

## NEXT STEP: STUDY &amp; SHARE

## READINGS

Isaiah 5:1-7

Psalm 80:7-15

*Look down from heaven, O God; behold & tend this vine. (vv14, 15)*

Philippians 3:4b-14

Matthew 21:33-46

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Beloved God, from you come all things that are good. Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to know those things that are right, & by your merciful guidance, help us to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior & Lord. Amen.

## SERMON TEXT- Matthew 21:33-46

[Jesus said to the people:] <sup>33</sup>“Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, & built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants & went to another country. <sup>34</sup>When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. <sup>35</sup>But the tenants seized his slaves & beat one, killed another, & stoned another. <sup>36</sup>Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; & they treated them in the same way. <sup>37</sup>Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ <sup>38</sup>But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him & get his inheritance.’ <sup>39</sup>So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, & killed him. <sup>40</sup>Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” <sup>41</sup>They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death, & lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.” <sup>42</sup>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, & it is amazing in our eyes?’ <sup>43</sup>Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you & given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. <sup>44</sup>The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; & it will crush anyone on whom it falls.” <sup>45</sup>When the chief priests & the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. <sup>46</sup>They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

## LISTENING TO . . .

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

1. Map out the symbolism of the parable. Who are: the owner, the slaves/servants, the tenants, the son? What is the vineyard? What is “outside”? *See Matthew 23:(23-28) 29-39, 27:27-37; John 11:45-54; Romans 11:17-24; Acts 7:2, 51-53. Use your Bible’s study notes for help.* How is the chief priests’, elders’, & Pharisees’ answer (vv41, 45) self-incriminating?
2. What does *John 15:1-9* add to v43? *See Matthew 7:16-20, 12:33; Luke 3:12; Colossians 1:10; Galatians 5:22-23;*

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

3. What about Jesus makes for so much controversy with the chief priests, scribes, elders, & Pharisees? (Use your Bible’s study notes & cross-references with #2’s citation as starting place). For what purposes can you take on some of Jesus’ boldness in everyday life? *See Proverbs 25:29; Matthew 10:16; Ephesians 4:20-27*
4. St. Paul speaks of “pressing on,” that Christian life is a process of growth. What are your spiritual growth goals for the next six months? For the next year?\*

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

5. Many congregations pile up a hoard of things (physical, financial, & metaphorical) that can only be used for a (foggy) “special” purpose within the congregation (this does not include special Christmas/Easter decorations & the like) & finally end up not being used much at all. First, where do see this attitude at work in your congregation? Second, how can you honor the giver & the gifts, yet help find a new, life-giving, fruit-bearing purpose for them? *See Matthew 6:19-21, 19:16-24, 20:28, 23:11-15; Luke 12:13-21; 1 Timothy 6:9-10*
6. Imagine [American Christianity] as the vineyard. What has God planted? What has God pruned?\*

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Usetacould

*If you're not gonna use your church, Jesus will.*

-Notes-

KEY VERSE: “What will [the owner] do to those tenants?”  
They said to him, “He will... lease the vineyard to other tenants  
who will give him the produce at the harvest time.” (*vv40b, 41b*)

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-NEXT STEPS MEMORY VERSE-

Jesus says, I chose you & appointed you to go & bear fruit that will last.  
(*John 15:16*)

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