

The Parable of the Tenants

I. Jesus told many parables.

- A. Parables are earthly stories with a heavenly meaning.
- B. Stories help us remember
- C. Parables allowed the unbelieving to not see, hear, and understand (Matthew 13:11-15)

II. The Parable of the Tenants - A First Look

- A. Context: the people of Israel are “doing it wrong”
 1. Cleansing the temple
 2. Another parable: the two sons
- B. The Jewish understanding:
 1. The landowner is God the Father, who has
 2. Given His people a special place (the vineyard) with His protection (walls, watchtower); in response,
 3. They mistreat God’s prophets (the servants), so
 4. God will give their special place to others.
- C. Our better understanding:
 1. The landowner’s son is Jesus
 2. The new tenants (the Gentiles) will get more of the honor of spreading the Gospel.
- D. This is a story for the Jewish people

III. The Parable of the Tenants - A Second Look

- A. The tenants say “Let’s kill the son and his inheritance will be ours.”
 1. What makes them think this will work?
 2. The story does not make sense.
- B. This is a story for us! We are the tenants. We:
 1. Give God a portion, and “the rest is mine.” Or,
 2. Give God most, but set aside portion “just for me.”
- C. What makes us think this will work? (What does that mean?)
 1. Our way brings more joy, peace, and security.
 - a. “The way of Jesus is boring; my way is exciting.”
 - b. “The way of Jesus is work; my way is rest and peace.”
 - c. “The way of Jesus is risky; my way has me in control.”
 - d. But Jesus gives life to the full (John 10:10)
 2. God will leave me alone and let me run my life my way.
 - a. Remember Jonah.
 - b. God is the god who pursues.
- D. What are you holding back?
 1. He wants your time, talent, treasure, but

2. He is most interested in You

IV. The Parable of the Tenants - The Final Look

- A. The parable is about the Jews, but we are just like the tenants
- B. The real story:
 1. God gave us everything
 2. We sinned, so God sent His Son
 3. Our sin killed Him
 4. Plot twist: this was the plan all along
 5. Through Jesus, we get the inheritance!
 6. *This story does not make sense.*

What are you holding back? Say it out loud.

LIFEGroup Questions:

1. *Optional Icebreaker Question: If you could have dinner with any historical figure, who would you choose?*
 2. Why do you think stories are such powerful tools for remembering and understanding spiritual truth (Matthew 13:11–15)?
 3. In the Parable of the Tenants, the tenants reject the landowner's servants and son. How do we sometimes ignore, resist, or reject the ways God is trying to speak to us today—and what might that reveal about our hearts?
 4. What lies do we sometimes believe about following Jesus (for example, that it will make life boring or harder)?
 5. If God is the God who pursues (like in the story of Jonah), what are you personally holding back—time, talent, treasure, or something deeper? What would it look like to surrender that fully to Him?
- How have you seen God pursue you, even when you were resistant or distracted?