

Do We Have His Blessing

by Anton Bosch

This sermon delves into the parable in Luke 20:9-19 where Jesus addresses the scribes and Pharisees, illustrating God as the vineyard owner, Israel as the vineyard, and the religious leaders as the vinedressers. The parable highlights the rejection of God's messengers, including the prophets, and ultimately the rejection and killing of God's beloved Son, symbolizing Jesus. It emphasizes the consequences of not giving God what is due, leading to judgment and the transfer of blessings. The sermon challenges individuals and churches to examine if they are giving God His due honor and warns against complacency and self-centeredness.

Scripture: Luke 20:9, Psalms 118:22, Isaiah 8:14, Daniel 2:34, 1 Corinthians 10:11, Revelation 2:4, Hebrews 6:7, Romans 11:17, Psalms 118:25

Topics: "Rejection of God's Messengers", "Accountability to God"

Description

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Transcript

Luke chapter 20 and we're going to read 9 through 19, another parable. Jesus is in the last seven days of his earthly ministry before the crucifixion, between the Palm Sunday or the triumphal entry into Jerusalem and the crucifixion. So this is during that time and remember that in the previous section of chapter 20, the scribes and Pharisees asked him, well, who gave you authority? And Jesus doesn't answer the question and he now tells a parable and he is specifically addressing them.

So verse 19 ends, and the chief priests and the scribes that very hour sought to lay hands on him, for they feared the people, for they knew he had spoken this parable against them. So this is against them. All right, so verse 9, then he began to tell the people this parable.

A certain man planted a vineyard, leased it to vine dressers, and went into a far country for a long time. Now at vintage time he sent a servant to the vine dressers that they might give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the vine dressers beat him and sent him away empty-handed.

Again he sent another servant and they beat him also, treated him shamefully and sent him away empty-handed. And again he sent a third and they wounded him also and cast him out. Then the owner of the vineyard said, what shall I do? I will send my beloved son.

Probably they will respect him when they see him. But when the vine dressers saw him, they reasoned among themselves saying, this is the heir, come let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. So they cast him out of the vineyard and killed him.

Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come and destroy those vine dressers and give the vineyard to others. And when they heard it they said, certainly not. Then he looked at them and said, what then is this that is written? The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

Whoever falls on that stone will be broken, but on whomever it falls it will grind him to powder. And the chief priests and the scribes that very hour sought to lay hands on him, but they feared the people for they knew he had spoken this parable against them. So again we have a parable and we need to remember that the parables are sometimes difficult to interpret because sometimes the details don't matter, only the punchline or the bottom line is important, the truth that the parable is leading up to.

Sometimes the details in a parable is important. This is one of those parables where the details are important, but at the same time there are details that are just the very nature of a parable in order to make the story flow and to make the story a story. There are some details that are obviously incidental, that are just there for the sake of filling in the gaps, of making the story a flow.

And so we need to see the difference between those things. So he began to tell this parable, a certain man planted a vineyard, leased it to vinedressers, and went into a far country for a long time. So here is the first question.

If the details are important, then what are these various players in the story? Who are the various characters? And of course there can be some debate, but generally we're agreed on who the players are. So a certain man planted a vineyard. The certain man clearly is God.

Now, you need to obviously read the whole of the parable to see the other details before you can now go back and say, well, this is who the different players are. So God plants a vineyard, and obviously this is not a literal vineyard. Israel is spoken of as the vineyard of God.

There are many scriptures in the Old Testament that refer to Israel as God's vineyard. And so it's an analogy, it's a picture of Israel. And so he plants a vineyard.

So God establishes the nation of Israel. The history of Israel is clear, we understand that. Israel refers to God as their father.

So a certain man planted a vineyard, and he leased it to vinedressers—vinedressers, gardeners, people who tend vineyards. And so who are the vinedressers? Who are the gardeners that he has put in charge of the vineyard? Well, clearly the bottom line, the last verse, 19, tells us who these are. These are the leaders of Israel.

