

# Further up, Further in

## Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT  
MOUNTAIN  
Presbyterian Church

### “THE PARABLE OF THE WICKED TENANTS”

For individual study or group discussion

While Jesus did not directly answer the question about his authority posed by the chief priests, scribes, and elders in Luke 20:1–8, his parable for them in Luke 20:9–19 is pointedly and painfully clear. Unlike Jesus’ other parables which were about himself and his mission, **The Parable of the Wicked Tenants** is an allegory delivered and directed at the religious leaders as a severe warning for their continued rejection of the Son of God.

#### The gracious provision of God as vineyard owner (v. 9)

The parable begins with a description of the owner’s gracious provision and allotment of a vineyard for his tenants. The passage echoes Isaiah 5, “*Let me sing for my beloved my love song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines*” (vv. 1–2). No doubt the Isaiah passage would be familiar to the religious leaders. But Jesus takes the familiar passage and modifies it. Rather than warning the people of Israel of their impending destruction for their rebellion, Jesus now warns the religious leaders.

- While most parables don’t function as allegories, this one seems to do so. It appears as an allegorical retelling of salvation history. Take some time to identify who the characters of the parable correspond to in salvation history: the owner of the vineyard (v. 9), the tenant farmers (vv. 9–10), the servants (vv. 10–12), the son (vv. 13–15a), and the others (v. 19).
- Can you think of other places in the Old Testament where Israel is referred to as a vineyard? (cf. Psalm 80:8; Jeremiah 2:21; Hosea 10:1)
- How can John 15:1–7 inform our understanding of today’s text?

#### The remarkable patience of God for faithless people (vv. 9–13)

Israel has a long history of rejecting God, but God has an even longer history of remarkable patience for his faithless people. Over the years, God sent his messengers, and one by one they were rejected. God’s patience towards the wicked tenants is astonishing! Most of us would agree with Martin Luther, “*If I were God and the world had treated me as it treated him, I would kick the wretched thing to pieces.*” But not God. He redeems and restores. And the only way that can happen is for his only begotten Son to be despised and rejected for our sake.

- Read John 3:16–20. What can we learn about the heart of God as the vineyard owner from John’s passage? What can we learn about the nature of the sin of these tenants?
- How do the words Jesus heard from heaven at his baptism, “*You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased*” (Luke 3:22), and again at his transfiguration, “*This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!*” (Luke 9:35) underscore the identity of the son in the parable?

#### The ultimate consequences of unyielding resistance to God and his beloved Son (vv. 14–19)

Jesus’ severe warning and clear proclamation only further hardened the hearts of the religious leaders, as summarized by pastor and theologian, R. Kent Hughes: “*They set themselves to fulfill the parable to the letter—to throw him ‘out of the vineyard and kill him’ (v. 15). Golgatha, where Jesus was crucified, was outside the city.*”<sup>1</sup>

- Read Psalm 118:19–24 and Daniel 2:44–45. Jesus references both passages in his response. Through his death, resurrection, and ascension Jesus became the chief cornerstone in what new temple? (cf. Eph. 2:17–22)
- Read Acts 4:5–12. How does **The Parable of the Tenants** point to the glory and power of God in orchestrating the rejection and exaltation of his Son and the continuation of his Kingdom?

DATE: September 15, 2024

SPEAKER: Brian/Wil

SERIES: The Gospel of Luke

PASSAGE: Luke 20:9–19

## RENEW: 31 Days of Prayer

**DAY 3: Pray that we would be a church that equips disciples biblically.**

#### PRAYER:

Our Faithful God, who with delight chooses to reveal himself by his Spirit and Word, we praise and thank you. When we consider the way our Lord Jesus, the Word made flesh, resisted the temptation of the devil with the weapon of your Word and the filling of the Spirit, we are rebuked in our arrogance. We so often seek to win the battle in our own strength and not by the sword of the Spirit, your Word. Forgive us, we pray, because of the finished work of Christ Jesus. We remember that, in the garden, the tempter questioned our first parents, “Did God really say?” Remind us that failure to remember what you have said to us ruins us with misery and death. Enable us to be a people who delight in the law of the Lord and meditate on your Word day and night so that we may be like a tree firmly planted, no matter what season or temptation. Strengthen us to remember that all Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, so that we, servants of God, may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. Empower us to neither add to nor subtract from your commands. Prevent us from shaping you according to our own insecurities, intellects, imaginations, and ideas. Convince us that our only offensive weapon in the armor of God is the Word of God. Enable us to know you as you have revealed yourself to us in your Word. For the sake of your glory and our good, we ask this in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

#### PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

**Hope for the Inner City,**  
*strategic partner ministry*

#### PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

**Tsendee,** *supported national partner*

<sup>1</sup> Hughes, R. Kent. *Preaching the Word: Luke, Volume II*. 1998, Wheaton, IL. Crossway Books. 260