

THANK YOU Pastor Jeff !!

Our last msg in the Gospel of Mark was – “We Need Real Faith”

I read thru that msg Fri night - & thought
Man, this msg is exactly what I NEED

So – I encourage you to go back & watch, listen, or read that msg
on The Word By Mail phone app – or on the Church website.

& so – this morning we pick up on that SAME Day
after the Real Faith Lesson of the Fig Tree

& today - Jesus enters Jerusalem again – w/ the Disciples

& he comes into the city – Ready for a
No Holds Barred – Cage Fight to the Death

Jesus is going into the RING
With the Religious Leaders of the day

& IT IS a Cage Fight - TO HIS DEATH

& today – Jesus starts this final – Spiritual Boxing Match
By just throwing a few JABS - (to get under their skin)

But He's letting them know - right up front

The Gloves Are Off - & the Championship Fight
for WHO is Truly KING - HAS BEGUN

& guys – Us Putting Ourselves IN this section of scripture
Is really, really GOOD for us – So Get Ready

I'm just going to READ straight thru our First Section today

Just so you can see - The Religious Leaders
come at Jesus with a half-hearted swing

& Jesus lands his FIRST JAB
Right on the Nose of these guys

Mark 11:27–33 (NLT)

27 *Again they entered Jerusalem. As Jesus was walking through the Temple area, the leading priests, the teachers of religious law, and the elders came up to him.* (the entire group that will orchestrate his death)

28 *They demanded, “By what authority are you doing all these things? Who gave you the right to do them?”* (referring to the cleansing of the Temple)

29 *“I’ll tell you by what authority I do these things if you answer one question,”* Jesus replied. (that’s a Jab)

30 *“Did John’s authority to baptize come from heaven, or was it merely human? Answer me!”* (notice the Exclamation Point)

31 *They talked it over among themselves. “If we say it was from heaven, he will ask why we didn’t believe John.*

32 *But do we dare say it was merely human?”* For they were afraid of what the people would do, because everyone believed that John was a prophet.

33 So they finally replied, “We don’t know.” And Jesus responded, “Then I won’t tell you by what authority I do these things.”

**BAAM – Round One - goes to Jesus
& he wins it with One Punch**

& the Religious Leaders
stumble back into their corner

to put an Ice Pack on their Nose

& AS Round 2 Begins - the Religious Leaders
are standing in their corner – getting Angier & Angrier

Mark 12:1 (NLT) (put up entire vs)

1 Then Jesus began teaching them with stories (parables): . . .

**Only the NLT uses the phrase “teaching them”
all other versions say “speaking to them”**

**Because Jesus Was Speaking To the Religious Leaders
But they certainly Weren’t Learning Anything**

So Jesus ‘Speaks to them’ – in a Parable

**A Parable that would be a “Sucker Punch”
Knocking the Wind Out of them – for Round TWO**

(cont'g in vs 1) 1 . . . ***"A man planted a vineyard. He built a wall around it, dug a pit for pressing out the grape juice, and built a lookout tower. Then he leased the vineyard to tenant farmers and moved to another country.***

Now – **you** may **Not Immediately Know** that **Jesus** is **using** a **Common Illustration** of **God & Israel**

But I **assure you** – the **Religious Leaders** **Knew Immediately**

Because **Jesus** was **referring** to - the **National SYMBOL** of **Israel's Relationship with God**

In fact - on the **gates leading** from the **Outer Court** into the **Temple Proper** was a **MASSIVE Grapevine**

& **thru-out** the **OT** – **Israel** is **referred** to as **God's Vineyard**

So – the **Religious Leaders** **knew Immediately** **Jesus** was **talking** about - **God & THEM**

But **Please** - **listen to me** very **carefully** Right Here

WE are Also God's People Today

Grafted in – As **Spiritual Sons & Daughters** of **Abraham**

& **So** – this is **no longer** just a **SUCKER-PUNCH** **For** the **Religious Leaders** in Jesus' Day

NOW - This **Confrontation Parable**
COULD – **Knock** the **Wind** - **OUT OF US**

So – **I'm just** going to **start saying US** – **Okay?**

So – **Vs.1 says** - **God** has **gone** to **Great Lengths**
To **prepare** the **Vineyard of OUR lives**

- (**v.1** says) - **He Planted** the **Vineyard** of our **lives**
- **He Hemmed** it in on **all sides**
- **He Made** a way to **bring FRUIT** out of **our lives**
- **& He Built** a **watchtower** to **Protect** it **from** the **enemy**

& then – **God gave** the **Vineyard of our lives** -
TO US – FOR US To Manage

& we have to know –
with all that **God did** for the **Nation** of **Israel**

Today – from a **Spiritual Standpoint** -
God has done **SO MUCH MORE** for **US** - **Hasn't he?**

We may have **NO** “**Living Prophets**” **Quite** like **Israel** did
Who Israel **Routinely REJECTED**

BUT – we **have** the **Living Word of God**

that we may **Routinely REJECT**
Just like **Israel** - **Rejected** the **Prophets**

& even more – If we have
Put Our FAITH in Jesus Christ today

we have the power of the Holy Spirit - Living in us

& the Holy Spirit
Brings the Word of God to Life – IN our Hearts

& so The Soil of the Vineyard
that God has made OUR LIVES

Is actually FAR RICHER - Spiritually
than that of the Religious Leaders of Israel

AND - WE can REJECT – what We Owe to God
Just like the Leaders of Israel did – Can't We?

& God has been SO PATIENT with us – Hasn't He?
Just like he was (& still is) with the Nation of Israel

& so now - God sends a Servant – to collect the Fruit
from the Vineyard of our lives

Mark 12:2–3 (NLT)

2 *At the time of the grape harvest, he* (the vineyard owner, representing God) *sent one of his servants to collect his share of the crop.*

3 *But the farmers grabbed the servant, beat him up, and sent him back empty-handed.*

Could this Really BE US?

Could there be a time

when **God** has **sent His Servant TO US**

to **collect** the **Fruit** - that ***should be coming***

from the **Vineyard** that **God has created** in our **lives**

But - - **when** the **Servant gets** to our **lives**

We **DON'T Gratefully Give God** - the **Fruit** he **deserves**

INSTEAD - We **beat the servant up**

& send him back empty handed

NO FRUIT FOR YOU - GOD!

Instead – we **have** only **Anger** or **Frustration** toward **God**

But **God** is **so Merciful** - & **so Patient** – **isn't he?**

Mark 12:4–5 (NLT)

4 The owner then sent another servant, but they insulted him and beat him over the head.

5 The next servant he sent was killed. Others he sent were either beaten or killed,

There **IS Historical Record** of this “**Actually Happening**”

DURING the time of Jesus

But the Religious Leaders KNEW

Jesus was actually talking about Them – Spiritually

Because this is Exactly the Way they Treated the Prophets

Who WERE - the Word of God to them

And **WE HAVE** – the **Living Word of God**

that **God** has **sent to us** – **Don't we?**

Is there a Chance

that **WE** are **treating** the **LIVING Word of God**

the **same way** - **Israel** Treated the **Prophets**

who **SPOKE the Word of God ?**

Is there a Chance that **WE are treating**

The **Living Word of God** - &

The **Living Testimony of the Holy Spirit**

In the **Same way** - the **Farmers** in the **Parable**

were **treating** the **Servant** sent by **Vineyard owner ?**

& WHY DID the **Farmers REJECT** the **Servants**

who were **sent** from the **Vineyard owner**

to **collect** what **rightfully belonged** to the **owner?**

Don't you think it was

because they VIEWED their Vineyard - (*meaning their LIFE*)

as **THEIR OWN** - & **NOT** belonging
to **the One** who **gave it to them**

& so **they felt JUSTIFIED** – in **doing** with **Their Lives**
Whatever THEY WANTED to **do** with **Their Lives**

& they felt NO OBLIGATION

for **what** they **OWED**
to the **One** who **gave it all to them**

& so they had **no problem** – **REJECTING** – **INSULTING** –
BEATING - & **KILLING**

the **Servants** who **came** – to **collect** the **fruit**
that was **rightfully OWED** – to the **Owner of their Lives**

& so Finally – The Vineyard owner Sent His Own Son

Now – **I know** when **we read** this
you're going to **think** about **Israel Rejecting Jesus Christ**

& that is CERTAINLY TRUE

But – can you try to see with me
HOW this may relate to our lives?

So – the Owner had sent all his servants

& then we read in - Mark 12:6–8 (NLT)

6 until there was only one left—his son whom he loved dearly.

The owner finally sent him, thinking, ‘Surely they will respect my son.’

7 “But the tenant farmers said to one another, ‘Here comes the heir to this estate. Let’s kill him and get the estate for ourselves!’

