**ROAD TO THE CROSS**

**Luke 20:9-20**

Sunday, April 10, 2022

**WE Slide 1 I’m telling you; you can’t miss a Sunday around here.** So good to see all those baptized last week- 11 here at GP, then 11 people indicated salvation, and we also had the largest non-holiday Sunday in our 5 years of existence. **God is working in/through our church family and I hope you’re excited to be a part of it.** EASTER is next week- 2 Sat/2 Sun, attend one with those you invite and serve at another one. **Also, if you’re an FTA/RecA we have our CONNECT Class- Sunday 4/24 and would love for you to come find out more about who we are and what God’s doing in our church- 11’s our number here too!**

**TURN TO Luke 20:9, pg. 1049, we’ve been traveling with Jesus, His disciples, and the crowd as He’s been making His way to Jerusalem listening to some of the teaching He’s done along the way.** The disciples have CONFESSED they believe He is God/Deliverer. **He’s revealed to the disciples that His arrest, torture, death on the cross, and resurrection are all part of God’s plan to secure God’s forgiveness for our sin, salvation from hell, our restored relationship with God, and the certainty of spending eternity in heaven with God.** They of course have struggled with this plan.

**AS JESUS APPROACHES JERUSALEM some of the 2 million people who are there for the Passover celebration flow out of the city and join the crowd that has been following Him.** The ever-expanding crowd begins to shout: “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” **The people believe Jesus has come to defeat the Romans and bring in God’s kingdom, like the days of King David.** The Pharisees fearing Roman retribution and hating Jesus for claiming to be God demand that He tell the people to stop.

**JESUS LOOKS AT THE CITY and weeps knowing they will ultimately reject Him and in just a few short years Jerusalem and the temple will be leveled by Rome as part of God’s judgment for their rejection.** He knew that most of those who were praising Him would turn on Him once He’s arrested and hung on the cross. **Jesus didn’t fit their expectation of a deliverer; He was not going to do what they wanted Him to do even though what He was going to do was far greater- bring God’s kingdom to the hearts of people.**

**WE’RE TOLD that during the 1st couple of days of the week Jesus has been teaching the people in the temple and sharing the gospel with them.** This caused the religious leaders to meet and come up with ways of getting Jesus arrested so they could put Him to death. **On one of those days Jesus goes head-to-head with the religious leaders by revealing to the crowds, through a parable, the selfish, controlling motivation of the religious leaders and their plan to have Him killed.** It’s that parable we want to read and learn from today. **Before I do let me explain what the different details in the PARABLE OF THE VINE-GROWERS mean.**

**Slide 2 THE PARABLE’S DETAILS**

1. The Owner = God
2. The Vineyard = specifically Israel, but generally speaking the world.
3. The Vine-growers = religious leaders who were to lead people to God
4. The Slaves = OT prophets who were persecuted and killed
5. The Son = Jesus Christ
6. The Others = initially the disciples/apostles and then we who are Christians
7. The Cornerstone = Jesus Christ, the One on whom the church/life is built.

**Follow along as I read Jesus’ parable and let’s see what Jesus said and why it matters. Slide 3-14 What is it that Jesus is saying here?** Using Israel’s religious leaders as His example He’s saying that…

**GOD**

1. **WHAT JESUS SAID: Those Who Reject Jesus Will Be Judged**
2. **Slide 15 God Created Israel for His Purposes, v. 9-** throughout the OT Israel is described as a vineyard that God planted in this world, Isaiah 5:7
3. Israel’s purpose was to reveal to the world who God was and the relationship He offered.
4. Israel’s religious practices were established by God- spelled out in the Law (Lev./Deut.); God told them how to worship Him, what was God-honoring, and how one could be right with God.
5. The religious leaders’ purpose was to build God’s kingdom by teaching Israel/others about God and how to be in relationship with Him.
6. **Slide 16 The Religious Leaders Wanted Control, vv. 10-15 This seems shocking doesn’t it?**
7. In the OT as the religious leaders led Israel away from God, God would send prophets to Israel to get them to turn back to God- Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, etc.
8. In each case they rejected what the prophets had to say and often times beat and some killed.

**For nearly 1000 years God sent prophets to try and get Israel’s attention.** This shows His incredible patience, grace, and mercy. **But God goes one step further and sends God the Son, Jesus Christ.** This parable is literally playing out right in front of their eyes- this isn’t just a story Jesus is telling, IT’S REAL LIFE!

1. Here standing before them is the Son of the Vineyard Owner- Jesus Christ, God the Son.
2. Jesus, as God, knows that they DO KNOW who He is but are choosing to reject Him.
3. He’s also letting them know that He knows their plans to have Him killed.
4. Like the son in the parable, the religious leaders will make sure Jesus is thrown out of Jerusalem and killed.

