

Harvest Lessons

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[0 : 00] Take your Bibles if you would and turn with me to the book of Matthew chapter 21. I want to give you some harvest lessons that are taught in this passage of Scripture.

Matthew chapter 21. I remind you that you can go back to Luke chapter 20 and get a parallel passage, which is a passage that tells the same story from another point of view, and all the details are basically the same, but you'll get that same story.

I'd like to have a word of prayer with you first, and then we will go through this passage of Scripture. Father, I love you, and I thank you so very much for the opportunity to open your word. God, I'd like to ask you to help us sense the awesome responsibility that we have before you to carry the gospel message to the entire world.

We're not here for ourselves. It's not our house, not our fruit, not our work, not our ministry. It's all about you.

And I pray, dear God, that today you would bless your people and draw them to you and strengthen us, and I'll give you praise for all you do in Jesus' precious name. Amen. Just real quickly, let me walk you right back through the passage of Scripture.

[1 : 08] If you've got chapter 21, verse 33, you should underline there's a certain householder. And before I preach to you, I'll give you just some lessons real quickly in a minute. He's a householder.

That means he owns the house. He holds the house. And there's a certain householder. Jesus is telling a story in that a householder plants a vineyard. That means he plants a place to raise up some fruit, grapes.

He hedges it about. He builds some protection around it. And then he digs a wine press so he can take the grapes and make grape juice and wine and grape jelly and grape jam.

And he'll be able to do all of that. And then he builds a tower, a place to live and a place for the watchman to live and to see what's going on. And then he leaves and goes into a far country.

And when Jesus tells that story, it's him, it's God, it's the Father who has been a certain householder and he has planted a vineyard. If you've got your Bible, you might write in a margin there, Isaiah chapter 5, the nation of Israel.

[2 : 12] He calls that a vineyard in Isaiah chapter 5. And in verse 34, the time came. He's off in a far country. And the time came and the story that Jesus tells.

He said, man, I want them to pay me the rent on my place. I want them to give me my portion of the fruit. And so he sent his servants to his vineyard.

If you've got your Bible open in verse 34, you'll notice it's always fun to do this. But his is used like four times. He makes it real clear. I'm a householder. I built a vineyard.

I did all this stuff to it. And now I send my servants to visit my husbandman that I can receive the fruit thereof. And when those servants got there, the rent collectors, and they showed up and they said, hey, the guy that owns the house here would like you to pay your rent.

And they said, we ain't paying your rent. They just whooped them right there. Beat them up. Beat them up. And they'll end up killing some. The verse 35, they beat one. They killed another.

[3 : 14] They stoned another. And so the man that owns the house said, my goodness, I'm going to send some more guys over and see if I can't get my money. I want my money.

And he sent some more guys over in verse 36, and they did the same thing to them. Then he thought to himself, well, now certainly, maybe they don't believe their credentials. And certainly they, I don't understand why they won't do what they're supposed to do.

But I'm going to go ahead and send my son. I know they would show respect to my son. And there is no way they're going to be like that to my son if I send my son. He said, they'll respect him.

In verse 37, it says, they reverence my son. But when the husband, when that's the farmer, he's a tenant farmer, he's a renting farmer. When he saw the son, they said among themselves, this guy's the guy that's going to inherit everything.

So if we kill him and seize his inheritance, we will be able to seize his inheritance. So the old man's too old to get over here and we'll kill the son and we'll be all right.

[4 : 15] So they grabbed the son and they threw him out of the vineyard and they killed him. And the Lord of the vineyard, Jesus asked a question to the people listening because he's telling a story to illustrate a truth.

And he says, now when the Lord of the vineyard, when the guy that owns the vineyard, when the householder hears about this, what will he do to those husbandmen? And the Jews respond very correctly.

They say, well, he will miserably destroy those wicked men and he'll rent out his vineyard to some other guys that will be willing to pay the fruit. And Jesus said in verse 42, did you never read in the scripture?

The stone that the builders rejected does become the head of the corner. And this is the Lord's doing and it's marvelous in our eyes. And then he said, so I say, take away the kingdom of God from that group of people and give it to another group of people, another nation that will bring forth fruit.

