13-01-13

**VINEDRESSERS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD**

**Text: Matthew 21:33-46**

* Mat 21:33 "Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country.
* Mat 21:34 "Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit.
* Mat 21:35 "And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another.
* Mat 21:36 "Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them.
* Mat 21:37 "Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.'
* Mat 21:38 "But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.'
* Mat 21:39 "So they took him and cast [him] out of the vineyard and killed [him].
* Mat 21:40 "Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?"
* Mat 21:41 They said to Him, "He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease [his] vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons."
* Mat 21:42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD's doing, And it is marvellous in our eyes' ?
* Mat 21:43 "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.
* Mat 21:44 "And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."
* Mat 21:45 Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them.
* Mat 21:46 But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitudes, because they took Him for a prophet.

**INTRO:**

* Vinedresser- one that cultivates and prunes grapevines.
* Part of their job is being a wine presser.

**AIM:**

* FOR US TO BE ABLE TO PRODUCE THE DESIRABLE EXPECTED FRUIT.

**I. THE LANDOWNER: THE LORD**-V 33

**A. He planted a vineyard**

* This is a parable that resembles the church
* God Himself has planted the church
* Psalm 80:15 And the vineyard which Your right hand has planted, And the branch [that] You made strong for Yourself.
* Isa 5:2 He dug it up and cleared out its stones, And planted it with the choicest vine.
* John 15:16 "You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and [that] your fruit should remain
* The earth of itself produces thorns and briars; but vines must be planted.

**B. He set a hedge around it**

* Songs 2:15 [Her Brothers] Catch us the foxes, The little foxes that spoil the vines, For our vines [have] tender grapes.
* Job 1:10 "Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.

**C. He dug a wine-press and built a tower.**

* The vinedressers have to do lot of effort but God promotes its fruitfulness.

**II. HE LEASED IT TO VINEDRESSERS –V 33**

* Lease is a contract granting use or occupation of property during a specified period in exchange for a specified rent
* The parable speaks of the Jews esp. the chief priest and elders.
* Not because He needs them as landlord needs tenants but He could try them and be honoured by them.
* He has an a reasonable expectation-fruit
* For who plants a vineyard, and eats not of the fruit thereof?
* 1 Portion for the landowner and 3 Portions to the tenants

**III. VINTAGE TIME-V 34**

* The yield of wine or grapes from a vineyard or district during one season
* From those that enjoy church-privileges, both ministers and people, God looks for fruit accordingly.
* He did not demand it like a rent but waited till the time of the fruit drew near.
* His expectations were not hasty
* He sent His servants to remind them of their duty and to help them in gathering in the fruit, and making return of it.
* These servants were the prophets of the Old Testament
* They were not hard; it was only to receive the fruits
* An observance of the laws and statutes he gave them

**IV. THE VINEDRESSERS REFUSAL TO RENDER THE FRUIT- V 35**

* They abused, beaten, killed, stoned, His servants.
* To suffer; so persecuted they the prophets
* It has been their lot to suffer from their Master’s own tenants
* The religious people and those who supposedly to have a relationship with Him.
* These were the most bitter enemies of the Lord’s prophets
* He again sent His servants more than the first
* Giving them a chance
* God was so graceful to them/us
* He had sent them John the Baptist, and him they had beheaded
* And yet he sent them his disciples, to prepare his way
* Luke 10:1 After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go.
* God was so rich in patience and forbearance
* Yet, His church continued to resist and did the same

**V. LASTLY, HE SENT HIS SON TO THEM-V 37**

* It is reasonably expected that the Son of God, when he came to his own, should be reverenced
* Reverence to Christ would be a powerful and effectual principle of fruitfulness and obedience
* He comes with more authority than the servants could
* Judgment is committed to him, that all men should honour him.
* There is greater danger in refusing Him than in despising Moses’s law.
* When they saw Him, they plotted to kill Him and seized His inheritance
* Just to preserve their wealth and grandeur by taking him out of the way, who was the only hindrance to it, and rival with them.
* For them to be able to do as what their hearts desire
* For them to keep the reputation of being the teachers of the Law without implying it for their own
* John 12:9 Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus'sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead.
* John 12:10 But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also,
* John 12:11 because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.
* John 12:19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, "You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!“
* So they took and cast Him out of the vineyard and killed Him.

**VI. THE STONE REJECTED BECAME THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE –V 42**

* This was the Lord’s doing
* It is marvellous in our eyes
* Whoever falls on this stone will be broken
* But whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.

**VII. AS RESULT OF NOT RENDERING THE FRUIT-V 41, 43**

* He will destroy those wicked men miserably
* He will lease His vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to Him the fruit in due season.
* The kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.
* The chief priests and Pharisees perceived He was speaking of them.
* You might not be a Pharisee or a priest but the Lord has entrusted you so many blessings such as His Word, a talent, a ministry, a job, …etc.
* Rom 2:4 Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?
* Our prime purpose in this life is to help others. And if you can't help them, at least don't hurt them (Dalai Lama).
* Mat 10:40 He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.
* Mat 10:41 "He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.
* Mat 10:42 "And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold [water] in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward."

**CHALLENGE:**

* Are you personally bearing fruit?
* Are you in vintage season?
* When He comes to you today, will He get what is due as the landowner?

**CONCLUSION:**

* Mat 9:37 Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly [is] plentiful, but the labourers [are] few.
* Mat 9:38 "Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest.