

Matthew 21:23-46**1-15-17****Coming to Terms w/Jesus or Coming to Jesus w/Terms****I. Slide1 Announce:**

- A. Slide2-6 McKenna: Middle School Camp. 3rd-5th camp. The Stir. REAL. *Church Counseling*.
- B. Slide7 Baby Dedication - 2nd service. *Andy & Shannon Deane*.
- C. Slide8 January is HT month. Our 6th annual conference is 2 weeks from today.
 1. Explain the day: same message 3 services, workshops 2nd and 3rd. Focus on prevention and what each of us can do to help in this fight. Free lunch.
 2. Workshops: Mentoring: A crucial piece in prevention. The poverty link. Local trafficking update. Protecting our kids on the internet. Vulnerability & exploitation.
 3. Speakers: Cory Nickols, Sandra, me. Harmony dust, Detective Jeff, Jen O'Farrel, Kristen Dolen, Melissa Herman.
 4. HS & Jr.H are encouraged to be in here. There will be class for Jr high if your not comfortable, but we'd encourage them to be in here since they are the age that are most targeted.
- D. Slide9 The youth conference, endit17 - is designed specifically for high school students. We are partnering with *student venture* to help bring awareness to the kids in the valley. Please pray for this event.
- E. Slide10 Todays children at risk - we will spend the time on last minute details, and mostly praying for the conference, for the attendees, for the victims, etc...

II. Slide11 Intro: Coming to Terms w/Jesus or Coming to Jesus w/Terms

- A. The 1st Adam came to the Fig Tree for leaves, the last Adam/Jesus came to the Fig Tree, not for leaves, but for FRUIT. *Jesus still expects Fruit*.
- B. Last week we entered the 4th major division of the gospel of Mt. The Rejection of the King
 1. Slide12 3 signs (last week: presentation of King. Purify Temple. Curse Fig Tree).
 2. 3 parables (2 today). 3 questions. 3 discourses. 3 trials.

III. Slide13 COMING TO TERMS w/JESUS or COMING TO JESUS w/TERMS (23-27)

- A. **Setting:** In the Temple. **They cut Him off in the middle of His sermon.**
- B. **Slide14** This is His 3rd entry into Jerusalem this week:
1. **1st** He entered as **King**, looked around & turned His back upon them.
 2. **2nd** He entered as **Priest** & cleansed the Temple.
 3. **3rd** He enters as **Prophet** w/the message of God for Israel.
- C. Remember **John's** ministry climaxed when he pointed his disciples to Jesus & said, **Behold the lamb of God. Now**, Jesus **traps the trappers** by asking them **the source** of John the Baptist's **authority**. [They truly were on **the horns of a dilemma**]
- D. They want to know **who** gives Jesus the right to do the things he does.
- E. (24) **I also will ask you one thing** - As a means of instruction, **rabbis** often answered a question by asking another one.
1. The answer to His question would reveal the answer to theirs. [the **source**, the Father]
- F. **When they are unable to answer his question, Jesus refuses to answer theirs.**

IV. **Slide15 SAYING 1 THING, BUT DOING ANOTHER (28-32)** *Parable of the 2 Sons*

- A. **This parable is found only in Mt.**
- B. **One son** says he **won't** but later **does**. **The other son** says he **will** but later **doesn't**.
1. **Corrupt tax collectors and prostitutes** can be compared to the **1st** son.
 2. **The scribes and Pharisees** can be compared to the **2nd** son.
 - a) When the ministry of John came, **the Religious crowd** showed great interest in his work, **but** they wouldn't repent & humble themselves & be baptized.
 - b) **The Non-Religious crowd**, confessed their sins & obeyed John's words & were baptized.
- C. **James** summarized this parable in a verse, **But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.** James 1:22
- D. **The 1st son**, showed no courtesy at all toward his father, **I will not!**
1. He even failed to address his father as **sir**. **Nor** did he give him an excuse why he wouldn't.
 2. **But** afterwards he **regretted it & went**. This was **true repentance**, for it led to **practical obedience**.

- a) He didn't offer a *verbal* apology, **or** make a *promise* of future good behavior.
He did far better...he *went about* His fathers business w/no further ado.
- E. **The 2nd son**, polite in oriental fashion, addressed his father properly, *I go, sir!*...**yet** he had no intention of doing it.
- F. **There are 2 groups of the masses of the unconverted:**
- Group #1** - Those who are *declared disobedient* towards God.
 - Group #2** - Those who are *deceptively submissive* to Him.
- G. (31) **Like** Levi/Matthew the tax collector *entered before the religious leaders*. **Like** Zacchaeus did. **Like** the immoral woman at the well did.
- H. (32) **Jesus sums their problem w/two sins:** They wouldn't **believe** John's message, **nor** **repent** of their sins.
- I. **The rejection of John was actually the rejection of *the Father* who sent him.**
- But God being gracious, didn't send a **sentence**, **but** sent **His Son**.
 - This leads us to the next parable.** (same theme)

V. Slide16 GOOD OWNER, WICKED TENANTS (33-46) *Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers*

- A. Jesus draws on *imagery* from Isaiah's parable of the vineyard (Is.5:1-7).
- In Isaiah**, the problem is the lack of fruit, and **the solution** is the destruction of the vineyard. **In Jesus' parable**, the problem is the **tenants**, who refuse the owner His fruit. **The solution** is replacing the tenants.
- B. **Slide17a GOD'S KINDNESS (33)**
- C. God is the man who **established & equipped** a vineyard **& rented** it to tenants, since He lived far away.
- A type of Sharecropping:** [they'd **lease** the land, **cultivate & prune** the vines]
 - Their agreement was that the landlord would receive a *share* of each crop as rental.**
 - The whole project was a *venture* for the landowner.
 - Slide17b Look at the kindness of the owner:** He **planted** it. Protected it w/a **hedge**. Dug the **winepress** for it. Built a 15-20' **watch tower** on top of the terraced hill for **shelter, protection, security, storage, & a look out**.

3. **Also**, Jesus was standing at **Solomon's porch**, where hung *a richly carved grapevine*. 70 cubits high, sculptured around the door which led from the porch to the holy place. Kent Hughes, pg.94, quoting Rosscup.

D. **Slide18a GOD'S PATIENCE** (34-36)

E. **Fruit** was the issue last chapter also (w/the Fig Tree & Temple mount)

F. The owner usually received 1/3 to 1/2 the produce.

1. It was also not uncommon for **rent collectors** to be *treated badly*.

G. Time and again God had sent prophets to Israel to gather **fruits of repentance and righteousness** but His prophets were *abused, wounded, and killed*.

1. **Slide18b Jer.7:25,26** From the day your ancestors left Egypt until now, I have continued to send my servants, the prophets - day in and day out. **26 But** my people have not listened to me or even tried to hear. They have been **stubborn and sinful** - even worse than their ancestors.

H. **Slide19** Jesus **parable** was *no exaggeration* (eg. Isaiah, Zechariah, John the baptist)

1. Heb.11:35-38 **others** were tortured, refusing to turn from God in order to be set free. They placed their hope in a better life after the resurrection. **36** Some were jeered at, and their backs were **cut open** with whips. Others were **chained** in prisons. **37** Some died by **stoning**, some were **sawed in half**, and others were **killed with the sword**. Some went about wearing skins of sheep and goats, destitute and oppressed and mistreated. **38** They were too good for this world, wandering over deserts and mountains, hiding in caves and holes in the ground.

I. So here we have the sad rejection of *God's messengers*; before the sad rejection of *God's Son*.

1. We still have the sad rejection of **God's messengers** in our world **Today**...some rejections are not just *verbal*. Some result in **beatings** & even **death** for some of **God's messengers**. (pers church)

J. It would have been *unheard of* for the owner to have been so **patient**.

1. **But God wouldn't turn His back on the world**; He continued sending servant after servant. (What persistent love)

K. How **was** God patient with **you** prior to your conversion? How **is** God patient with you presently?

L. **Slide20** GOD'S LOVE (37-39)

M. (true story from Wales) **A man** loved a women, whom after having a spat, wouldn't talk to him. He wrote letters for 40 years & placed them under her door, **but** she continually refused to speak to him. He wrote **2,184 love letters** w/o ever a spoken or written word. He finally got the courage to present himself **in person**, knocked on the door & asked for her hand. **She accepted.** The became Mr & Mrs at age 74.

1. **Imagine God's dilemma.** Time and time again He tried to get His **message of love** through to His human creation with *little response*. **Finally**, when there was no other way, **He wrapped up His message in a person.**

N. He/Jesus stands in succession to the great prophets of old, **but** He is distinct from them.

1. **Slide21** **If you reject Him, He answers you w/tears. If you wound Him He bleeds out cleansing. If you kill Him; He dies to redeem. If you bury Him; He rises again to bring resurrection. Jesus is love made manifest.** *Spurgeon*

O. (37) **They will respect My Son** - As if the Father said, *Since Heaven adores Him; Hell trembles at Him; surely they will reverence My Son.*

P. (38) This verse tells of Jesus crucifixion, which was only 3 days away.

Q. (39) **Cast Him out of the vineyard.** *God is Dead!*

1. Heb.13:12,13 **Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate**(Jaffa). **Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach.**

R. In verse 38 we find **The key.** They claimed everything as their own (**inheritance**)... *Their capacity to work, their output, the whole scene of their work & their life, namely, the vineyard itself. In the end they take credit for sunshine, rain, & good climate...heck, in the end they were the ones that produced this good wine.*

1. **Where do you live?** Thats **His** Vineyard. **Where do you work?** Thats **His** Vineyard. **Where do you vacation?** Thats **His** Vineyard. **Where do you rest?** Thats **His** Vineyard.

