

Adult Sunday School Lesson
Nassau Bay Baptist Church
April 18, 2021

Read Luke 20:9-19

The Parable of the Owner and His Son

We must remember that the Bible is about God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Whenever we encounter a parable, our focus should be on these three first and upon everyone else after.

We know the Pharisees missed the point of the parable because they made the parable about themselves. On the other hand, Jesus, knowing that they were not focused upon God, allowed them to see themselves in the parable.

A Certain Man

The parable begins with “a certain man,” who, later, we discover is God the Father. God planted the vineyard. God leased the vineyard. God sent the servants to the vineyard. God sent His Son to the vineyard. God destroyed the vinedressers (lessees) and gave the vineyard to others.

The Vineyard

The vineyard is the people of Israel, God’s chosen people, chosen to manifest a clear witness to God and to His love, to His goodness, and to His holiness. The vineyard in this parable is producing fruit, and the owner is seeking His share.

The Vinedressers

The vinedressers are the chief priests and the scribes/lawyers. The vinedressers were not accused of being lazy. They were accused of assuming for themselves authority over and ownership of that which belonged only to the owner.

The Servants

The servants of the owner are the Old Testament prophets. The servants/prophets were representatives of the owner. They did not possess authority in themselves, but came only to give the owner’s message and to receive what was the owner’s on his behalf.

The Son

The son is Jesus. The son came also in his father/owner’s authority. He did not come to condemn or to destroy. He came to forgive and to redeem the vinedressers, merely to receive from them that which belonged to his father, the owner.

The Owner

The owner is God. When He comes, He comes to judge, condemn, and to destroy. The owner further comes to give the vineyard to others. In this case, God will take the commission of His people to be a missionary people and give it to the Gentiles, followers of Christ. He will take the shepherding responsibility over His people from the priests and leaders and give it to Jesus, who will name others to shepherd His people.

Cornerstone

And Jesus is the stone who became the chief cornerstone. (Psalm 118:22; Read Psalm 118:21-24.) How we relate to Jesus is the difference between being in right relationship with God and being “ground to powder.” We can fall upon Jesus or be fallen upon by Jesus.

Read Luke 20:1-8

Jesus is asked for His authority. He then asked the chief priests, scribes, and elders by what authority John the Baptist baptized. Their only options were “from Heaven” and “from men.” Neither helped them maintain their own authority. When they refused to answer Him, He refused to answer them.

An important way to read the Bible is through the lens of authority. Authority is the issue in the Bible. It is the issue in creation. It is the issue in sin. It is the issue in redemption. It is the issue in eternity. The question of “Heaven or Hell?” is an issue of authority.

The vinedressers refused to submit to the owner’s authority three times. On the third time, they killed his own son. But the fact that they defied and denied his authority did not mean that the owner had lost his authority, and his authority was demonstrated in the end.

As the Son in the real version of this story, Jesus came to redeem, to forgive, but also to receive the submission that was due to Him on behalf of the Father/Owner of all creation. Jesus was killed. He was rejected. That did not change the Father’s authority, nor did it change Jesus’ place as the cornerstone, the stone from which all other stones are measured, leveled, and placed or thrown out.

But once Jesus died and rose again, the Father gave Him all authority both in Heaven and on earth. And Jesus will return to destroy, and His Father will come in Him because they are One. And no one will escape His wrath unless they have thrown themselves upon the Cornerstone and have been broken. Otherwise, they will be ground to powder and thrown into Hell forever.

Serious

God is quite serious. He is not playing games. Broken or crushed are the only two options. There is no option in which I skate around the Lord and get past “broken or crushed.” And there is no option in which anyone we know and all we do not know will skate.

Once Jesus received all authority, He gave His followers, you and me, a commission, a very serious command. Read Matthew 28:18-20. This is not a game. This is not a skate. This is not an “if I feel like it” or “if I am not too nervous.” It is a command to die to myself in order to reach others with the gospel.

God is serious. Heaven and Hell are serious. Jesus is quite serious.

The question is, “Am I?”