

Paying the Rent

Parables , What do We Know?

- 1.* They used everyday objects, events and images to communicate important truth.
- 2.* They were designed to test, not the intelligence but the spiritual responsiveness of the hearer.
- 3.* Great insight about God and his Kingdom can be ours by listening carefully to these parables

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The Kingdom of heaven is like... (what we have studied so far this summer)

- The Sower – 4 kinds of soil
- The Weeds – God decides
- The Prodigal Son – which son are you?
- The Workers & the Vineyard – God's justice looks different than ours
- The Unmerciful Servant – we owe but our debt has been cancelled. We are expected to do the same.
- The Talents – faithfulness with what God has given is expected

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Events leading up to parable of the Tenants in Matthew 21:33-44

- Jesus has recently entered Jerusalem and received a king's welcome – it was the height of his popularity
- Jesus cleared the temple of the crooked money-changers
- Curses a fig tree for not bearing fruit – it immediately withers
- Just before giving the parable of the tenants Jesus was teaching in the temple courts. He was interrupted by the chief priest and elders
- The religious leaders challenged Jesus with the question of “by what authority are you doing these things?”

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Events leading up to parable of the Tenants in Matthew 21:33-44

- Jesus responds with his own question and then proceeds to answer the religious leaders with 3 parables
- The first parable is the parable of 2 sons that a father asks to work in his vineyard
- The second is the parable of the tenants
- The third is the parable of the wedding banquet

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Key Elements of the Parable of the Tenants – Matthew 21:33-44

1. There is a large investment that is well prepared
 - It is well protected by a wall
 - It has a watch tower to see approaching danger
 - It is ready for wine making
 - The grapes have already been planted
 - What a great deal!

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Key Elements of the Parable of the Tenants – Matthew 21:33-44

2. A contract is made

- farmers move in and start farming the vineyard

3. Servants sent to settle contract

- it's harvest time and the land owner expects the contract to be honored
- sends servants to collect rent – servants are abused and/or killed and rent remains unpaid
- more servants sent – same result
- son is sent as an authority to settle the debt

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Key Elements of the Parable of the Tenants – Matthew 21:33-44

4. Tenants assume ownership of the vineyard

- seize opportunity to steal the vineyard by killing the land owner's son who is the heir to the property

5. Land owner returns to deal with nasty tenants

- tenants come to a “wretched” end (debt will be paid)
- new trustworthy tenants will be found

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Original message of Parable of the Tenants – Matthew 21:33-44

Angry audience – you are the wicked tenants!

- the religious leaders would have been outraged by the fact that they knew that Jesus considered them to be the wicked tenants
- God had given Israel an incredible gift – they were his people!
- the expectation was that they would live according to God's desire for them and as a result, be a light to the nations
- Israel ultimately failed in her mission; in fact, they ended up killing and abusing almost all of the prophets that God sent to help Israel come back to God

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Original message of Parable of the Tenants – Matthew 21:33-44

- imagery of parable taken from Isaiah 5 (well known to leaders)
- Jesus answered the question of authority in the parable as he was the son who was sent
- Jesus foreshadowed his impending death at the hands of the religious leaders
- who would be the new tenants? The followers of Jesus – including the gentiles.

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What can we learn for today from the parable of the tenants?

1. Undermining the “mine” mentality

- everything belongs to God

Psalm 24:1 “The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it...”

- what we have does not belong to us
- is our default setting “mine”?
- when we forget that our lives – who we are and everything we have – belongs to God, we lose sight of what God wants and start seeking after what we want

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What can we learn for today from the parable of the tenants?

2. Becoming a steward

- we are expected to be good stewards of what God has given
- a good steward treats his master's property well, but never forgets that what has been given is actually not his
- good tenants are hard to come by
- tenants go from abusing servants to killing them to killing the heir – once sin takes root in our hearts, there's no telling how far it will take us
- religious leaders claimed ownership of authority

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What can we learn for today from the parable of the tenants?

3. Paying the rent – what does a good renter look like?

- God is looking for men and women who are willing to live according to his mission and his purposes – not our own
- listening to God's correction in our lives
- the result of not paying the rent is rebellion against God's kingdom and ultimately, his Son – this is serious business
- paying the rent simply means we are living as kingdom subjects

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What can we learn for today from the parable of the tenants?

1. Undermining the “mine” mentality – a question of ownership
2. Becoming a steward – we are expected to be good stewards of what God has given
3. Paying the rent – living as subjects in God’s kingdom means seeking his kingdom and will first, not ours