S. **Jesus was God's Ultimatum** [**nothing** remains when *Christ* is **refused**]

1. You put your finger in the eye of God, when you slight His Son. *Kent Hughes*
- T. Slide22 God, the greatest Giver. So loved, the greatest motive. The world, the greatest need. That He gave, the greatest act. His only Son, the greatest gift. That whosoever, the greatest invitation. Believes in Him, the greatest opportunity. Should not perish, the greatest deliverance. But have eternal life, the greatest joy.
- U. Slide23 GOD'S SEVERITY (40,41)
- V. In leaving the question open, Jesus was making His final appeal to the listening Religious leaders to take a long look at *their own plans*.
1. He gave His enemies a last opportunity to change their course.
 2. Oh, the *patience* of God, to wait, to give another chance.
 - a) Robert G. Ingersoll, the noted *agnostic lecture*, used to take out his watch and give God 3 minutes to strike him dead – If there *were* a God. On one occasion, however, a man in the audience asked: *Does the gentleman think that he can exhaust the patients of an eternal God in 3 minutes?*
 3. But the leaders were caught up in the drama of the story & didn't realize that they passed sentence on themselves.
- W. How can people say hell isn't fair? How can hell *not* make sense? They killed a Fathers one and only Son.
1. God should have kicked this blue soccer ball we *live on*, so hard out of our atmosphere, so it burnt up immediately with a fervent heat.
 2. The question should be How can heaven make sense? How can *any imperfect* being be invited to inhabit such a *perfect* place?
- X. Slide24 GOD'S TRIUMPH (42-44)
- Y. They were *builders* who rejected the stone; they were *vinedressers* w/no fruit.
- Z. Here we have the largest *excommunication* to ever take place.
1. Here we have the consequences: The kingdom taken away & given to another nation/generation (i.e. Jews later, or the gentile nation, or the Church, or it's simply...people who recognize the identity of the Son/Jesus).

AA. Israel *stumbled over* Christ. The Church is *built upon* Christ. The Gentile world dominion will be *crushed by* Christ (Armageddon).

BB. *Slide25a* GOD'S GRACE (45,46)

CC. Don't you picture big light bulbs over each of their heads? *Hey wait a minute.*

DD. One last chance for them to turn from the error of their way.

1. In the **1st parable** Jesus told them a story, asked them their opinion, & they gave it, & it was **perfectly accurate**.
2. In the **2nd parable** He told them another story, & again He asked them their opinion, & they gave it, & it was **quite correct**.
 - a) Thus w/simple illustrations, He reached down into the *deepest* things in the lives of these men, & **they pleaded guilty**, & **chose their own punishment**, w/o knowing what they were doing, **until** He had finished.

EE. The parable is a powerful demonstration of the **love & patience** of God.

FF. Note the owner's attention & care for the vineyard: *He **bought** the land; **cleared** the land; **prepared** the soil; & even **made provisions** to keep out the wild animals or thieves.*

1. God has taken **every care** to provide for His people.
2. **He still sends** messenger after messenger...**but** so often they are still rejected.
3. Deliberately, repeatedly, people **reject** His love.
4. **Oh the generosity & patience of God & yet the stubbornness of humanity.**¹

GG. This seems to be one more way the Lord shows His **patient love** in allowing his precious servants to be mistreated.

1. *Slide25b* It could be viewed as a **lack of love** for His children **or** It could be viewed as such a **radical love** for the lost.
2. *Slide26* Martin Luther King Jr. Day tomorrow - *He (Jesus) knew that the old eye-for-eye philosophy would leave everyone blind. He did not seek to overcome evil with evil. He overcame evil with good. Although crucified by hate, he responded with aggressive love.*

¹ David Hewitt, pg.158.

HH. How many more Christians does God need to send into **your** life before you'll respond to His **gracious love**?

1. God has been waiting **patiently** for you... Will you respond to *His love today*?

II. Martin Luther King Jr. - *Jesus is not an impractical idealist; He is the practical realist.*