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SERIES: Matthew (The King, His Kingdom And Me)

TITLE: Program 36 – Resting Or Resisting?

MONDAY

OPEN

Jesus told a parable, a parable of a landowner that planted a vineyard and put a wall around it. And then he made a wine press and then he built a tower, a tower where he would store the wine, the fruit of his labors, the fruit of those that labored in his vineyard. (See Matthew 21:33-46) What does that parable mean to you and to me today, Beloved? We're going to talk about it. We're going to talk about the importance of bearing fruit.

PART ONE

The book of Matthew is all about the kingdom of God. The king has come. The kingdom of God is at hand. And as Jesus talked about the kingdom He used many parables to explain the kingdom. I'm standing in a vineyard in Judea. And Jesus is going to refer and use the vineyard as an illustration of the importance of understanding the authority of the kingdom of God. Remember, He opens up the gospel with announcing that Jesus is the King

of the Jews. None of the other gospels talk about this one particular incident of the magi coming and asking, **“Where is He who [is] born King of the Jews...?” (Matthew 2:2)** I think it’s significant because what He is showing here is there are Gentiles who have recognized that it is the time of the Messiah, the time of the birth of the King of the Jews and they, in turn, have come to worship the King of the Jews. They have come to worship the King of the Jews and they are Gentiles; they are not Jews. Well as you go on in Matthew, one of the things that you see is, you see Jesus telling them in Matthew chapter 8 verse 11. **“I say to you that many will come from [the] east and [from the] west, and recline at... table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; but the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into... outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Matthew 8:11-12)** The Jews thought that simply because they were Jews, because they had the law, because they had the commandments of God and they knew what they were, and they were keeping them to the letter of the law that, that automatically guaranteed them entrance into the kingdom of heaven. But remember what Jesus said on that Mount of Beatitudes overlooking the Sea of Galilee. In Matthew chapter 5, verse 20 he said, **“...[Unless] your righteousness... exceed[s] the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, [you] shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:20, ASV)** Then He goes on to say, **“[You] have heard [it said]....” (Matthew 5:21) “But I say to you...,” (Matthew 5:22)** And He takes them from the external to the internal showing them that it is a matter of the heart. It is a matter of a righteousness that is not merely an external keeping of the law, but a righteousness that goes to the heart. And this is why He says. [If you look at a woman to commit adultery with her in your heart, then you are guilty of it.] Now we’ve come to Matthew chapter 21, and remember how that chapter opens. It opens with Jesus Christ coming down, what you and I call, the Palm Sunday Road. And as he comes down they are saying, **“...Hosanna**

to the Son of David....” (Matthew 21:9) They are saying, “Save us now, we pray.” That’s what Hosanna means. “...**Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord....**” (Matthew 21:9) Well, they are proclaiming the fulfillment of Zechariah chapter 9 verse 9, “...**Behold, your king is coming to you; ...[on] a donkey.**” (Zechariah 9:9) “...**Your king is coming [unto] you, gentle, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.**” (Matthew 21:5) Then they leave there and they go into the temple, and even the children are following him and they’re continuing to say, Hosanna, “...**Hosanna to the Son of David.**” (Matthew 21:9) And the chief priests and the scribes are indignant and they want them to stop, why? Because they understand what’s happening. They understand that He is being proclaimed again as the king. And a king has a kingdom. Jesus is in the temple, He leaves the temple, He goes to Bethany, He spends the night there, and then the next day He gets up and He comes back into the temple area. And when He gets into the temple, then He’s challenged by the chief priest because they want to know, “...**By what authority are You doing these things....**” (Matthew 21:23) Look at verse 23 of Matthew chapter 21. “**When He entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to Him while He was teaching, and said, ‘By what authority are You doing these things, and who gave You this authority?’**” (Matthew 21:23) “Where do you get this authority from?” Why? Because they were the authority figures until Jesus came on the scene. They were the teachers until Jesus came on the scene. Now what’s happening? Well what’s happening at this point is, He has become the teacher. He is the one that is drawing the multitudes. He is the one that has the people sitting at his feet, young and old. And “**Jesus said to them, ‘I will... ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I will also tell you by what authority I do these things.’**” (Matthew 21:24) I love it. He didn’t always answer their questions. Sometimes He answered their question with a question. He says, “**“The baptism of John was [it] from... heaven or from**

men?’ And they begin reasoning among themselves...,” talking among themselves. And they were “...Saying, ‘If we say, “From heaven,” He will say to us, “Then why did you not believe him?” But if we say, “From men,” we fear the people; for they all regard John as a prophet.’ ”