There are two massive lessons overall here. I'm going to give you some really good lessons, but the massive lessons are the massive lessons are that the owner is God.

[5 : 28] It's his house. It's his. And then the lesson is he wants fruit. He wants fruit.

He said, I expect a return on my investment. In a dispensational way of looking at that, what happens is God gave the nation of Israel the authority and the privilege and the responsibility of being a blessing to the entire world.

Genesis chapter 12. They did not do that. And when they did not do that, God came along. And this is Romans 9, 10, 11 for those who really get confused about what happened.

And God set the nation of Israel to one side and he brought in the church, which is made up of born again Jews and born again Gentiles. And they formed the church and he gave it to them and he expects them to bring forth fruit.

He expects them to bring forth fruit. They're supposed to do something with what God has given them. And so today you and I live in the last part of this chapter.

[6 : 36] And the last part of this chapter is that we have, the last part of this passage, we have the responsibility that the Jews used to have. We have the responsibility to be a blessing to the entire world.

We're told to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. That's, this is not a, the New Testament great commission is not new.

It's not shocking. It's not like when somebody who's reading the Bible and hears about the great commission and they go, well, you know, for, for 39 books, Jesus didn't think like that. But if the last 27, he changed gears and said, now I want y'all to go do it.

No, it's only that I took it from one group and I gave it to another group. We're responsible before God to get the Bible, to get the word of God, to get salvation, to get churches everywhere.

So number one, write this down. If you would ownership, it all belongs to the householder. It all belongs to the householder.

[7 : 37] If you got your Bible open there and you'll read that verse of me, verse 33, it says there was a certain householder. It doesn't tell us who he is, but Jesus is telling the story.

And before the story is over, you're going to know it's about the kingdom of God. And he says, he planted a vineyard. He planted a vineyard. He hedged it about. He dug a wine press.

He built a tower. And then if you have your Bible open there, underline this, and he let it out. That's King James language for he rented it out.

The fact is, if you were to go to England right now and drive around England, all the stores, every place is friends. It says, for let. It'll say, for let.

We're going to let this one out. We're renting this one out. And that's what this landowner does. It's his house and his vineyard. Five times he uses his or my, denoting they're his servants, his son, his vineyard.

[8 : 36] He leases the vineyard. The man who leases the vineyard is a husbandman, a tenant farmer. He has a contract on the farm, all the houses, and all the implements.

All this fits what you should already know. Now just look this way. I'll bring it to you. And I'll apply it to you. Do you know that he created the world? If you know that, say amen.

I mean, like he owns the world because in Genesis 1, 1, the Bible says, in the beginning, God created heaven and the earth. There was nothing before God. And everything that is came after God.

And so the whole planet belongs to God. This might come as a shock to you, but you belong to God. And if you're a born again believer, you belong to him twice over.

All human beings belong to him because he is the creator. He is therefore the owner. But I'm a blood-bought son of God. I'm on my way to heaven because Jesus died for me and rescued me from my filthy sin.

[9 : 34] And he saved me. Is that good or not? Now if you go to this story and you go all the way back to the very beginning and his ownership, the first thing he did was let out his garden. He let out his garden.

He said, I'm going to put Adam and Eve in this garden. I'm going to let them take care of my garden. And I just got one rule here. Don't eat of that tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Well, like dingbats always do.

They went there and did what they weren't supposed to do. Amen. Kind of like you. Kind of like me. We've done what we weren't supposed to do. But you know what he did? When he did that, you know what he did?

He said, I want everybody to know I'm a good God. I want everybody to know I'm a good God. So Adam and Eve went out and they hid. And they covered themselves up with some leaves. And they tried to make something to hide their shame and their embarrassment.

And the great, sweet, and wonderful God of the Bible, who they know they're going to die. That God steps out and says, hey, where are y'all? Adam, where are you? And Adam says, God knows where he is.

[10 : 32] I mean, Adam's his creation. He knows Adam. He knows everything. He's omniscient, we call it. We're all knowing. And he knows. But he needs Adam to realize Adam's messed up.

And so Adam says, I'm over here. And he said, but we're naked. He said, how do you know you're naked? You've been naked all along. How'd you figure that out? He said, well, you know, this woman you gave me, you know how women are.

