

**CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE-  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
[Adapted from Bethel Bible-  
Presbyterian Church, 10 Downing  
St. Oakleigh, Vic., 3166]

**DHW BIBLE CLASS**

**LESSON 31 A**

**THE LIFE OF CHRIST**

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- 1. Parable of the Two Sons:**  
Matthew 21:28-32.
- 2. Parable of the Wicked  
Farmers:** Matthew 21:33-46;  
Mark 12:1-12; Luke 20:9-19.

**INTRODUCTION**

In Lessons 31 A and B, the Jewish leaders challenged Jesus and began to question the nature and source of His authority. When they could not answer the questions which Jesus put to them, Jesus spoke three parables to them. They are the three parables of judgment against the chief priests, the scribes, and the Pharisees. Jesus exposed their hypocrisy, pride, and self-righteousness. Having been chided, they grouped themselves together and hoped to trick Jesus by raising controversial issues.

The first was made by the unholy alliance between the Pharisees and the Herodians. Their question was a very cunning one based on politics and they thought that they had Jesus trapped. They failed. The Sadducees then made their attempt with a theological controversy about the resurrection.

They too failed. In all these parables Jesus exposed the character and conduct of the religious leaders; and in His direct confrontation with them, the precious truths and spiritual lessons that emerged from them are invaluable and edifying, they are for our learning as much as they were for the people then.

**UNDERSTANDING**

***Parable of the Two Sons:***  
*Matthew 21:28-32.*

This lesson is a continuation on where we left off the last lesson. Jesus refused to answer the question of the chief priest. Instead He posed to the chief priests and elders His own question. The question was from where did the baptism of John originate, heaven or men? They dare not answer His question and Jesus said that He will not answer theirs either.

In further response to the chief priests and scribe's challenge to His authority, Jesus spoke to them in a short parable. A man had two sons. He told them to work in the vineyard. The first son replied that he would not go, but afterwards he repented and went to work as his father had bade him. The second son promised to work in the vineyard, but did not do it. At this juncture, Jesus did not conclude the parable. Instead, Jesus asked the chief priests and scribes: "Whether of them twain did the will of his father?" They all answered; "The first." Jesus then applied the thrust of the parable to His hearers, saying, that the tax collectors and the prostitutes would enter the kingdom of God before the chief priests and the

scribes because they believed the testimony of John the Baptist, unlike the religious leaders who rejected and believed not.

This was as good as slapping the enemies of Christ on the cheeks. Their self-righteous superiority would immediately elevate them way much above these “scum” of societies. They are definitely bound for Hell and God’s condemnation. On the other hand the religious leaders thought that by their legalistic life style and religious garbs, coupled with their talk of religion constantly, they would already have one foot inside the kingdom of heaven. Their “talk” means more to them than their “walk.”

Jesus was contrasting the character and conduct between the religious leaders and the tax-gatherers and those who lived immorally. Those who lived immoral lives obeyed the Word of God and repented when they heard John’s message, and they were saved. But those who prided themselves for being more religious and pious than others were condemned. They paid lip service to God in the Temple and worship services but did not practice the Word of God in their lives. Jesus used their own words to condemn them. Jesus was a Master Teacher.

Jesus taught clearly that the tax collectors and the prostitutes had greater spiritual perception than the supposed religious leaders and teachers of the Law who were blinded by their pride! The “publicans and the harlots,” whom they despised, entered the kingdom of God because they repented when they heard the message that John preached. It is

because of their confession and repentance, and acceptance of the message that they were allowed to enter into the kingdom of God. On the other hand, the chief priests and scribes, who had knowledge of the Law, were condemned and were not allowed to enter the kingdom of God because of their stubbornness of heart and unbelief.

When Jesus said that the “publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you” (meaning the chief priests and scribes), He was not declaring that they would enter the kingdom after the publicans and the harlots had entered. Surely Jesus did not approve of the first son’s initial disobedience, but when he repented and obeyed his father, he was accepted. We all know that no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he confesses and repents of his sins, and accepts God’s gift of salvation. The chief priests and the scribes knew that Jesus was talking about them (Matthew 21:45).

A truly born-again Christian will do the will of his Father in Heaven. Verbal confession without obedience to the Word and Will of God means nothing to God. He is not interested in people paying Him lip service. Saying that I am praising God and calling ourselves Christians do not make us God’s children at all. Jesus had said that those who do the will of the Father will be saved. **Matthew 7:21**, *"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."*

What Jesus denounced is an insincere profession of a Christian

who cries out to Him, “Lord, Lord . . .” but who does not do what Jesus asks him to do. There is nothing wrong in making promises or professions, so long that they are made in sincerity and truthfulness. Jesus Christ will use our obedience to His Holy Word to separate the wheat from the tares and the sheep from the goats!

***Parable of the Wicked Farmers:***  
*Matthew 21:33-46; Mark 12:1-12;*  
*Luke 20:9-19*

Jesus spoke another parable to the people. It is connected to the parable of the two sons, since they follow one after the other. Furthermore, the message in this parable supplements the lesson taught in the parable of the two sons.

In this parable, a landowner owned a vineyard and provided all the means for the production of wine. He let it out to the husbandmen (vine-growers). He then went to a far country for a long time. At harvest time, he sent his servants to the husbandmen to receive his produce. But the husbandmen mistreated his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned the third. Then he sent more servants to the husbandmen and they treated all of them the same.

