

II. The question Jesus put to the Jewish leaders.

- A. Jesus asked, "What do you think the owner of the vineyard will do to the husbandmen?"
verse 40.
- B. The Jews answered two things:
 1. He will destroy the wicked husbandmen, verse 41a.
 2. He will rent the vineyard to husbandmen who will render fruit to him, verse 41b.

III. Jesus' explanation to the Jewish leaders.

- A. First, He quoted from Psalm 118: 22-23 which prophesied that the leaders of Israel would reject the Messiah, verse 42.
- B. Then He gave His interpretation of the parable of the vineyard which also pictured their rejection of Him as the Messiah, verse 43.
 1. The owner of the vineyard represented God.
 2. The vineyard represented God's work among men.
 3. The husbandmen represented Israel.
 4. The leaders of Israel (and hence the nation) had ceased to bring forth fruit to God.
 5. The servants represented God's prophets who warned Israel to repent and were abused as a result.
 6. The son represented Himself, the Son of God.
 7. The killing of the son by the husbandmen represented the killing of the Son of God by the Jews.

C. He also explained what God would do as a result.

1. God would take Kingdom authority away from Israel. (Note that Israel is not the Kingdom.)
2. God would give Kingdom authority to another nation. Literally – “another people” . (New Testament churches, Gentiles: Note the church is not the Kingdom.)

IV. An observation for us today.

A. It was a blessed privilege that Israel had to represent the God of heaven to the world.

B. It is a blessed privilege which we have today as members of a scriptural New Testament church.

C. But the privilege carries with it a great responsibility.

1. We are to bring forth fruit to God.
2. We are to present the gospel, teach Bible truth, live righteous lives.

D. What happened to Israel gives a solemn warning to us.

1. God has no need for a nation which will not bring forth fruit to Him.
2. God has no need for a church which will not bring forth fruit to Him.
3. God has no need for a Christian who will not bring forth fruit to Him.

Conclusion:

1. Are you saved?
2. Are you a member of a New Testament church?
3. Are you bringing forth fruit to God?

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