She kind of messed me up. And I ate the fruit. She ate the fruit. And I ate the fruit. And here we are. And I know you're here to kill us. Go ahead. He said, I'm not going to kill you.

If you'll trust me, I'll just take one of those sheep over there. I'm going to let that sheep die for you. And that lamb, that'll be the symbol of the Lamb of God that's to come, that lamb will die for you.

I'll cover your sin and your nakedness with his skins. But that lamb's sacrifice will get you right. That's the beautiful story of the entire Bible. The beautiful story of the entire Bible is every man's a sinner.

[11 : 29] And every man's done what he wants to do. And every man's gone his own way. But the sweet, wonderful, and great God of heaven wants every man everywhere to be saved. And he's made a provision to do that. Can I get an amen?

But he owns the world. I don't have time to go into all this. Boy, I could preach this to you for an hour and a half without even thinking about it. But just let me tell you this. If he owns the world, he's coming to get his fruit.

If he owns the world, he's coming for a judgment time. He's coming to talk to us. He's coming to find out what's going on. Number two. I want you to look at Matthew 21, 33. Again, he provided all that was needed to do the work.

And to do everything he wanted done. He provided everything. Look, if you would, in verse 33. Here, another parable. A certain householder. It's a parable. It's a story. He's telling to get it explained. He plants a vineyard.

But he didn't say, here's a bare piece of ground. See if you can get something to grow. I don't know what he did. He went on. He prepared the ground. And he planted a vineyard. And then he built a wall around his place to keep all the thieves and animals out.

[12 : 33] He didn't even want the foxes. The little foxes. He didn't want anything messing with his garden. And he fixed it all around. And he dug a wine press over there. So you can harvest the crop here.

And refine the crop over there. And take care of it. And he built a place for the guy to live in. A tower. So he could watch over the crop. So he could have a place to live. And then he let the guy have everything.

I mean he took Hoss Cartwright and old Ben Cartwright's house. And he just rented it out. Everything beautiful and everything right. And he just let them have it.

He just gave it to them. But he gave them everything they needed to do the work. He gave them everything they needed to do the work. Do you realize that? Do you realize that you and I as a people of God have everything we need to do the work?

He wants the world to know. He wants us to go be harvesting fruit. He wants it harvested in China. He wants it harvested in India and Indonesia. He wants it harvested all over the world.

[13 : 34] He wants fruit brought to him. If you don't believe that go read the book of Revelation. And he gave us everything we need. He gave me an inspired infallible inerrant word of God. He said this thing cuts both ways.

It'll change lives. He gave me the power of the Holy Spirit of God. He gave me a church. He gave me gifts. He gave me everything I need to get the gospel message to the world. Everything.

He gave us the ability to learn languages. He gave us the ability to transport ourselves. He gave us the money to send the messengers. He gave us everything we need. If you see that, say amen.

So you see he owns the vineyard. And he gave everybody that's working in the vineyard everything they needed. You know, the guy working in the vineyard, he didn't get up and go, where are we going to turn the grapes into jelly and jams and juices?

The guy goes, he gave you a wine press. Well, where are we going to spend the night? He built you a tower. Well, how are we going to protect it? Well, he hedged it in for you. He did it all. And that's how our God is.

[14 : 35] Amen. We have this massive work in front of us. This massive responsibility as a church to carry the gospel to the world. And we make excuses. And the God of heaven looks on and says, hold it, boys.

It belongs to me, not you. Money in your pocket doesn't belong to you either. The time on your watch doesn't belong to you. Your children don't belong to you. It all belongs to him.

Number three, he expects a return on his investment. What I'm about to say has gotten me in more trouble, even at vision.

Even at vision. People say, brother, well, to just be faithful. No, I had to be fruitful. Just faithful. I need to read these verses.

Hang on. Watch what it says. Matthew 21, 34. And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenant farmer and said, I want my fruit.

[15 : 38] He said, I want my fruit. I need you to understand something. He didn't give me good health so I can enjoy good health.

He didn't give me money so I can enjoy my life. He didn't give me a beautiful wife and wonderful children so I could just have a great time. He didn't give me talents and abilities so I could look good in front of you.