(Matthew 21:25-26) “So if we say that John’s authority came from men and they think He’s a prophet then they’re not going to like what we have to say.” What were they? They were pleasers of the people instead of pleasers of God. They wanted their way. They wanted the kingdom on their authority. And not under the authority of this one that has been proclaimed King of the Jews, that has been pronounced as the fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9. “And [so] answering Jesus, they said, ‘We [don’t] know.’ [And] He also said to them, ‘Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.’ ” (Matthew 21:27) What word have you heard repeated, Beloved? You’ve heard the word authority, authority, authority. What is the kingdom of heaven all about? It’s a matter of God’s authority over man’s authority. And this is what they don’t see. And this is what they don’t want. And this is why when John the Baptist, in Matthew chapter 3, comes preaching, and Jesus comes preaching in Matthew chapter 4, what is the message?

“...Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matthew 4:17) Have a change of mind. The king has come and you and I are to do obedience to the king. But they don’t want to do obedience to the king. They want to get rid of the king. So He takes this matter of authority and what He does is He’s turning the tables now. And He’s going to say “But what do you think...?” (Matthew 21:28) And He’s going to tell them a story, “...A man had two sons, and he came to the first and [he] said ‘Son, go work today in the vineyard.’ ” (Matthew 21:28) “Go on out, I want you to work today in the vineyard.” “And [then] he [said], ‘I will not;’ but afterward he regretted it and went.” (Matthew 21:29) “I’m not going, father.” And then he felt bad and he decided to go. Now what did he have? He had a change of mind, a change of mind. That’s what repentance is. So he said, “No,” but then he

regretted it and he decided to go. That is repentance. And then it goes on to say, “[And] **the man came to the second and said the same thing; and he answered, ‘I will, sir’; but he didn’t go.**” He says, “**Which of the two [do you think] did the will of [the] father? [And] they said, ‘The first.’ [And] Jesus said to them...,**” now listen, “**...Truly I say to you that the tax collectors and [the] prostitutes will get into the kingdom of God before you.**” (Matthew 21:30-31) Can you imagine what happened when he said that? I’m telling you that the tax collectors were despised by the Jews, because they were collecting money from them to give to Rome. There was nothing lower than a tax collector. And, among women, there was nothing lower than a prostitute. And what he has just said to the chief priests, what he has just said to the elders in the temple is, [“I’m telling you a story and I’ve told you a story about two sons. One son that says, ‘I will not go,’ then regrets it and goes. The second son says, ‘I will sir,’ and gives a verbal consent and yet does not do the will of the father.”] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 21:30) And He takes that story and he says I want you to understand one thing. [It’s the tax collectors and it’s the prostitutes who did not do the will of God to start but regretted it and turned around. Those are the ones that are greater in the kingdom of heaven. Those are the ones that are going to get into the kingdom heaven before you.] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 21:31) He says, “**John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him; but...,**” a term of contrast, “**...the tax collectors and prostitutes did believe him; and you, seeing this, did not even feel remorse afterward so as to believe him.**” (Matthew 21:32) John the Baptist came with a message. And what was that message? “**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**” (Matthew 3:2) And yet, they would not believe. They would not listen, they would not submit to the authority of his word. [The tax collectors and the prostitutes, they believed. And He says, and when you saw them believing, you saw them believing, you saw that they recognized that this was truth and and you did not even repent, you did

not even feel remorse.] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 21:31-32) What is it Precious One? It's the fact that we get stuck in our religiosity. It's the fact that we get stuck saying, "I know the way and I'm going to make the way, and it's going to be my way or it's not my way at all." O Beloved, the kingdom of God is not about your way, it's about God's way. And it's about submitting to God's authority. We'll talk about it more in just a minute.

PART TWO

As I said in the first segment of the program, Jesus was in the temple and He was being challenged by the chief priests and the elders of the people. They challenged his authority. They wanted to know where He got his authority, and He wouldn't even answer them. And then He began to show them how they had refused to submit to God. Remember, Jesus said in the end of the Sermon on the Mount, that [Many will say to me Lord, Lord, have I not done these wonderful things in your name?] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 7:22) And he said [Then, I will say to them I never knew you.]