So God establishes Israel, and he puts leaders in charge. And he says, look after the vineyard. Now, we can extend that, and we can say these leaders would include kings and prophets, but generally what

Jesus is referring to here are the present spiritual leaders—the scribes, the Pharisees, the chief priests, and the priests, the spiritual leaders of Israel.

Why does it say he leased it? Why doesn't it say, well, he established the vineyard and he gave it to them? Well, obviously because the parable is leading to a particular point. And the point is that God is entitled to the proceeds or to the rent. He is entitled to a share of the crop.

Remember those days a lot of stuff was done on a barter basis, so you didn't necessarily pay in money, but you would pay in kind. When people came to the temple and brought their tithes, those tithes would often be in the form of wheat and barley and part of their crop. This was just the way they did things.

And so he plants the vineyard, and he expects a return. He expects rent. What would that rent be? Well, I know the shortcut would be to say, well, those are tithes.

No, obviously God's not looking for the money. It's not about the money. God is looking for honor.

God is looking to be glorified. Why did he create everything? For his glory. Why did he save us? Not for ourselves, but for his glory.

And so God is to be respected, to be honored, and to be glorified. And so they are to give him the glory that is his, the honor that is his. And he went into a far country for a long time.

So God recedes into heaven, if you will. And it's a long time. God is patient, and God doesn't deal in one year and two year increments.

God deals in thousands of years. And so for a long time, God stands back and allows the process to develop. Then in verse 10, at vintage time, at the time of the harvest, he sent a servant to the vinedressers that he might give him some of the fruit of the vineyard.

But the vinedressers beat him and sent him away empty-handed. So he does that a second time. Verse 11, again he sent another servant, and they beat him also, treated him shamefully, and sent him away empty-handed.

And then again he sent a third, and they wounded him also, and they cast him out. They kicked him out of the vineyard, told him to go. Of course, we would say this is a shameful thing.

And as Jesus is telling this parable—and remember that we have the disadvantage of knowing the end before the beginning, because we've, I'm sure, read this many times, we've heard it preached before, and so we know where this is leading. But just put yourself in the position of those people that Jesus is telling the parable to. Obviously, their response would be, this is terrible.

This is unrighteous. This is unjust. The landlord is entitled to his rent.

He's entitled to be paid at harvest time. And of course, again, in our modern thinking, we pay rent monthly, generally. But those days you paid when the harvest came in.

In fact, when I was a boy, my father had a farm, and he owed money to the government for the farm, to the land bank. And that would be paid at harvest time. So it wasn't paid on a monthly or even a quarterly basis, but paid at harvest time.

So it's the same idea. And so they would say, well, you know, what kind of people are these? And obviously they're not understanding at this point that Jesus is referring to them. They're saying, who are these guys? You know, this is one of the problems we have.

It's easy to see the splint in our brother's eye, when in fact there's a beam in our own eye. It's something that after many years of ministry, I still can't get over. How that people will criticize things in other people, in other families, that are in fact bigger problems in their own lives, in their own families.

It's just part of human nature, it seems. That everybody else's issues seem to be huge, and we can clearly see. And of course, you're not wrong.

These guys are not wrong to have been angry. Now, it doesn't say they were, but I'm sure they were. To be angry and say, this is unrighteous, this is unjust.

How can these guys do this? It's easy to see that in someone else, and yet somehow it is impossible for us to see it in ourselves. I'm not going to quote examples, because I may step on too many toes. But trust me, we all do it.

And it's something that we need to be aware of. It's something I have to ask myself every time I preach the Word. Am I guilty of this? If I am preaching to you, I need to make sure that I am not doing the same thing.

And if I am, then I need to repent. This is the question I ask those that I seek counsel from on a regular basis. Am I guilty of the same things that I'm preaching against to others? And so, the response obviously is outrage at this kind of injustice.

And yet, they are the guys he's talking about. And of course, the same thing happens when we preach the Word. We listen to the Word, and when the Word deals with an issue, it's easy to apply it to someone else and say, well, that's terrible.

