

Two Sons – Obedient Men under Authority

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Sunday morning service

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Matthew 21:28-32

Parable of Two Sons

“But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, ‘Son, go work today in the vineyard.’ And he answered, ‘I will not’; but afterward he regretted it and went. The man came to the second and said the same thing; and he answered, ‘I will, sir’; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I say to you that the tax collectors and prostitutes will get into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him; but the tax collectors and prostitutes did believe him; and you, seeing this, did not even feel remorse afterward so as to believe him.

- We all can relate to this text because we are all either a parent or a child or both.
- We have either been the one requesting something to be done or we were requested to do something.
- We have all been a son who have said no to a request or had said yes I’ll do it but never did what we said we would do.
- Children don’t always do what they are told or do what they say they will do.

Parable: Illustration, something that will help hit home. But not everyone understands Parables

Matthew 13:10-17

And the disciples came and said to Him, “Why do You speak to them in parables?” Jesus answered them, “To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted. For whoever has, to him more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, ‘You will keep on hearing, but will not understand; You will keep on seeing, but will not perceive; For the heart of this people has become dull, With their ears they scarcely hear, And they have closed their eyes, Otherwise they would see with their eyes, Hear with their ears, And understand with their heart and return, And I would heal them.’ But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

- God wants to reveal the mysteries of His Kingdom to us through these parables.
- Do we understand or are we like the others who hear and don’t understand? What is it that we should hear and see in this parable?
- As the Israelites received new manna every day, God wants us to receive new manna. Don’t keep on eating old manna.
- Nothing is as nice as eating a steak as soon as it comes off of the grill.
- Let’s hear and see this morning and taste some steak off the grill
- Let’s put away our perception of what we thought this scripture meant and let’s listen and hear a new this morning.

Dissecting the Parable

The parable has 3 main characters: the Father and the 2 sons.

The Father

- Head of the household.
- The Father has power and authority over his household and vineyard.
- The Father Instructed the sons to attend to the vineyard, he did not ask them.
- The Father most probably had servants too, but he wanted his sons to go work the vineyard.
- The Father raised these sons, which means he taught them everything they know.
- The scripture doesn't talk about the father's reaction to the son rejecting his instruction or to the son accepting the instruction.

The Sons

- The sons grew up in the same household.
- The sons had the same privileges and opportunities in the household.
- Despite these, the sons' reactions were very different.
- Sons are not servants, but they were heirs of the father.
- The sons had delegated authority from their father.
- The sons were in training for taking over some day.
- The sons are disrespectful to their father.

Work to be done in the Vineyard

- Farming is hard work.
- I have a cousin that farms with grapes in De Dorings. Farming is very active and demands long hours.

The Will

- We note there is 3 wills. The will of the father and the wills of the 2 sons.
- Even though they were from the same household, their priorities were different.
- Obedience and disobedience

John the Baptist – Messenger & disciples of Christ. A man under authority who went to work the vineyard

Prostitutes and tax collectors – Those not from the house who heard and came to work the vineyard

You – Children, sons of the house

To understand the context of the parable, let's see what occurred before the parable of the 2 sons:

Matthew 21:23-27

Authority Challenged

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?" Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John was from what source, from heaven or from men?" And they began reasoning among themselves, 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." And answering Jesus, they said, "We do not know." He also said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

- Even though we know Jesus said to the people 'I won't tell you under whose authority I do these things', I believe in the parable He was continuing to illustrate the principle of authority.
- The 2 sons were under the father's authority
- The 2 sons did not want to submit under the father's authority
- Jesus then illustrates that those who submit to authority will earn the reward. (The prostitutes and the tax collectors) before those who think they are in the house and they don't have to submit.

Let's look what Jesus says after the parable of the 2 sons:

Matthew 21:33-45

Parable of the Landowner

"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, and rented it out to vine-growers and went on a journey. When the harvest time approached, he sent his slaves to the vine-growers to receive his produce. The vine-growers took his slaves and beat one, and killed another, and stoned a third. 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.' They took him, and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers?" They said to Him, "He will bring those wretches to a wretched end, and will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers who will pay him the proceeds at the proper seasons." Jesus said to them, "Did you never read in the Scriptures, '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 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 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.

- We know that the Landowner is God and He sent Jesus who was killed by men.
- Once again Jesus is referring to people sent under authority and those who submit to and reject authority.
- Here, the consequence of rejecting authority and disobedience is death.
- If we don't acknowledge the person under authority, we won't receive the reward.

Matthew 10:41-42

He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward."

- Those who did not receive John and his message lost and did not receive the baptism.
- Those who did not receive Jesus and His teachings cannot be saved.

Romans 13:1-2

Be Subject to Government

Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.

Luke 7:1-10

Jesus Heals a Centurion's Servant

When He had completed all His discourse in the hearing of the people, He went to Capernaum. And a centurion's slave, who was highly regarded by him, was sick and about to die. When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders asking Him to come and save the life of his slave. When they came to Jesus, they earnestly implored Him, saying, "He is worthy for You to grant this to him; for he loves our nation and it was he who built us our synagogue." Now Jesus started on His way with them; and when He was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends, saying to Him, "Lord, do not trouble Yourself further, for I am not worthy for You to come under my roof; for this reason I did not even consider myself worthy to come to You, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man placed under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to this one, 'Go!' and he goes, and to another, 'Come!' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this!' and he does it." Now when Jesus heard this, He marveled at him, and turned and said to the crowd that was following Him, "I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such great faith." When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.

A Prophet is not accepted by His family and hometown.

Mark 6:1-6

Teaching at Nazareth

Jesus went out from there and came into His hometown; and His disciples followed Him. When the Sabbath came, He began to teach in the synagogue; and the many listeners were astonished, saying, "Where did this man get these things, and what is this wisdom given to Him, and such miracles as these performed by His hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? Are not His sisters here with us?" And they took offense at Him. Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and among his own relatives and in his own household." And He could do no miracle there except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. And He wondered at their unbelief.

Submission

Jesus only did what He was told.

John 5:19

Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.

"Great leadership is not about control. It is about empowering people." - Bigette Hyacinth

Let us exercise the same faith as the Centurion. Let us recognize and submit to authority.