He looked at everything and said, my vineyard, I've given you everything you need. I want my fruit. Let me show you what the Bible says. In this story, Jesus said, the guy, Jesus is telling the story.

And Jesus said, now a certain householder, he planted a vineyard and he did all these things. And then he rented it out to a husbandman, which was the nation of Israel. And now it's a church.

But he rented it out to these people who are responsible to do what the householder wants. And then he said, and when it came time for the harvest, he said, I want my fruit.

[16 : 42] It's nothing new in the Bible. Look at Matthew chapter 13 and verse 23 with me if you would. You see, good ground brings forth fruit. The only question is how much fruit?

In Matthew chapter 13 and verse 23, the Bible says, But he that received seed unto the good ground is he that heareth the word and understand it, and which bears fruit and brings forth some a hundredfold and some sixty and some thirty.

You've heard that passage preached. He goes out and he sows the seed and some falls on stony ground and some falls in the weeds and some falls on some good ground. There's four kinds of soil there.

And he said, one of them doesn't have much depth. But when it falls on the good ground, that's us. We heard it. How many of you heard it? Say amen. You heard about God.

You heard about Jesus loving us. You heard about Jesus dying for us. And you received it. And when you received it, God said, I gave it to you. Now do something with it.

[17 : 48] Yeah, you're going to heaven. But do something with it a hundredfold. Give me a hundred time return or a sixty time return or a thirty time return. Matthew chapter 21 and verse 19.

There's this fig tree. Look at it in verse 19. And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it and he found nothing on it. Just leaves. That's like churches full of activities.

Churches full of activities. They look pretty. They look good. But you can't find nothing to eat there. He said, I found nothing but leaves. He said, all right, that's it. Let no fruit grow on you forever.

And the fig tree just died. You know, when he's walking along and sees a fig tree, you know what he thinks? I ought to get it. If I see a fig tree, I'll really get a fig. That's what he thought.

He just walked along to that fig tree. I think I ought to get a fig. I got some pepper plants growing on my back porch. I think I got thirty-five peppers out there. You'd just be shocked, man. I keep cutting them and they just keep a-coming.

[18 : 50] Say amen. If not, I'd let them wither up and die. I couldn't curse them, but I could quit watering them. Say amen. Huh? And I got some tomatoes growing out there, but the snails or something like them better than we do.

And so, don't they're doing too good. They don't like the hot peppers. You want to hear what he said in John chapter 15 and verse 8, if you would look at that? In John 15 and verse 8, he said, Herein is my father glorified that you bear much fruit.

So shall you be my disciples. You're not here to take up space, breathe air, have a baby, build a nest, and enjoy life and die. I want some fruit. Come on.

Do you see it or not? That's always the rub. Now watch this. Here's another story told. In Matthew chapter 25 and verse 14.

Open your Bibles there so you can see it. Matthew chapter 25 verse 14. For the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling, just like a guy going to a far country, into a far country who calls his own servants, his own servants.

[19 : 57] How many of you are his servants? Say amen. His own servants. He gave up his servants and delivered unto them his goods. You know, everything I have, he delivered to me.

Amen. The fact that I got up this morning is him. He gave it to me. And verse 15. And he gave five talents to one. And he gave two to another. And he gave one to another man.

Every man according to his several ability. He didn't give you more than you could use. He gave you exactly what you needed to do what he wanted done. And a straight way, right away, he took his journey.

And after he had received, and then he said, excuse me, verse 15. And he gave five talents to one, according to several ability, and straightway, he took his journey. Verse 16. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same and made another five talents.

You should underline that. Made another five talents. He said, boy, the Lord gave me this. Let me see what I can do with what he gave me. I want to provide the fruit. I want to provide the increase.

[21 : 03] I want to use responsibly what God put in my hands. You know, some of us have been given very small amounts of money. Very small amounts of talent. But we're supposed to do something with it.

Some of us have been given a whole bunch of money and a whole bunch of talents. And we're supposed to do something with it. He gave them five talents. The guy made another five. Verse 17. And likewise, he that received two gained other two.

In verse 18. He that received one went and digged in the earth and hid his Lord's money. Now, the guy in verse 18. I mean, he's a bad guy. In the story, he's a bad guy.