Why don't these people, why doesn't my husband, why doesn't brother so-and-so get their life in order? But in fact, the message is against you. And of course, it gets worse, because then the owner of the vineyard said, what shall I do? I'll send my beloved son. Now, here you can clearly see where the key is.

And with any of these things, it's like a riddle in a sense, you have to find the key, and then once you find the key, you can start figuring out the other bits in the riddle. And of course, here is the key. If you didn't know who the owner was, what the vineyard was, what the vine dresses were, when you get to this verse, it's clear who he's speaking about.

I will send my beloved son. There's only one that is spoken of in Scripture as my beloved son. This is my beloved son at his baptism.

Here he, him. God called Jesus his beloved son. And so, this is clearly Jesus that he's speaking about.

So, what will I do? I will send my beloved son. Probably, and I'm not sure whether this really should be translated maybe, but he's not saying maybe, he's really hopeful. Now, obviously God knew even before he sent his son.

He knew what it was. But again, this is in a human parable so that we can understand. So, from a human point of view, God is saying, well, maybe they will respect him when they see him.

They'll recognize this is not a highling. This is not one of the servants. This is my son.

But when the vine dresses saw him, they reasoned among themselves saying, this is the heir. Come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. Now, I'm not sure on what basis they came to that kind of conclusion.

I found one commentator that said that if the owner had not visited the land for three years and was an absentee landlord, that he forfeited the right to the land and that those who were working the land could then claim the land. I don't find any support for that idea, but somehow they had figured this out in their minds. And here's where the parable cannot be interpreted because there's really not a sense in which the leaders of Israel said, well, God, you know, will kill his son that we can get Israel.

You know, I don't think that was in their thinking. This is just part of the parable. So, trying to explain, so in trying to make the parable work, why would they kill him? Well, obviously he gives this reason.

So, come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. So, who then are the servants? So, we know who the owner is, the landlord is God. We know the vineyard is Israel.

We know that the rent that he is looking for is honor. We know that the son is the Lord Jesus Christ. So, then who are the servants who go and ask for the rent? Clearly, the servants are the prophets.

The God sent his prophets in the Old Testament. And really, what is the message of the prophets in the Old Testament? Give God what is God's. Give God his due.

God has given you the land to use. God has given you blessing. But there is something that you need to give back to God.

And what did the Israel do with the prophets? They beat them up. In fact, if you go to Hebrews chapter 11, you find a long list of what they did to them. They cut them asunder.

They stoned them. They killed them. They mistreated them.

They did all sorts of terrible things to them. And then God finally sends his son in the hope that they would hear him. Remember Hebrews chapter 1, that God at different times and in different ways spoke to the fathers through the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us through his son.

And so you would think that if God had spoken through the prophets, they would recognize this is God speaking. The prophets are not speaking on their own behalf. The messengers who came and claimed the rent were not asking for rent for themselves.

They were sent by the landlord. They were acting on his behalf. The prophets in the Old Testament were not asking for honor for themselves.

They were asking for honor for God. And even so today, those who are preachers of the word are not, obviously false preachers are looking for honor for themselves, but the true preachers are saying, give God his due. Give God what is his, what he is entitled to in your life.

And of course, the problem is that we mistreat the prophets the same way as they mistreated the prophets. And we say, no, we don't do that. Yes, we do that.

And so you can see the terrible bottom line of the story, ending in murder, just because they didn't want to give the rent. How much was the rent? I don't know, but it was a small percentage of the overall profit that they were making. He wasn't asking for the whole harvest.

He was just asking for 10% maybe, 5% maybe. And God is not asking us for too much. He's just asking us for what is his due.

We're going to see later on, Jesus says, give to Caesar what is Caesar's, but give God what is God's. We're so concerned about giving Caesar what is his, and we short change God on what is his. And again, I'm not talking about money.

Well, money may be part of the equation, but that's not really the issue. The issue is the heart. Their heart was not with God.

Their heart was not with the landlord. Their heart was not in the side of saying, well, this is just, this man has planted the vineyard. We didn't plant it.

