

NEXT STEP: STUDY & SHARE

READINGS

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

Psalm 25:1-9

Remember, O Lord, your compassion & love. (v6)

Philippians 2:1-13

Matthew 21:23-32

PRAYER OF THE DAY

God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties & failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, & guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior & Lord. Amen.

SERMON TEXT- Matthew 21:23-32

²³When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests & the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, & said, "By what authority are you doing these things, & who gave you this authority?" ²⁴Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" & they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' ²⁶But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." ²⁷So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." & he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things. ²⁸What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first & said, 'Son, go & work in the vineyard today.' ²⁹He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind & went. ³⁰The father went to the second & said the same; & he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. ³¹Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors & the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³²For John came to you in the way of righteousness & you did not believe him, but the tax collectors & the prostitutes believed him; & even after you saw it, you did not change your minds & believe him."

LISTENING TO . . .

GOD- *Christian life is rooted in the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit*

1. What connections do you find between the Old Testament lesson (*Ezekiel*) & the Gospel (*Matthew*)? The OT lesson is picked as a model of some kind for the Gospel. *Hint: look for themes, parallel ideas, inversions, reversals, similarities, extensions, metaphors, actions, vocabulary, grammar, etc. See 2 Peter 3:9.*
2. Consider *Matthew 9:9-12*. How does that help explain v32 above? *See Matthew 3:1-12, 11:2-30; Mark 2:13-17; Luke 3:1-20, 7:24-30, 36-50, 15:1-32; John 5:17-24, 30-47, 8:12-20, 31-47, 54-59, 10:22-39*

EACH OTHER- *Sharing & growing with our brothers & sisters in Christ*

3. & 4. Think back over the last two weeks. When have you been like each son in the story? List at least 10 times for each. What caused you to change your mind like the first son? What caused you leave your duties unfulfilled like the second son? Review Small Catechism: 10 Commandments, Office of the Keys, Table of Duties available bookofconcord.org

NEIGHBORS- *Bearing fruit for those not yet our brothers & sisters*

5. Jesus' story is very pointed about repentance (first son) over & above "good intentions" (second son). How do congregation get this backwards, privileging the talkers over the doers? How have you gotten it in backward in your congregation? How can you help to serve repenting over wishing?
6. Take stock of your congregation's ministries/services of compassion (*cf. Psalm 25*) in the neighborhood. Are they serving the (socio-economic) status quo around you or are they explicitly showing & telling God's way to others? How so? Do you like what you see? What service can you offer in these ministries?

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18th Sunday after Pentecost

10.01.23

Series: Subversive Verses

Rev. Jared Stillions, STS

Ugottawanna

Ministry has to get done- God wants workers

-Notes-

KEY VERSE: A man had two sons; he went to the first & said, ‘Son, go & work in the vineyard today.’ He answered, ‘I will not’; but later he changed his mind & went. (*v28b-29*)

-NEXT STEPS MEMORY VERSE-

My sheep hear my voice, says the Lord;
I know them & they follow me. (*John 10:27*)

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