**The parable seems absurd because who would believe the tenant-farmers could get away with killing the owners slaves, not to mention, killing his son!** That’s Jesus’ point- it is as absurd as the Pharisees thinking they can keep control of what is God’s. **Because of their absurd arrogance God will judge the religious leaders. Slide 17**

1. **God Will Judge** “destroy”, apollumi/ruin **the Religious Leaders, vv. 16-18**
2. God will give the vineyard/mission to others- the mission to grow God’s kingdom, to tell others about God and the relationship He offers to people will be given to the disciples and through them to us.
3. Jesus Christ will break in pieces and crush to dust those who reject Him.
4. Psalm 118:22 from the same Psalm the people shouted as Jesus came into Jerusalem a day or 2 before shows the religious leaders were fulfilling prophecy- He was the cornerstone and they were rejecting Him. **There’s physical and spiritual aspect to this prediction.**
5. Physical meaning- Jesus is predicting the destruction of the temple by Rome in AD 70 which ended, to this day, the priesthood, and sacrifices. Through Jesus there is no more need of them.
6. Spiritual meaning- those who rejected Jesus also rejected God’s offer of forgiveness and restored relationship and so are experiencing an eternity in hell.

**So why does this teaching by Jesus matter to you and me today? Slide 18 1st this world are His vineyard.**

1. **WHY IT MATTERS**
2. **This World Is God’s “Vineyard”- He created it and us for His purposes.**
3. Like Israel was created by God to be in relationship with Him and reveal Him to the world, so all of us have been created by God to be in relationship and reveal Him to others.
4. It’s what creation is all about- God created us in His image, able to have a relationship with Him.
5. Our lives are ultimately God’s- He controls our conception, our heartbeat, when we’ll die.
6. We live at the pleasure of God- we can’t control anything in our lives; we think we can but we can’t.
7. All those who have not placed their faith in Christ live life like the religious leaders thinking that their life is theirs to control for their purposes.
8. Sadly, so do many Christians those who have placed their faith in Jesus and supposedly given Him their lives- they continue to live as if their life is theirs to do with as they think despite what they read in God’s Word or hear from those teaching the Bible.

**If you’re a Christian here this morning, listening on the podcast, we are the “others” to whom Jesus gave His mission.** **Slide 19**

1. **We’ve Been Given the Mission, v. 16**
2. The “others” Jesus spoke of in the parable were initially the 12 disciples they became the apostles.
3. Today we who are Christians are His disciples through whom He is accomplishing His mission of building God’s kingdom in the hearts of people- building His church, Week #1- Matthew 16.
4. It’s what Jesus commanded in Matthew 28:19, 20 and Acts 1:8.

**The final reason it matters is because… Slide 20**

1. **Rejecting Jesus Brings Judgment Let me talk to Christians first…**
2. Christians, Jesus has taken our judgment for our sins on the cross- us doing life our way, failing to deal with our struggles His way is sin.
3. Becoming a Christian doesn’t purify/make right our wrong thinking on life, responses to life.
4. REJECTING Jesus’ way of doing life, trying to manage life with our wisdom as if this life is ours will bring God’s discipline.
5. Yes, Jesus has taken our judgment but as a child of God now our Heavenly Father disciplines us when we do life our way, **Slide 21-23** Hebrews 12:5b-6, 11
6. Most often He lets us experience the painful consequences of living by our wisdom, not His.
7. “scourge”- in other cases, it might be a more severe discipline.
8. Righteousness, doing life Jesus’ way, is the harvest He’s trying to bring out of the vineyard of your life; He’s trying to get fruit, change, out of us but many Christians are acting like the RLs- they think the vineyard is theirs, trying to produce what they want out of life.
9. To use Jesus’ other illustration- He is the Cornerstone not just of our salvation, but for every area of our life- WE BUILD OUR LIVES USING HIS PLANS NOT OURS.

**Christian don’t reject the messengers God is sending you like the VGs rejected the slaves.** For those who have not placed their faith in Christ, I need to share some bad news, but you can’t have good news, the Gospel, without the bad news so here it goes. **Slide 24**

1. For non-Christians, v. 18
2. Someone must pay for our disobedience to God.
3. If you reject God’s offer of allowing Jesus to be your substitute it will be you who does the time.
4. Good judges judge people for their crimes and God is a good judge.
5. But this good judge is also merciful, gracious, and is the One who created you, so He’s given you a way out.
6. Jesus didn’t fail His mission when He died on the cross, He succeeded; He accomplished what He had intended to do.
7. He took God’s wrath on Himself so that we could experience God’s forgiveness, restored relationship with God, God providing/protecting in this life, and heaven when we die.
8. Don’t be like the RLs who thought their life/purpose was theirs to determine and missed out on the forgiveness and relationship with God Jesus was offering.

**That leads me to our TAKEAWAYS this morning.** AS THE BAND make its way up let me 1st challenge you who have never placed your faith in Christ. **Slide 25**

**YOU TAKEAWAYS**

1. **Don’t reject Jesus, instead accept Him- it’s simply ABC really.** Have a conversation with God right here, right now, your heart to God’s and ADMIT, tell Him your BELIEVE- you’re entrusting your spiritual, physical well-being to Him, and CONFESS that you want Him to forgive you and you’re trusting in Jesus and only Jesus for your salvation. **If you do that would you fill out a Connect Card and mark on the back that you had that conversation with God? I’d love to know and I’ll get some helpful information into your hands as well. Slide 26**
2. **Don’t reject Jesus, do life His way and share the Gospel-** If you’re struggling with life take time with God/His Word and ask Him to give you clarity on how you’re doing life your way and not His. Don’t be like the RLs who rejected and abused God’s correction.

**GOD WANTS TO PRODUCE RIGHTEOUSNESS IN HIS VINEYARD, WHICH IS YOU.**

**PODCAST- The Danger of Rejecting Jesus, Luke 20:9-20, Hebrews 12:5-6, 11**