In fact, the other gospels say that he put a wine press in, a pit where they would trade out the wine. He fenced it around. So he set the whole thing up.

He set the whole business up. And all they had to do was to tend the grapes and to reap the harvest. And God has done everything for us.

He has set everything up in our lives and in our salvation. All we have to do is to look after what he's given us and give him his due. And yet they would not.

So of course, the bottom line or the response, they cast him out of the vineyard and they killed him. Therefore, what will the owner of the vineyard do to them? They cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. Interesting statement.

They didn't kill him in the vineyard. They threw him out and killed him outside. And I think that there's a reference there to the Lord Jesus, because remember that he was crucified outside of the city.

They took him out and they crucified him outside of the walls of the city. Again, just an oblique reference to the Lord Jesus. Now, again, put yourself in the position of these people who are hearing the story.

So Jesus asks a question. And of course, he's going to answer the question. But he says, what will the owner do? Now, I don't know if he gave them a few moments to think about that.

I don't know if there was maybe some discussion. But I'm sure that even if there was no discussion, their immediate response would be he would throw them out and repossess the property. Maybe he'd even kill them.

That would be the natural response. And of course, that would be the just response. Because remember, they had not just tried to steal the property.

They had just not given God what was his, but they killed his son. So this is what he will do, Jesus says. He will come and destroy those vine dresses and give the vineyard to others.

And when they heard it, they said, certainly not. Now, here we have to be a little clever. In terms of interpreting this part of the parable, he will come and destroy those vine dresses.

So what does that mean? Well, obviously, he's going to judge them. And in terms of God's plan, they will end up in hell. That's his punishment, eternal death.

So he will come and destroy those vine dresses and give the vineyard to others. Now remember, we said that the vineyard is Israel. But here is where it becomes difficult.

So does God take Israel? And remember, when he's speaking about Israel, we're not speaking about the land. I don't believe you can say, well, God has given the land to the Muslims for these last 1,400, 1,600 years, that that's what Jesus is speaking about here. He is speaking about the nation.

God's concern was for the nation, not for the land so much. And so what is he going to do with Israel? Well, we also know the end of the conversation, so it's easy to interpret this. God takes away the blessings that he had given to Israel, and he gives them to the Gentiles, to the church.

So while Israel is still Israel, the blessings have been transferred, because Israel did not give God what was his due. And when he sends his son, and really, what does Jesus come to do? Well, he comes to seek and save what is lost. But his whole purpose is to restore Israel's relationship with God, and for Israel to give God what was his, and to restore God in his proper place in Israel.

Now the question is, what had replaced God and Israel? Why then was God not given the place that he should have been given? What had taken the place of God? Well, two things had taken the place of God. The first was the scriptures had taken the place of God. And I know some people who have not heard me before will be horrified and say, how can the scriptures take the place of God? Yes, they can, because many people have a relationship with a book, but they don't have a relationship with the author.

These people had a relationship with the law. They loved the law. They studied the law.

They taught the law. They argued the law. They went to sleep thinking about the law.

They got up in the morning thinking about the law. The whole thing was about the law. It wasn't about God.

It wasn't even about righteousness or justice. It was just about the law. And the second thing that had taken the place of God was nationalism.

It was all about the nation Israel, and not about God. You see, in God establishing Israel, the purpose was that he would be God, and Israel would be his people. But no, they changed that.

God was now out of the picture. It was all about us. And it becomes a self-centered, nationalistic thing.

And so the people's responses, and I'm not sure whether it's the people or the scribes, but when they heard this, they said, certainly not. I think that they began to understand what he is driving at, what the point was. Because they understood at this point, if he was speaking about the vineyard, what would the response be? Yeah, that's right.

They didn't pay the rent. They killed the son. They need to be kicked out.

They need to be dealt with, and the vineyard needs to be given to someone else. That's right. But you see, here's the problem.

The moment the chickens come home to roost, our whole sense of justice changes, because they understand this is not about vine dresses. It's about us. And suddenly it's all, it's, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no.

