

DIGGING DEEPER



Producing Fruit:

18 Oct 2026

The Parable of the Tenants and Our Call to Purpose

What does it truly mean to bear fruit in our faith? The Parable of the Tenants in Matthew 21 pulls us into one of the most layered and confrontational stories Jesus ever told. Set against a backdrop of rising tension between Jesus and the religious leaders of His day, this parable is far more than a simple moral tale. It draws on centuries of history, connecting directly to the poetic imagery of Isaiah 5, where God's relationship with His people is already described through the picture of a vineyard carefully planted, lovingly tended, and heartbreakingly unproductive. When Jesus retells that story and inserts Himself into it as the son of the landowner, He is doing something bold and unmistakable. He is showing us that the broken relationship between God and His people has a turning point, and that turning point is Him. The question this parable leaves us with is not just a historical one. It is deeply personal. We are now the people entrusted with the vineyard. The measure of our faithfulness is not how many religious activities we participate in, but whether we are producing fruit. That is the single, honest, unavoidable metric this parable puts before us.

1.

The landowner in the parable entrusted his vineyard to the tenants with the expectation of fruit -- in what areas of your life has God entrusted you with something valuable, and are you stewarding it in a way that produces the fruit He expects?
2.

God's original call to Abraham in Genesis 12 was not simply to bless him but to make him a blessing to all peoples -- how does this purpose challenge the way you think about your own faith as something meant to extend outward rather than remain personal?
3.

The prophets in the Old Testament were repeatedly rejected, beaten, and killed when they called God's people to repentance -- what does this pattern reveal about human nature, and in what ways might we be resistant to voices calling us toward correction today?
4.

Jesus used a vineyard image that His audience would have recognized from Isaiah 5, connecting centuries of broken relationship between God and His people into one pointed story -- how does understanding this long history deepen your appreciation for what God has done through Christ?
5.

The religious leaders in the crowd condemned the wicked tenants with great emotion before realizing Jesus was describing them -- how easy is it to recognize sin and failure in others while remaining blind to the same patterns in ourselves?
6.

Jesus declared that the kingdom of God would be taken from those who refused to produce fruit and given to a people who would -- what does it mean to you personally that you are part of that people, and what responsibility does that place on you?
7.

The sermon draws a distinction between doing churchy things and actually producing fruit -- how do you evaluate whether the spiritual activities in your life are genuinely contributing to the mission of making disciples or simply maintaining comfortable religious routine?
8.

Jesus quoted Psalm 118 to describe Himself as the stone the builders rejected that became the cornerstone -- in what ways does rejection and apparent failure in your own life or faith community sometimes precede something God is building that you cannot yet see?
9.

Pastor Daniel challenged the congregation not to try harder but to sharpen their focus on becoming more like Christ and making disciples -- what is one specific area where a renewed focus, rather than increased effort, might transform the way you live out your faith?
10.

The parable ends with fruit as the ultimate measure of faithfulness -- if fruit production were the only metric by which your spiritual life was evaluated right now, what would that assessment reveal, and what would you want it to look like one year from now?

Remember...

"My challenge is for you to refocus yourself... to remember that everything is about what God has placed us on this world: to become more like Him, to follow Him, and to make disciples."