8 So they grabbed him and murdered him and threw his body out of the vineyard.

That is Graphic - & Hard to Read

But remember – FOR US

The ESTATE - is a picture of OUR Lives

& the Son is coming to collect the FRUIT –

From the life that God has created for us

& the Picture here – is this

Tho Jesus Christ is the RIGHTFUL HEIR

to our Spiritual Lives

INSTEAD of Bearing the Fruit

that he CREATED us to Bear

We RADICALLY Remove Him - FROM our lives

SO THAT – we can have our Lives TO OURSELVES

& NOT Have To Give Him - the Fruit we Owe Him

So - Can I Ask you – to Ask God
a **Really HARD Question** Right **Now**

& **Be READY** – to **Really Listen** for the **answer**

Here in **the room** - & **at home** – **can** we just **bow our heads**
& **get ready** to **talk to God** for a **minute**?

Josh is going to play some music
to help keep us focused

& **we're going** to **ask God** – a **Hard Question**
& then **really Listen** – for **Him to Answer**

Ready? – Let's Pray

Here is the HARD Question

What is the Fruit - that God expects from me ?

What is **the Fruit** – that **God expects** to **receive**
From the **Abundant Spiritual Life** - **He's Given Me?**

Lord, What Fruit – Do I OWE You
from the life you've given me?

- From **ALL** that **you've created** in **me**
- From **ALL** that **you've done** for **me**
- From **ALL** that **you've prepared my life** to **Produce**

What fruit – are **you Expecting** to **receive**?

What Fruit – do you **come seeking** from **me**
Out Of the **Abundant Spiritual Life** you've **given me**

Forgiveness

Mercy

Grace

Long-Suffering

Faith – Trust – Contentment

What is it Lord, that you have prepared my life to produce ?

What Fruit are you EXPECTING to Receive From my life?

Is it **Righteousness**

Is it **Holiness** – in a **specific area** of my life?

I'm just going to **be quiet** for a **Minute**

Please – **Don't Lose Focus**

Stay in this place with **God**

Until you **KNOW** – what **Specific Fruit**

The Lord is **expecting to receive** from **your life** – today

[Just MUSIC Playing]

[END MUSIC at end of Dave Closing Prayer]

Jesus Christ – is **COMING TO OUR LIFE**
to **Receive the Fruit** – that **God created US** to **produce**

& **for all the times** – that **we** have **Rejected Him**

Charles Spurgeon said these words

“If you reject him, he answers you with tears; if you wound him, he bleeds out cleansing; if you kill him, he dies to redeem; if you bury him, he rises again to bring resurrection. Jesus is love made manifest.”

& **Jesus** will **continue to come**
to the **Vineyard of your life**

until your **last breath** in **THIS VINEYARD**

BUT- **there is a Day** – **when** it **becomes** – **TOO LATE**

Speaking to those
who **NEVER RECEIVE the Son** God sends . . .

Mark 12:9 (NLT)

9 *“What do you suppose the owner of the vineyard will do?” Jesus asked. “I’ll tell you—he will come and **kill those farmers** and lease the vineyard to others.*

The Parables are **some** of
the **Most Graphic Teachings** of Jesus

Because Jesus is SERIOUSLY TRYING

To get the truth across to us

& I THINK – THAT Vs – Gets it across

But then comes – The Ultimate Triumph

In this Cage-Fight

Between Jesus - & the Religious Leaders

Mark 12:10–11 (NLT)

10 Didn't you ever read this in the Scriptures? 'The stone that the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone.

11 This is the Lord's doing, and it is wonderful to see.'"

The Religious Leaders Would Reject Jesus

& put him to Death

But Jesus would become – the CORNERSTONE

Of the Eternal, Spiritual, Temple of God

& Phil Ch 2 says – One Day EVERY KNEE will Bow

& EVERY TONGUE will confess

That Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father

& right here – R. Kent Hughes tells us

[The Religious Leaders] had heard an eloquent description of the hope of God, the kindness of God, the severity of God, and the triumph of God. They had heard all this from the most authentic voice that ever spoke . . . And what was the result?

Mark 12:12 (NLT)

12 The religious leaders wanted to arrest Jesus because they realized he was telling the story against them—they were the wicked farmers. But they were afraid of the crowd, so they left him and went away.

The **Religious Leaders** of Israel

REJECTED the **Son of God**

**When he came to Receive
What was Rightfully His**

& they did it – to their Eternal LOSS

**May we, Instead - Receive Jesus Christ
As the Lord of the Vineyard of our Lives**

**& may we bring to him – The Fruit
That he created our lives to Produce**

Let's Pray