That's not the right thing to do. But if it was the right thing for the vine dresses, then it's the right thing for Israel. Now, here's where it gets sticky, because up to this point, I think that most Christians will be with me and say, yeah, God was right to deal with Israel.

God was right to take the kingdom away from Israel and to give it to the church. And just to, I always have to insert this caveat because some people are looking for, just looking for trouble. I don't believe that the church replaces Israel, that God's covenants with Israel are God's covenants with Israel.

He will return to Israel, fulfill those covenants. But in the meantime, he has taken the blessing from Israel and given it to the church. All right, there's the fine print.

So up to this point, we're good. We say, yeah, it was right for him to take the vineyard and give it to other tenants. It was good for him to judge those vine dresses.

It was good for God, and it was right for God to take his blessing from Israel and to give it to the Gentiles, to give it to the church, not just to Gentiles in general, but to the church. It was right for God to turn away from Israel. And in a sense, there is a reference to AD 70 when Jerusalem is destroyed and all of that, but I don't want to get too sidetracked on that.

So up to this point, we say, yeah, that's right. That's all good. But here's the bottom line.

If that was right for the vine dresses, if that was right for Israel, then what about us? What about us? What about the church that does not give God his due? What about the Christian who does not give God what is his? Oh no, certainly not. In other words, God should not take the blessing from us. He should not judge us, because we're the church.

But that's exactly what these guys were arguing. They were saying, but we're Israel. Yeah, he can do that to the vine dresses, but not to us.

We're Israel. And we use the same argument, and we say, yeah, that was right for the vine dresses, was right for Israel, but certainly not, not us. We're the church.

Now, folk, I understand. To be theologically correct, there is no scripture, and I don't believe that there is any sense in which God rejects the church, the true church, and gives the blessing to yet another group of people. Obviously, that's not there.

That's not going to happen. But we've got to bring this down to a personal level. We have to bring it down to the level of local churches, this church and other churches that may be represented on the internet.

If the local church does not give God what is his, is he not entitled to take away the blessing from that church and to give it to others? Do we have scripture for that? Yes, we do. To the church of Ephesus in Revelation chapter two, what was the problem with the church of Ephesus? They did not give God his due. What is God entitled to? He's entitled to our love, that you love the Lord with all your heart, all your

mind, all your soul, your strength, that he be the first love.

And you remember, that was the problem with the church of Ephesus. They had left their first love. In other words, they had given their love to something else and not to God.

So here's a church, a real actual church, that had done exactly what Israel had done and not given God his due. And what does God say? What does Jesus say to them? He says, I will remove your lampstand. I will remove your lampstand.

The lampstand was the franchise, if you will, of the church. In other words, you will no longer be a church. The lampstands represented the seven churches.

I will remove your lampstand. In other words, you will no longer be authorized to function as a church. Did they continue to function as a church? Yes, they did.

But God wasn't in it anymore. God had removed his blessing. You remember King Saul? God had anointed him through the prophet Samuel to be king of Israel.

But the time came when Saul no longer gave God what was his, that God took the anointing and he gave it to David. And Samuel goes and he anoints David. Saul continued to reign for 38 years.

But God was not with him. God had removed the blessing and given it to David. And David is fighting the battles and winning the wars because God is with him.

And folk, the Western world is filled with churches where God has removed the blessing. The lampstand is gone. The anointing is gone.

But they're going through the motions, meeting every Sunday, preaching, singing, doing the business of being a church. But God's not in it. And folk, we must ask the question about our church.

Where are we in this whole picture? I spoke a couple of weeks ago, I made reference to the tabernacle and to Eli's grandson, who was called Ichabod. The blessing has departed. It's gone.

God's no longer with Israel. The book of Romans tells us that we are the engrafted wild branches in the olive tree, not the vineyard, but the olive tree. Different pictures of Israel.

God cut off the two branches. Speaking of Israel and exactly what we've been speaking about, God turns away from Israel, takes the blessing, takes us as wild branches, Gentiles, and grafts us in. So we are not natural branches, we are grafted in.

