

Tuesday Morning Bible Study
God With Us
A Study of Matthew: "The Tenants"
Matthew 21:33-46

September 24, 2019

"For from His fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." (John 1:16-17)

I. The Rejected Son

- a. As we transition from the parable of the "Two Sons" to the parable of the "Tenants", we are still in the garden. This parable is based on Isaiah 5:1-7.
- b. The landowner who planted a vineyard is God. The vineyard is Israel. The tenants are the religious leaders (Pharisees, Sadducees) of the nation. Jesus is the *heir*.
- c. The messengers (servants) are the succession of prophets whom God has sent to Israel.
- d. The wall, winepress, and watchtower underline the care and protection God has lavished on Israel.
- e. God's holy plan involves the formation of His people for the salvation of the world. Israel failed to be this people.
- f. God has work in the world (vineyard) and He entrusts this work, not to angels but, to humans (ministers).
- g. The parable also teaches the patient love of God. An ordinary landlord would have punished the rebellious tenants, but God is merciful.

II. God is a Merciful Judge

- a. What should the Master of the house do? He could have sent His armies to destroy them, but He sent His Son to them.
- b. Jesus was crucified outside the gate and rejected by His own nation. (Heb 12:12-13)
- c. What were the consequences of rejecting Jesus?
 1. The Kingdom would be taken from Israel and given to another nation, the Church. (1 Peter 2:9)
 2. Those who attack the Kingdom will be judged and crushed.
- d. The desire of God (the Master) was to receive His due (praise, glory, honor, obedience).
- e. Fruit is what God requires. In this case, and in every case, God's expectant fruit from *His* people is faith and obedience to His will.

III. Thoughts and Considerations for Action

- a. In this parable, Jesus is not indicating a shift of God's love from the Jews to the Gentile, but is anticipating that it will be the Church, that will unite both Jew and Gentile.
- b. A basic principle of Christian living is we cannot learn *new* truths if we disobey what God has already told us. True fruit begins with true faith and obedience.
- c. God expects His leaders, whom He trusts and equips so richly, to be completely loyal to Him.
- d. Church leadership must not use their position as an excuse to 'keep the fruit' and feather their nest.
- e. Pastors must not fail to listen to God's prophetic messengers in their congregations.
- f. As *tenants* of God in this world, He expects fruit production from our lives. Secondly, we are to influence fruit in the lives of others where He places us.