

**Matthew 21:33-46 (NIV)**

<sup>33</sup> “Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. <sup>34</sup> When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit.

<sup>35</sup> “The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. <sup>36</sup> Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. <sup>37</sup> Last of all, he sent his son to them. ‘They will respect my son,’ he said.

<sup>38</sup> “But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, ‘This is the heir. Come, let’s kill him and take his inheritance.’ <sup>39</sup> So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

<sup>40</sup> “Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?”

<sup>41</sup> “He will bring those wretches to a wretched end,” they replied, “and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants, who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time.”

<sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures:

“The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes’?

<sup>43</sup> “Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. <sup>44</sup> Anyone who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; anyone on whom it falls will be crushed.”

<sup>45</sup> When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus’ parables, they knew he was talking about them. <sup>46</sup> They looked for a way to arrest him, but they were afraid of the crowd because the people held that he was a prophet.

**Sermon for October 8, 2023:** [www.collegechurch.org/college-church-online](http://www.collegechurch.org/college-church-online)

**KNOW ...** *God and his Word.*

Parables are powerful. They provide an inroad to getting a point or a concept across and into a listener’s mind and life without really directly naming their particular circumstances. When faced with a parable, the listener must mentally engage and wrestle with the story in order to solve the puzzle and extract the meaning.

- Let's engage and wrestle with the parable in Matthew 21:33-46 by breaking down and identifying its pieces. Where did the parable take place? Name what each of the following represents in the story: the landowner, farmers/tenants, the son, vineyard. Who was Jesus' audience? What significance did the setting (context) have for that listener?
- The parable begins by explaining all the landowner did. Discuss the landowner's investment in the vineyard. What was the landowner's expected return on the investment? Was it reasonable? Why or why not?
- The tenants' response to the collection efforts for the landowner are extreme — beating, killing, stoning the servants. What do these extreme actions indicate about the tenants' thinking, attitudes and character? Name the real issue(s) prompting their responses.
- Jesus ended his parable with a bit of Q&A, asking the listeners what the proper response of the landowner should be. Discuss the listeners' response (v. 41).

While the listeners gave the “Sunday school” answer (learned from the Old Testament prophets), Jesus **didn't affirm** them but gave a surprising twist in response — a **prophetic judgment ON** them. Did Jesus have authority to render such judgment? Why or why not? What twist/judgment does verse 43 reveal? What actions/inactions brought on the judgment?

**ACT** ... *responding to & applying what we know.*

- Jesus crafted a parable with Scriptural echoes and imagery familiar to the listeners to remind them who they were, to whom they belong, and to call them to accountability and obedience.

What came to mind as you listened to the parable? Did you find yourself identifying with the landowner or the tenants? Discuss a time God or one of his servants attempted to hold you accountable. What was your response?

- Pastor Mark asked us throughout the sermon Sunday, “So was fruit the point ... Is (the parable) all about the fruit?” While fruit is important and is part of the parable, Pastor Mark reminds us that this parable is “about the Lordship of Jesus Christ and his authority to expect from us the fruit of the life of God within us.”

Describe what “the fruit of the life of God within us” should look like. Name areas in the mission of Christ we have ignored or neglected that need attention in order to produce fruit again (church and personal). What caused the neglect? Name one or two “tending” actions that can or should be undertaken to bear kingdom fruit.

**BE ...** *living in light of what we’ve heard, becoming more like Christ.*

CONSIDER if or where you see fruit in your life and in the life of CCUA. If you’re not bearing fruit, ASK the Holy Spirit to point out any ways you have ignored or neglected his leading and repent.

LOOK for ways to join Christ’s mission around you. Offer others the fruit of God’s life in you through acts of kindness, showing love, being joyful. Join in ministry at or through CCUA by serving in the café, joining the hospitality, media or worship teams, participating in a Serve Day locally, going on a mission trip, or teaching/leading our children, teens or adults.

GO and bear fruit of the life of God! KEEP becoming more like Jesus!

Grace and peace,  
*Pastor Angela*

**Rev. Angela Alvarado**  
Discipleship Pastor  
College Church of the Nazarene University Avenue  
[aalvarado@collegechurch.org](mailto:aalvarado@collegechurch.org)