In fact, he's going to be cast out. I mean, bad things are fixing to happen to that poor guy. But can I just be honest with you? He reminds me of a Baptist. I love the word of God.

I'm not going to hide it in my heart. I'm going to use it in a sword battle. But when he comes, I know where I put it. Getting bad in here.

[22 : 08] Y'all don't like me. One more week, that's all you got to put up with. Now go do this to somebody else. Watch this. So the Lord came and he goes. Make it look like I used it a little bit.

Read your Bible. Verse 19. After a long time, the Lord of those servants comes and reckons with them. See, that reckons. He comes and says, it's time to settle up, boys.

It's time to settle the counts. Verse 20. The guy that received five brought other five and said, in verse 20, I have gained. In verse 21, he said, well done.

In verse 22, the other guy came and said, I have gained. In verse 23, he said, well done. In verse 24, the guy that received one talent said, now, Lord, I wasn't about to lose what you gave me.

Because I know you. You're a tough guy. You reap where you haven't sown. You wanted us to make money for you. You gather where you haven't strolled. I know you just wanted to use us.

[23 : 17] You wanted me to give you my money. And so here's what I did. I hid your talent. And here's what's yours. You can have it back.

That's faithful. I mean, he didn't lose a thing. He's faithful. I mean, when the Lord shows up, he's like, hey, I haven't spent one penny that I wasn't supposed to spend.

Man, it's all here. I could have took a chance and lost it, but I didn't lose it. It's right here, right here. Done right, done right. And Jesus said, the Lord said, in verse 26, thou wicked and slothful servant.

Verse 27, he said, you should have put my money with the exchangers. And then I could have at least got some interest when I got here.

Now, that's an interesting concept for you to look at right there with me. It's an interesting concept. The one guy comes and says, Lord, you gave me five. I got five more. He said, well done.

[24 : 17] He said, I have gained. He goes, the other guy says, I got two. I got two more. I have gained. Well done. The other guy comes and says, I didn't lose a thing. I didn't lose a thing. And the Lord's answer wasn't, well, that's good.

I'm glad you didn't lose it. I'm glad you held the fort. I'm glad you held on to the fort. I'm glad you didn't lose. You know, he said, could you not have at least put it in the bank and got me a half a percent interest a year?

Couldn't you have done something with what I gave you? You see, he wanted some fruit. Number four. Time's gone. So number four, ready? Verse 35.

And the husbandman took his servants and beat one and killed another and stoned another. He sent other servants and they did the same to them too. I want you to write this down somewhere if you do. Too often God's people enjoy the benefits while ignoring the responsibility.

They're living in a tower he built. They're using the wine press he built. They're eating grapes and drinking wine and grape juice.

[25 : 27] They're having parties. They're enjoying it. It's prosperity gospel time, which is what Christianity has turned into. Even among independent Baptists.

It's not like, hey, boy, God has put me so much on me. I got so much I need to do. It's like, boy, God's been good to me. Y'all want another, y'all want another tater?

I got plenty of taters. It's not like I got something to do. It's hold the fort. Deuteronomy chapter 6 and verse 10. Jesus is talking to that first husbandman, the Jews.

He said, now, y'all are going to get, look at it. He said, y'all are going to get good, great and goodly cities, but you didn't build them. You'll get houses full of good things, but you didn't fill them. You're going to get wells that you didn't dig.

You're going to get vineyards and olive trees that you didn't plant. And when you eat and get full, don't forget I gave it to you. Beware, lest thou forget the Lord.

[26 : 37] For the sake of time, are you enjoying what God's done? And how he's blessed you.

I mean, you got money. You got good health. But you haven't witnessed anybody. You haven't invited anybody to church. Haven't given anything to missions.

Christianity is about your children marrying right. And nobody getting drunk. Nobody using drugs. But it's not about being a blessing to the world.

Well, that's not who we are, guys. The deciding factors found in verse 37. What's your attitude towards the son?

Last of all, he sent unto them his son. And he said, certainly they'll reverence my son. But they killed his son. They killed his son. They decided to kill Jesus and take his inheritance.

[27 : 35] That's what the Jews did. Boy, the Jews had gone from this little, measly, traveling vagabond named Abraham. And all through their life, God made them richer and richer and richer and richer.

