



SERMON REFLECTION GUIDE

Luke, Part 57: Power Struggle - Luke 20:9-19 - January 25, 2026

SERMON OUTLINE

Intro - 1964 National Champ Arkansas teammates become friends, become employer/employee, begin a *power struggle*, employee is fired, and nothing is ever good again.

The nature of Jesus's arrival in Jerusalem (Luke 19:28-48) presented him as an *authority* figure in the eyes of the people. However, the established authorities had a problem with him infringing upon their territory. (20:1-8) **Result?** They want to kill Jesus (19:47)
In light of this — Jesus tells a allegorical parable that describes the past AND the future.

1. The Vineyard Planter/Owner is God

Genesis 1 documents that God is the creator of everything, and yet he leaves the stewardship of his creation in the hands of his prized creation - mankind who were made in his image.

2. The Vineyard is Israel

For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel... his pleasant planting. (Is. 5:7)
Vine & vineyard became representations as a symbol for the nation of Israel.

3. The Tenants are the Established Jewish Religious Leadership - Priests, Scribes, Etc.

God has left the care of the vineyard in the hands of these "tenants" in the form of a "*crop lease*" - where they tend to Israel's spiritual wellbeing, helping them bear fruit for God.

Problem: God is not receiving any fruitfulness or glory from the nation, and he holds the tenants responsible for this failure.

4. The Servants are the Old Testament Prophets

God's initial *corrective/encouragement* came in the form of prophets in the Old Testament.

For centuries, God displayed *incredible patience* as he sent prophet after prophet to call Israel to return, and often these prophets were rejected, treated poorly.

5. The Son is Jesus

"*Beloved Son*" is a call back to God's proclamation at Jesus's baptism. (Lk. 3:22)

The tenants think that killing the heir will be the final hurdle to take full possession of the vineyard themselves.

Now - the parable turns to the *future*, as Jesus predicts that his own death will come at the hands of the Jewish religious leaders.

The Question: What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them?

What will he do to us? If, ultimately, all sinners are guilty of the death of Christ - what will God do to those who are implicit in the crucifixion?

"Destroy" "Broken to pieces" "crush him" (v. 16, 18) - God will judge and sentence all those who kill the son to destruction.

Could a loving God send people to hell? This question discounts God provision and patience over centuries, calling sinners to repent and trust in Christ - the rejected stone that becomes the cornerstone. (v. 17)

But, if you still reject the cornerstone - he becomes a different kind of stone - a heavy stone breaking and crushing those who remain opposed to him.

The scribes understand that he is talking about them (v. 19)

Jesus will either be the **cornerstone** or the **crushing-stone**.

We either **build** on him, or are **broken** by him.



SERMON REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Why is it human instinct to protect any power we have? How does this lead to conflict?
2. What was the scribes and Pharisees major problem with Jesus?
3. How have the "tenants" gotten to a place where they do not want to provide fruitfulness back to God?
4. Does the abuse of spirituality extend to today? Does the rejection of prophets extend to today?
5. Considering the scope of the Old Testament, what do we learn about God's nature from the continual sending of prophets?
6. Verses 16-18 are difficult as Jesus promises destruction for those who are guilty of his death. Is God's justice and wrath understandable?
7. What is the difference between Jesus being the cornerstone and Jesus being a crushing-stone?