

The title for today's message is: **Jesus Is our Cornerstone**

Jesus said: **"Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my son, whom I love; perhaps they will respect him.'**

Grace and peace to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

From time to time, each and every one of us have turned to a stranger for all kinds of things, such as advice, wisdom, and even strength.

And, when we don't feel well, what do we do? we go to the doctor, and seek his, or her advice, and treatment.

When we have problems seeing, what do we do? we go to the eye doctor, or if we have a toothache, what do we do? we go to the dentist.

And when we need advice, or direction in our life, what do we do? we go to someone who claims to have all the answers.

But by doing so, if we were not careful, we will forget all about God's wisdom, strength, and knowledge, which surpasses all people in the entire world.

Now, let's take a closer look at today's parable. It's certainly one of Jesus' more popular ones, known as the parable of the tenants.

Defiantly one of the saddest, and shocking parables that Jesus used, one that has all the elements for a great mystery story.

And let us not forget, at the time Jesus told this parable, He was getting closer to the day He would be crucified on a cross.

As Jesus gets closer to that day, it becomes apparent that His enemies are now very anxious to silence Him, or get rid of Him altogether.

But, God had other plans, there was a lot more teaching that Jesus must do. Showing the people that the advise they were getting was bad advice.

So, Jesus wastes no time in doing just that. Speaking now to all the people there, He said; **“A man planted a vineyard and let it out to tenants and went into another country for a long while.**

Back then, it was a common practice of the day, for a landowner to let, or rent out, his property to tenants who would then farm the land.

And it was also common for a landowner to travel to another country, all the while his land is being farmed.

And, nether was it uncommon, for the landowner to wait long periods of time to receive their share of the harvest, which was considered the rent.

Now, Jesus continues saying; **When the time came, he sent a servant to the tenants, so that they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard.**

But something unexpected happens, the tenants decided not to pay the rent, instead they beat the servant, and sent him back empty-handed.

As a sure sign of defiance, a notice to the landowner, if you will, that the renters or, tenants, have decided not to pay the rent.

Apparently the land owner thought this was just a fluke or something, because he sent another servant to try and collect the rent.

But again, the tenants beat up this servant as well, sending him back to the land owner empty-handed like the first one.

Now, the land owner, still wanting to give the tenants a chance to pay up, sent a third servant to collect his rent.

And just like the others, he too, was treated in the same way, he too was beaten and sent back empty-handed.

Three times the land owner sent his servants to collect the rent due him, and three times the tenants refused to pay.

Now, by this time, it was very clear that the tenants weren't going to pay the landowner, the rent due him.

My wife saw this kind of thing every day, as she would go out to collect the rent due to the landowner, and many times she's sent away empty-handed.

Now, I started out by saying many people seek advice from all sorts of people, yet for spiritual advice, most people simply don't bother, why?

Look, the world has little, if any, tolerance at all, for God's Word. For many they feel that God's Word, isn't relevant, that its just too confining.

The writer of Proverbs chapter 1, said: **"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline"**.

It's the unbelievers who are fools, they despise, and reject God's Word. And like the tenants in the parable, they too have no use for God's Word.

But were different, we have come to know, and believe that God's Word, is relevant today. Revealing to us all, His knowledge and wisdom.

So, when we need direction on finding our way in life, we have it, right here in God's Word.

And when we search for hope in this world of hopelessness, we find it right here, in God's Word.

And when we realize that we deserve nothing more, than eternal punishment, we realize there's salvation, right here in God's Word.

God's Word changes our lives, making it possible for you, and me to enter into heaven, rather than languishing in the depths of eternal hell.

And even though some people, do reject God's Word, it doesn't change the truth in any way. No matter what, Jesus is our cornerstone.

Now, going back to the parable, the land owner was at his wits' end, and he said to himself; **"What shall I do?"**

I mean, its not as if he could get on the phone and call the police, and have the tenants evicted, or arrested.

No! Instead, he comes up with the only solution he could think of. He said: **"I will send my son, whom I love; perhaps they will respect him."**

He really thought the tenants would respect his son, and finally pay the rent due him. After all this was his son, not a servant.

Now, can you see a parallel here, the land owner said: **"I will send my son, whom I love."**

And what did God say in Mark chapter 9: **"This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!"**

But the tenants didn't respect the son, nor did they listen to the son, Jesus said: **"But when the tenants saw him, (meaning the son) they talked the matter over."**

Now, they knew it was important that they respect the landowners son, but instead, they said: **"Let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours."**

That's right, they actually thought by killing the landowners son, they would end up with his inheritance. Ownership of the land. Now, that's bad advice!

Even though, that's exactly what they did. Jesus said: **"So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him."**

The tenants rejected the love that the land owner was showing them, by giving them, yet another chance to do what was right.

At this time, Jesus asked the people there: **"What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them?"**

Here, Jesus stood there, describing Himself to the people as their cornerstone, yet He found it necessary to answer His own question.

He said, **"He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others."**

Yet, look how the people react to this, Jesus said: **"When the people heard this, they said, 'May this never be!'"**

For some reason, the people thought it wrong to kill the tenants, and giving the land to someone else. Its as if they didn't see the injustice of it all.

Never giving up, Jesus continued saying: **"Then what is the meaning of that which is written.**

Here Jesus quotes Psalm 118, He said: **'The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone."**

Here, Jesus is asking the people to explain to Him, the meaning of the Psalm. But again, there was only silence.

Look, when Jesus said; **the stone the builders rejected...** He was talking about Himself. He is the one, the people would reject.

And when He said the rejected stone became the cornerstone. He was again talking about Himself.

Now, the cornerstone, or capstone as it is also called, is a stone of prominence. It's the stone that stabilizes the other stones of the foundation.

Look, if the cornerstone is out of place, all the rest of the other stones in foundation will also be out of place, causing the foundation to fail.

Now, the point is; through God, Jesus became the cornerstone for which His church is built. A foundation that will never fail, lasting forever.

Jesus then said: **"Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him."**

And you can bet, there were many who stumbled against this cornerstone, and were broken, or crushed, by what Jesus had to say.

Yes, my friends, there are all kinds of people out there today, that claim to be experts in just about everything.

And for a price, they'll give advice to those who are lost and hurting. But remember, there's only one who gives good solid advice, free of charge.

The only one who gives us the absolute truth, making all other advice, and wisdom, useless, and shown to be false.

Its of course, Jesus Christ, our Lord and savior, our cornerstone, who for us, came to this world to save us from all our sins.

And the truth is this; **"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.**

Amen.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all. Amen.