And then it was Isaac and Jacob. And when they leave Egypt, there's at least a million or two of them that walk out of Egypt. God works miracle after miracle. God is so good to Israel.

Israel is so good to them. And he takes them through. And then he gives them Eli and Samuel and other judges. And he raises them up. And he gives them a king named Saul.

And he gives them David, like the wisest man. And he gives them Solomon, the richest and wisest man of all. And the country is blessed beyond measure. So that people everywhere are like, boy, if you want to hear wisdom, go to hear Solomon.

If you want to see wealth, go see Solomon. But Solomon turned to other gods. He had enough money to build anything he wanted, like you do. Do anything he wanted, like you do.

[28 : 35] But he forgot what it was all about. It was never about him. It was never about him having a bunch of wives. It was never about him having a bunch of horses. It was about him. Blessing the world.

You see, they rejected Jesus in Matthew 21, 42. They rejected Jesus. The Jews rejected him. The Jews rejected him. And he says, isn't it shocking that the one you rejected will become the chief cornerstone?

Too many of us want Jesus as a Savior and not a Lord. We make decisions that we want instead of considering his will.

But in Romans chapter 12 and verse 1, he said, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercy of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God. That's your reasonable service.

Will you reject yourself and follow the Lord? In Matthew 21, 40. The Lord Jesus said, let me ask you all a question. What would any householder do in those circumstances?

[29 : 37] I can tell you what he does. He killed my son. He hires an army. Abraham's got his own men raised and taught to fight in his house. He mounts up on his horses and he rides into his vineyard and says, bless God, I'm here to take over.

You don't kill me. You don't kill my son. You don't take my stuff. It's my stuff. He did that in Genesis 6 when the flood happened. He did that in AD 70 when Jerusalem fell.

Well, he did that when Jesus was taken away from them and he led it out to another group of people. That's us. He's going to give it back to Israel eventually.

But here's what I'd like to ask you. What are we going to do with it while we got it? What are we going to do with it while we got it? We ought to all be as a church saying, I'll have a little meeting over here and pray for Mongolia and Mexico.

And Malta and Malaysia. Let's have a meeting over here. Let's pray over China and India because we're supposed to be a blessing there. We're going to have all these missionaries come along and we're going to help these missionaries.

[30 : 47] And we're going to raise them and we're going to train them because we're not here to have a feel-good church. We're here to carry the gospel message of Jesus Christ around the entire world. That's who we are.

What are we going to do? We have made it acceptable to enjoy blessings while ignoring responsibilities. We don't want to do that.

Maybe God would call you to be a missionary. Maybe God would deal with your heart about how much you've been giving. Maybe God would deal with you about how much you're praying.

But maybe God would say to you, it's my life, my world. I want you involved in it. God, I want you doing my will. You ought to pray something like this.

Our Father, charted heaven. Hallowed be your name, not mine. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

[31 : 46] Today, I quit living for me. And I began living for him. Today, I realize that the money I have, the health I have, the life I have, isn't about me.

With every head bowed and every eye closed. Father in heaven, I ask you to work today. I pray you'd call some people to the mission field. I pray to God you'd call some people to give like they've never given before.

To pray like they've never prayed for. To witness to their neighbors. I just pray God that our church would be a church that is used constantly, continually.

And from now till you come back to get the gospel to the world. Would you move amongst us? Your heads bowed and your eyes closed. If the Holy Spirit spoke to you, I ask you to get out of your seat and come find a place to pray.

If you're not saved here, you need to know this. Today is the day of salvation. Today is the day you can be saved. But it won't be that way tomorrow or the next day.

[32 : 53] Like Cindy Proctor, you could be in a wreck. Or like Andres Ramos, you could die without Christ.

We need Jesus. Is the Holy Spirit of God dealing with you? If you're not saved, be saved today. And as a Christian, I challenge you to take everything you have and lay it on the altar.

I really would like to ask you to get out of your seat and say, God, whatever you want. Not my will to be done, but your will be done. Let God do a work in your life for his honor and his glory.

Not about me, not about my future, not about my money, but about whatever you want in my life. Father God in heaven, I give you praise. Do a work now, and I'll thank you for all you do.

and I'll let you love that one ceremony.