And then Paul, or God through Paul, gives the warning. He says, you need to be careful. Because if God did not spare the natural branches, why then will he spare the grafted in branches, the not natural branches? A very specific, clear warning that we as the church have no reason to boast against Israel.

That we have less claim. Look, here's the scary thing. Yeah, we're in grace and we understand Calvary and we understand the New Testament.

But Paul says we have less claim to God's blessing than Israel does. And if God dealt with Israel this way, what Jesus is speaking about here in this parable, then how will he deal with the church? And I'm not meaning the real church, I'm meaning local churches that are not bearing fruit. Because at the end of the

day, what does the landowner want? He wants fruit.

How many times does Jesus tell parables? How many times do we see Jesus cursing the fig tree? Various illustrations, various statements that God is wanting fruit. The book of Hebrews chapter 6 speaks about the land that receives blessing from God, speaking about the rain, is tended by farmers, the leaders. But instead of producing fruit, it produces thorns and briars.

He says that is near cursing. It is to be reprobate, rejected, cast away. Over and over and over, we have this warning against the church.

And yet, folk, we don't get the message. We say, yeah, that was Israel. No, this is us.

These parables and the teaching of the New Testament is not about Israel, it's about us. I quote so often 1 Corinthians chapter 10, these things happened as examples to us upon whom the ends of the ages have come. And we said, but we didn't kill Jesus.

Or maybe not. Maybe. But we haven't given God what is his.

Now verse 17, then he looked at them and said, what then is this that is written? So they're saying that this is not right. And I know that there are those who are listening to me today and saying, this is just not right. How can God do this? How can he take the blessing from Israel? How can he take the blessing from my church? How can he take the blessing from my life? And Jesus said, it is written, the stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

Who is the stone that the builders rejected? Jesus. Obviously, he's speaking about Israel who would crucify him that week. And as they would crucify him, they would reject him.

But in rejecting him, he becomes the chief cornerstone. And he's quoting from Psalm 118. Now, this is interesting.

The stone which the builders rejected, Psalm 118, verse 22. The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. So he's quoting it word for word.

But the interesting thing is that part of Psalm 118, and Psalm 118 is a messianic psalm. It's a psalm that speaks about Jesus. Verse 25 says, save now, I pray, O Lord.

O Lord, I pray, send now prosperity. You say, well, what's got this got to do with anything? Well, what it has to do is remember that on Palm Sunday, they cried, Hosanna. Hosanna means save now, O Lord.

So he's prophesying that they will say, Hosanna, save now, O Lord. And then verse 26, this becomes more familiar. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

We have blessed you from the house of the Lord. So a few days before, that's what Israel said. Save now, O Lord.

Hosanna. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. So Jesus is quoting now from exactly the same psalm that they had quoted a few days before.

And he is saying the psalm also says, now he doesn't say that, but he's inferring that. You have said, he is saying, Hosanna. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

And I am inserting, and he says to them, but that psalm also says, the stone which the builders have rejected have become the chief cornerstone. And of course, that speaks about the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus is the chief cornerstone.

He is the foundation. Some translations, by the way, he doesn't say chief cornerstone, but says capstone. It really doesn't matter.

It's the same idea, the most important part of the building. Remember the cornerstone those days? Today we have cornerstones, but they are symbolic. And when they start building the building, they'll put in a cornerstone, and most often it's not even on the corner anymore.

It'll be somewhere near the door, like the one that we have outside. But those days, the cornerstone was the stone from which the building would be squared up. So it would be a very square stone, and the lines of the building would be established by that cornerstone.

And so it is the most important stone in the building. So Jesus would become the most important person in the kingdom. Now he goes on.

Now he says, not only does the stone become the cornerstone, but whoever falls on that stone will be broken. And again, he's quoting Isaiah chapter 8, which we spoke from a few weeks ago, a couple of months ago, actually. Isaiah says that he will become a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense.

That was who Jesus was to them at that time, a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. So whoever falls on that stone will be broken, but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder. Now remember, Jesus is answering a question, not a verbal question, but a question in their minds.