Finally the landowner sent his beloved son, thinking that the husbandmen would respect his son. But they killed his son instead. Once again Jesus did not conclude the story, but put a question to His hearers, “When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?” They gave the right answer, “He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other

husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.”

In order to understand the parable, we should know who and what some of the key elements in the parable represent. The landowner is God the Father. The husbandmen are the Jewish religious leaders. The servants are the prophets whom God sent. His beloved son is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. There is a progression in this parable from the parable of the two sons which precedes it. In the parable of the two sons, the fault of the second son is his hypocrisy. But the husbandmen or tenant farmers of this parable show a disobedient spirit that is worse than mere hypocrisy. Their spirit was hardened by evil thoughts that culminated in the murder of the landowner’s son.

The parable manifests the blatant disloyalty and wickedness of the chief priests and elders. God had given them a mission field to lead and guide God’s people and be a witness to all the nations that this is the way to the one living and true God. In addition, they were provided with all the necessary equipment to do the work (The Temple and the Word of God). He had trusted them. But what did they do? A look at the biblical history of Israel reveals that these Jewish leaders had appropriated the things God had given them, but rejected His prophets whom He sent to them, and killed His Son, His only begotten and beloved Son, whom He sent. Jesus knew the evil intent of their hearts!

In giving the right answer to Jesus, they had condemned themselves. God will not be

mocked. At the day of reckoning, God will judge and punish them. Jesus then drove home a point by citing an Old Testament messianic text (Psalm 118:22, 23): *“The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.”* Jesus asked His hearers: *“Did ye never read in the scriptures?”* They would kill Jesus, but God would vindicate Him and exalt Him above every name! Jesus emphatically explained so that the Jewish leaders who heard Him would not miss His point. Jesus clearly declared that the kingdom of God would be taken from them and given to “a nation” or people who would bring forth fruits thereof. This is clearly a declaration that the visible witness of God’s work on earth i.e. the preaching of God’s message of salvation to the world and the defense of His Holy Word now lies in the hands of the local Church. This is seen in the early beginnings of the local church in the book of Acts.

Jesus gave a stern and sobering warning. The chief stone which the builders rejected is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who fall on this Stone will themselves be broken to pieces, and whoever the Stone falls on it will be crushed into powder and be scattered like dust. God’s enemies are destined to be defeated, dispersed, and destroyed. No one can go against Him and win. All will be defeated in due time. Some may appear to have the upper hand on this earth just as Satan thought that he had won when he used Judas to betray the LORD which ultimately led to His

crucifixion. But the LORD turned the table around and made the cross of Christ the climax of His great plan of salvation for mankind!!

When the chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees heard Jesus’ parables they knew that He was speaking about them. They were angry, and if not for Jesus’ popularity at that time, they would have laid hold on Him and killed Him. But from God’s perspective, they would never have laid a finger on Him without God’s permission! No man taketh the life of the Son unless the Son laid it down Himself! Understanding the Word of God may not necessarily lead to repentance. In the example, it led to anger and hatred and even murderous rage!!

### PRACTICAL VALUE

In the short parable of the man and his two sons, Jesus’ point is that it is far better for a person who initially refuses to do God’s will and later repents and does it than for a person who hypocritically says that he will do it but does not. Of course, it is **best for a person to say that he will do the will of God and then do it**. There are many today who say only but act differently. We must examine ourselves: whether we come under this category of people, who say one thing but act differently. Jesus certainly places a high premium on doing more than just saying. **He condemns hypocrisy and all who pay Him only lip service.**

In the parable of the wicked husbandmen, Jesus judged the Israelites for misappropriating all

the wonderful blessings that God had bestowed upon Israel. They rendered poor stewardship of what God had entrusted them. In addition they knowingly and deliberately usurped the authority of God because of their pride, greed and evil heart. God judged them for their evil deeds. The lesson is simple. **If we do not appropriately do what God expects of us or do according to His will, He will take the privileges and the rights He has given to us to others.** The preaching and defense of God's Holy Word is always an honour and a privilege. We are always dispensable. If we fail and tamper with the Word of God, the lampstand of God will be taken always from us and given to another. AMEN,

**DHW BIBLE CLASS  
LESSON 31A**

**THE LIFE OF CHRIST**

**DAILY READING & DISCUSSION  
QUESTIONS**

**Daily Readings**

**MONDAY:** Matthew 21:28-32.

**TUESDAY:** Matthew 21:28-32.

**WEDNESDAY:** Matthew 21:33-46;  
Mark 12:1-12; Luke 20:9-19.

**THURSDAY:** Matthew 21:33-46;  
Mark 12:1-12; Luke 20:9-19.

**FRIDAY:** Matthew 21:33-46; Mark  
12:1-12; Luke 20:9-19.

**Discussion Questions**

**1. What would you say from the above parable are the essential elements for genuine repentance? Have you experienced them before?**

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**2. What two groups of people was Jesus referring to? Which group do you belong to right now? Can we say that to every doctrine of God's Word?**

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**3. Do you think that Jesus was too harsh in his judgement of the chief priests and elders through this parable?**

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**4. How did that generation return its kindness to God's invitation? How have you lived up to the grace and**

**mercies that you have received from the LORD?**

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**5. What is the difference between the local and universal church of Jesus Christ?**

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