

# Sermon Discussion Guide- Week of Jan 26, 2020

## Promises To Keep: Just Do It

Pastor Conway 8am & 10:30 Festival, Pastor Temple 9:15 & 10:30 Fam Life

### Getting Started- Life Updates, Prayer Requests & Opening Question (15 min)

- Anything to share about personal events since you last met or about applying last week's message on "This Is Only A Test"?
- Are there any joys or concerns that you would like to share with the group for the closing prayer time or for group members to hold in prayer during the week? (please note them below for later)
  
- How do you view or feel about work in your life? Primarily positively as a good thing or begrudgingly as simply a necessity of life?

### Review the Sermon (15 min)

Please read aloud the sermon scripture, Matthew 21:28-32. Know that it is ok to skip some questions below in order to manage the time for discussions in each section.

**28 "What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work today in the vineyard.' 29 "I will not,' he answered, but later he changed his mind and went. 30 "Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, 'I will, sir,' but he did not go. 31 "Which of the two did what his father wanted?"**

**"The first," they answered. Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. 32 For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.**

- If you had to give a one-minute summary of the sermon message this week, what would you say?
- What kind of work do you believe the sons were being asked to do in Jesus' parable?
- Why are people reluctant to commit to doing work requested by someone in authority over them?
- Why do people not follow through on the work those in authority has asked of them in good faith?
- In the scriptures, vineyards were referenced as a poetic metaphor for God's people Israel. What or who do you believe is meant to be represented in the parable as the father, the first son and the second son?
- The context of this parable occurs in Chapter 21 just after Jesus' triumphant entry in Jerusalem, Jesus overturning tables in the temple, Jesus cursing a fig tree that bore no fruit and the chief priests and elders of the temple questioning him about his authority. How does this context affect the interpretation of the parable in verses 28-32?
- How is getting the chief priests and elders to admit it is better to actually do the will of the father than to say you are going to do the will of the father and then not do it, a win for Jesus?

- In verses 31-32, Jesus speaks further about the tax collectors and prostitutes. On what basis are they presented as entering the kingdom of God?
- How is this a challenging word to the chief priests and the elders?
- How is it a challenging word to us today?

### **Other Related Readings (10 min)**

- Would a volunteer please read out loud the parable which comes immediately after this one that is also about a vineyard, the parable of the tenants of the vineyard in Matthew 21:33-46.
- Verses 33-34 describe a good faith arrangement offered by a vineyard owner to tenants in which everything is provided to have a successful vineyard with the expectation of payments that are due to the owner. How do verses 35-40 describe the tenants who have broken this good faith understanding with the owner?
- How is getting the chief priests and elders to share their anticipated reaction of the owner in the parable in verse 41, a win for Jesus?
- In verse 43, Jesus tells the chief priests and elders that “the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.” The term “a people” is singular. Who do you believe Jesus is talking about?
- What does this verse, 43, and the parable as a whole, share about what God is primarily concerned about? What would be some examples of this?
- What was the reaction of the chief priests and Pharisees when they heard Jesus’ parables (plural=both of them) and “they knew he was talking about them?” Why do you believe they reacted in this way?

### **Personalizing and Applying The Message (10 min)**

- As you reflect upon the sermon and the additional readings above, what are points of encouragement or challenge for you personally?
- What do you believe it means to be a good worker of the vineyard/church today?
- How would you define the “fruit” of a vineyard/church that God most desires today ?
- Which do you believe is the greater obstacle to faithful service in the vineyard today- lack of belief in Jesus and his message (chief priests/Pharisees) or slowness to place self-will under the higher authority of God (the son who did not do the will of the Father)?
- An ideal third son would both say they are going to do the work of the father and then follows up and actually does the work. An ideal vineyard tenant would do the work that produces fruit and honors the good faith arrangement of giving back to owner. How are our positive responses to God with both our words and deeds important in the vineyard/church today?

### **Witness & Closing Prayer (5-10 min)**

- What happens when our words do not match up with our deeds?
- If we were to minimize our words in order to minimize expectations of our deeds, how would that limit the “fruit” that the Father/owner wants to see produced in His vineyard?
- The group leader or another volunteer who took notes on the prayer requests shared earlier in the meeting, may now lead the group in closing prayer