

Rejoicing in the Rejected Stone

Matthew 21:23-27

The _____ of Authority. (Matthew 21:23-27)

_____ in a Vineyard. (Matthew 21:28-32)

_____ in a Vineyard. (Matthew 21:33-41)

A _____ in a Building. (Matthew 21:42-44)

A Life-giving _____. (1 Peter 2:4-10)

Holy Week

2021 LENT SERMON SERIES

Matthew 21:23-46

²³ And when he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came up to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" ²⁴ Jesus answered them, "I also will ask you one question, and if you tell me the answer, then I also will tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵ The baptism of John, from where did it come? From heaven or from man?" And they discussed it among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?'" ²⁶ But if we say, 'From man,' we are afraid of the crowd, for they all hold that John was a prophet." ²⁷ So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.

²⁸ "What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' ²⁹ And he answered, 'I will not,' but afterward he changed his mind and went. ³⁰ And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, 'I go, sir,' but did not go. ³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you. ³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. And even when you saw it, you did not afterward change your minds and believe him.

³³ "Hear another parable. There was a master of a house who planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a winepress in it and built a tower and leased it to tenants, and went into another country. ³⁴ When the season for fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to get his fruit. ³⁵ And the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶ Again he sent other servants, more than the first. And they did the same to them. ³⁷ Finally he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' ³⁸ But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.' ³⁹ And they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. ⁴⁰ When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" ⁴¹ They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons."

⁴² Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures:

"The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;
this was the Lord's doing,
and it is marvelous in our eyes'?"

⁴³ Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits. ⁴⁴ And the one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him."

⁴⁵ When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he was speaking about them. ⁴⁶ And although they were seeking to arrest him, they feared the crowds, because they held him to be a prophet.

1 Peter 2:4-10

⁴ As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, ⁵ you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ For it stands in Scripture:

"Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious,
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."

⁷ So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,

"The stone that the builders rejected
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⁸ and

"A stone of stumbling,
and a rock of offense."

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. ⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (ESV)

Tuesday: Rejoicing in the Rejected Stone

March 14, 2021

Holy Week

Open: Do you enjoy gardening? If so, what causes you to enjoy it?

Read: Matthew 21:23-26

Discuss:

1. Having just cast the money changers from the temple, Jesus' authority is questioned by Jewish leaders. What do you think motivated their question? Why did Jesus not answer them directly?
2. By raising the question of John's authority, what is Jesus implying about his own authority? (*Note the reference to John in v. 32.*) Why is the question of authority so important in spiritual matters? How can we be sure we are being guided by the authority of God?
3. According to verse 45, the Jewish leaders understood Jesus' two parables were about them. In verses 28-30, who represents the Jewish leaders? According to Jesus, what distinguished the tax collectors and prostitutes from the Jewish leaders (v. 31)? From verse 32, what effect should the faith of the tax collectors and sinners have had on these leaders?
4. How are the leaders represented in Jesus' second parable (vv. 33-41)? What characterized the tenants of the vineyard? Who do the masters' servants represent in this parable? (*See Matthew 23:37*) What did the master expect but not get from the tenants of the vineyard? (*See Matthew 3:8*) What does this parable tell us about God's perspective on His plan?
5. Who are the builders in verse 42, and who is the stone? How is the judgment of verse 41 made more specific in verse 43? To whom is God giving the kingdom? (*Read Matthew 8:11-12*) What will God expect of them? What do verses 42-44 and Daniel 2:35, 44-45 tell us about the characteristics of this stone?
6. How does 1 Peter 2:4-10 shed positive light on verses 42-44? As those who have come to the Living Stone, how does Peter describe our identity? How does Peter explain our responsibility?

Apply: How should our lives contrast with the Jewish leaders of whom Jesus spoke?

Pray: Pray that we would be people who delight in belonging to God and that we would bear fruit for His glory.

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