(PARAPHRASE, Matthew 7:23) And he makes it very clear. [It's not those who say Lord, Lord. But it's those who do the will of the Father which is in heaven.] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 7:21) Now he's going to tell them another parable, as it's precept upon precept with Jesus that day in the temple. It is parable upon parable. It says, "**Listen to another parable.**

There was a landowner who planted a vineyard and put a wall around it and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower...." (Matthew 21:33) The tower is where they would store the wine. They would put the wine into the wine jugs, the grape juice into there. And then they would take them and they would put them in the tower. He wants them to know and to understand what they're doing in regard to God. How they say and profess to be sons of the kingdom, but they really aren't. He says, "**...There was a landowner who planted a vineyard... put a wall around it and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and rented it out to vine-growers and went on a**

journey. (Matthew 21:33) God keeps giving Himself the picture of being the landowner, and He is the landowner. **“...The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof.” (1 Corinthians 10:26, KJV) “...His sovereignty rules over all.” (Psalms 103:19)** He is the Creator. We are the created. He is the one that is the Lord, the Master and we are to be his servants. We’re to be obedient to Him. We are to do His will. And so He says, **“When the harvest time approached, he [the landowner] sent his slaves to the vine-growers to receive his produce. [And] the vine-growers took [the] slaves and beat one, and killed another, and stoned a third. [And] again he sent another group of slaves larger than the first; and they did the same thing to them. But afterward he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ But when the vine-growers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.’ [And] they took him, and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, [when he shows up] what will he do to [the] vine-growers?” (Matthew 21:34-40)** Now these men are so caught up in the story that they answer Jesus question. **“They said to Him, ‘He[‘ll] bring [out] those wretches to a wretched end, and [he] will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers who will pay [them] the proceeds [in their] proper seasons.’ [And] Jesus said to them, ‘Did you never read [did you never read]... “The stone which the builders rejected, this became the chief corner stone; this came about from the Lord, and it is marvelous in our eyes”? Therefore....” (Matthew 21:41-43)** Now when you see a “therefore,” a “therefore” is a term of conclusion. So listen to His conclusion to this second parable. **““Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it. And He who falls on this stone...,’ ”** He who falls on this stone, He’s the cornerstone, **“ ‘...will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust.’ When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they**

understood that He was speaking about them.” (Matthew 21:43-45)

They got the point. “[And] **when they sought to seize Him they feared the people, because [the people] considered Him to be a prophet.” (21:46)** A prophet, He was. He was the prophet, He was the priest, He was the king, just as had been prophesied in the Old Testament. What does He want us to see? What does He want us to know? Who were the slaves that they killed, that the owner of the vineyard had sent to them? It was the prophets. They killed the prophets, they stoned the prophets, they put the prophets in cisterns, such as they did with Jeremiah, because they didn’t want the message of the prophet. (See Jeremiah 38:6) Then he sends another group of prophets and those prophets, they reject. And so then the landowner sends his own son. Heh. The landowner is God. The son is the Son of Man that is standing before those chief priests and those elders. And He’s standing there and He’s showing them that they are rejecting the very Son of God. They are rejecting the very cornerstone of the kingdom of heaven. They’re rejecting it. And they’re rejecting it, why, because they do not want this man to reign over them. They do not want him to be the king of the Jews. They want the kingdom, they want to seize it. And God, remember, says and we read it in Matthew, [You come and you seek to seize the kingdom by force.] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 11:12) You can’t seize the kingdom by force. The way you get into the kingdom of God is to bow the knee, to bow the knee to the authority of God. You can’t have it your way, Beloved. It is only God’s way. And so He wants them to see that their righteousness has to exceed, it has to exceed an external righteousness. It has to be a righteousness of the heart. A righteousness that comes from believing that Jesus is the Christ, that he is the Messiah, that Yeshua is the Messiah and that he is the Son of God. And there’s no other way to God before him. Now what do you see about the hearts of these chief priests? What do you see about the hearts of these elders? They understand that this one standing before them that has done all these miracles, that has done all this teaching,

the one that has been moved with compassion, the one that claims to be the Christ, the Son of God, that this one, that this one is the one that they do not want to rule over them. And therefore, what they want to do is they want to seize Him. They want to kill Him. Watch what happens in the Gospel of Matthew following this, following the king coming in on a donkey. Your king is coming to you on a donkey. And as you know, when you came on a donkey, you were coming for peace. But there's no peace, Precious One, apart from the Prince of Peace. And the only Prince of Peace is the Lord Jesus Christ. This all happened in the temple. But what He did was in their mind's eye, He took them back to the ordinary situations of life and used places like this, used places like a vineyard, used places like a tower to store the wine in, used places like the winepress to teach them valuable, valuable truths, the truths of the kingdom of God. Precious One, listen to me carefully. **"...The kingdom of God is at hand...."** (Mark 1:15) And very soon the King is coming. The Son of Man is going to mount His glorious throne and the question is: Will you be among the redeemed? Will you have submitted to the authority of the King?