This is not right. How can you take the blessing from Israel and give it to the dogs? And Jesus is saying, but the very psalm that you guys quoted a few days ago about me says, and the prophet says that the stone that you've rejected, me, Jesus, will grind you to powder. And of course, they would remember if those words are in the book of Daniel, Daniel chapter 2, verse 34.

You watched while the stone was cut out without hands. This is the image that the king sees and Daniel interprets, and the image represents the kingdoms of the world, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay and broke them in pieces. The stone is Jesus.

I'm not going to get into the details of Daniel's prophecy because we've run out of time, but you can listen to the teachings on Daniel or study Daniel chapter 2. So the stone, remember the stone which the builders rejected, became the chief cornerstone. If you fall on that stone, you will be broken, but if that stone falls on you, it's going to grind you to powder. So the little stone comes and it strikes the image and it breaks the image in pieces.

Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, the gold, the different kingdoms were crushed together and became like chaff from the threshing floor, powder. The wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found, and the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. Jesus' kingdom.

Jesus becomes the center of everything, and the kingdoms of this world are destroyed. And so, can you see what Jesus is telling them? He's saying, you say, that's not right. You can't take this from Israel.

And he's saying, remember, the stone is everything. He's the cornerstone. He will destroy all of the kingdoms, including Israel, and his kingdom will endure forever.

All right, we're almost through. Luke chapter 20, verse 19. And the chief priests and the scribes that very hour sought to lay hands on him, but they feared the people, for they knew he had spoken this parable against them.

My prayer this morning is that we would understand if this parable has spoken against us personally, if it has spoken against your church, if you're watching online, if this parable has spoken against our church. And folks, this is a question I've reminded you of before, and I have to remind you again, we must ask the question, is this about us? Can God remove his blessing from us? And of course, the problem is certainly not. We are Sun Valley Community Church.

God has given us this property. God has blessed us in many ways. That's what Israel said, but God still turned away from them because they didn't give him what was due to him.

Folks, if we as a church don't give God what is his, nothing stops him from taking away his blessing. If you and your life don't give God what is his, he doesn't owe you. You owe him.

I owe him. We need to give him what is his. Father, we pray that you'd help us to understand.

Lord, these things are hard to hear, they are hard to receive. Lord, it's so easy to read through the gospels and to sit in judgment of Israel, and yet, Lord, these things speak to us. If they had no relevance to us, Lord, then what would the point be for them to be in Scripture? But they're written for our admonition.

They're written for our learning upon whom the ends of the ages have come. And so, Lord, I pray that you would help us, that when we hear your word, we may not be like the scribes and Pharisees who heard and wanted to apply it to everyone and everything else except themselves. But Lord, that we may hear your word and respond to your word.

Lord, that we may give you what is your due. Lord, you've sent your Son, and in our case, Lord, the order is reversed. You first sent your Son, and now you still continue to send your servants, the prophets, the preachers.

And they're saying, give God his due. Give God what is his. Lord, help us to hear and to give you what is yours, that you might be glorified, and that we might continue in your blessing.

And so, Lord, we need your blessing. We cannot continue. We cannot be like Saul, Lord.

Lord, for myself, I confess I do not want to be Saul who went through the motions and did the job, but you were not with him anymore. Lord, we need you. We need your blessing.

We need your help. We need your anointing. We need your power.

And Lord, we see a church in the Western world which, by and large, you have forsaken because they have forsaken you. Lord, I pray that you'd raise up your remnant, that you'd raise up individuals amongst us, that you'd raise up churches that honor you and give you what is yours. Help us to understand, Lord.

Help us above all to look into our own hearts, not to have a knee-jerk reaction like those people, but, Lord, to look into our own hearts and to examine and to fix those things that need to be fixed. We pray that you'd

help us in Jesus' name. So, I pray, Lord, that you'd go with us now.

Grant that your spirit may continue to teach us. And Lord, bring us together again safely on Thursday, I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/czZo0SbiYKA.mp4>

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