

A Scandalous Kingdom—Matthew 21:23-22:14

- **Intro**
 - State v. UNC fans fighting at a football game—gets rowdy, awkward and you're right there!
 - **Main Point—Rejecting the authority of Jesus and the invitation to salvation results in the judgement of God.**
- **The Leaders Reject Jesus' Authority**
 - 21:23-27—questioning and rejecting Jesus' authority—leaders more concerned with reputation than worship. Will Jesus be King or will we be king?
 - **Main Point—rejecting the authority of Jesus leads to God's judgement**
 - Leaders like whiney kids mad at Jesus for taking over—Who put you in charge!??
 - **v.25—“baptism of John”**—refers to JTB's whole ministry. JTB was last prophet before Jesus. He called people to repent and believe in Jesus! He was revered as prophet.
 - **From heaven**—they answer their own question about Jesus and affirm what JTB said about them (brood of vipers)! **THEY WILL NOT DO THIS!**
 - **From man**—they fear the people's response—about reputation over worship
 - In refusing to answer, he actually answers—I am sent by God
 - The leaders are trying to play politics and trap Jesus and instead, they are exposed by him!
 - **We typically reject Jesus' authority when it disagrees with us. Threatens our kingdoms!**
 - **Who is in charge of your life, you or Jesus? Are you believing that Jesus has authority to TELL US the way of salvation? Does Jesus have authority to tell you how to live?**
- **Jesus Pronounces Judgement on Their Rejection**
 - **Parable 1 = 2 Sons (21:28-32)**
 - 21:28-32—two sons (Jewish leaders/gentiles; insider/outsider).
 - **Main Point = God is not after LIP SERVICE but LIVES of obedience and worship.**
 - **It doesn't matter how you talk the talk if you're not walking the walk**
 - **Kids dinner analogy—We want less, “yes, dads” and more FEET MOVING!**
 - Problem—the religious leaders has FAILED in their response. All talk, no walk!
 - **v.31—the tax collectors and the restitutes go into the kingdom of God before you**
 - “before you”—could be taken as, “instead of you.”
 - Sad/Shocking irony—the leaders (w/ all the Law, prophets, promises) did NOT see Jesus and repent. The outsiders (w/o all those things) they heard, listened and repented! And now, those folks are going in and you are being left out!
 - **Humble AWARENESS of sin leads to repentance and kingdom entry**
 - **Prideful SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS leads to hardness and prevents kingdom entry.**
 - **ACTUAL repentance and obedience is what counts; not lip service or religious acts!**
 - **How would you characterize your faith? Authentic? Need to repent? More talk than walk?**
 - **Parable 2 = Tenants in the Vineyard (21:33-46)**
 - **Main Point = God is concerned with the FRUIT of faith and righteousness, not the fruitlessness of empty religion.**
 - **Isaiah 5**—Israel as a vineyard planted by God, but will it bear fruit? Theme of fruit bearing repeated (fig tree)!
 - Ups the ante by adding a layer of judgment to the leaders' rejection
 - **v.34-39—Telling the story of the history of redemption**—God mercifully sent prophets into the world to call humanity to TRUE WORSHIP. Instead of worshipping God, they rejected God and murdered his prophets. God then, in utter grace, sent his own Son, and rather than worshipping Him they crucified Him.
 - **v.40-41—Jesus exposes them and they actually answer correctly.**
 - **Self-righteous religious folks are experts on the sins of OTHERS and are blind to their OWN!**

- Paul Tripp—you are in real spiritual trouble when you are more concerned with the sin of the person next to you than you are with your own!
- This exchange sounds a lot like David and Nathan...except the leaders do not repent and worship like David, they resist and reject Jesus in rage (v.46)!!
- v.42-44 — this is tragic—the people who had been given responsibility to lead the people of God, to oversee right worship and faith, had FAILED and then kingdom gets taken.
 - These religious leaders were now charged with “building” the temple/leading people to worship, YET they had REJECTED the cornerstone, the most important stone, on which the entirety of worship of God and right relationship with him rested!
 - Jesus is the cornerstone. Jesus is the hero. Jesus is the point. Jesus is the center of worship. Jesus is the only means of salvation. All our hope rests on Jesus!
- v.43—judgment = the kingdom taken away from Israel ALONE and given to the Church—the ONE people of God from all nations who abandon sin and trust Christ (Jew and Gentile)!!
- Parable 3 = The Wedding Banquet (22:1-14)
 - Main Point = Our response to the King’s invitation is the most important decision we will ever make!
 - Israel repeatedly, foolishly, proudly REJECTED the gracious invitation to come to God!
 - v.2—The Kingdom is a celebration of Jesus!
 - Living in the Kingdom is living every part of our lives in glad, joy-filled celebration of Jesus!
 - The invitation = “come to the wedding feast!! The Kingdom is not a lecture...the Kingdom is a celebration focused on Jesus (dancing, fun, friends, wine, food!)
 - REMINDER—God is a GIVER, not a taker! In Him is pleasure forever!
 - v.3—The King Offers the Invitations—He is Sovereign
 - We don’t invite ourselves. We are sinners and enemies. We would NEVER show up to this party on our own. That he offers an invitation at all should STUN and HUMBLE us!
 - John 17:2—God gave Jesus authority to give eternal life!
 - We don’t nominate ourselves; bring our own ticket! We are sought out by God!!
 - v.9-10—The King SENDS his servants to GO and invite in the nations
 - We were out on the main roads; unaware/disinterested in the King’s party. He chose to come to us. He chose to come save us. Apart from that grace...HOPELESS!
 - v.10—We must respond to the King’s invitation
 - Those invited first REJECT the invitation and those invited from the main roads accept the invitation!
 - v.5—Religious Leaders—presumed upon salvation rather than responding personally to God’s gracious offer of salvation.
 - v.11-14—The King Requires Righteousness
 - No WEDDING GARMENT (the righteousness of Christ) = no entry!!
 - There is a universal INVITATION but a specific APPLICATION—receiving Christ’s righteousness via repentance and faith in Christ is the only means of entry!!
 - Without Grace (getting Christ’s righteousness!) we don’t get in!! No merit system!
 - Works. Religion. Heritage. Knowledge = useless. Transformation by grace = everything!
- Communion:
 - In Communion we break one loaf to symbolize the one body that was broken for our salvation and the one body that we are as the church as we partake in Christ by faith. If you can affirm this morning that we are taking the Table together in unity around the gospel and can affirm that you are personally trusting in Christ alone for salvation, please come take the Table. If you have not placed your faith in Christ alone for salvation, please do not take the Table but take Christ instead. If you are in the process of church discipline, we want to honor that process and ask you to refrain from taking the Table.