

How To Give Away Your Faith

HANDOUT #6

126. We must not forget that Jesus is responding to their criticism of His seeking sinners & so He gives three illustrations of God's pursuit.
127. The shepherd like the God the Son goes after the lost sheep.
128. The woman like God the Spirit searches for the lost coin.
129. The father like God the Father longs for the return of his lost son.
130. The question is not whether Calvinists believe God takes the initiative with sinful man — for they certainly do.
131. The question is whether the Bible teaches that God's saving initiative is extended only to those whom He has unconditionally chosen.
132. The Calvinist would object to the Traditionalist's characterization of their view as making God's call & saving initiative disingenuous & not genuine.
133. They would reason that God — can sincerely call those whom He has not elected to salvation while genuinely saving those whom He has elected, for they say Jesus Himself said, "**For many are called, but few are chosen.**"
134. They would further argue that no one would ever accuse Jesus, who is "**the truth**" (John 14:6) of being less than truthful.
135. Therefore, if He could sincerely make such a statement, they maintain that they can affirm the same distinction without making God's call insincere.
136. But does Jesus' statement in Matthew 22:14, "**many are called, but few are chosen**" necessarily establish their teaching of unconditional election?
137. We have seen that unconditional election is the Calvinist position that God, before the foundation of the world, sovereignly chose certain individuals to be saved without basing that choice on any future act of faith in Christ.
138. So, the Calvinist argument is essentially that while God calls many people, only the elect receive His irresistible call; therefore, "**many are called, but few are chosen,**" with those few being unconditionally chosen by God.
139. However, I think that if the passage is studied carefully it does not change that God initiates with all & that all have *an equal opportunity* to respond.
140. As we consider Matthew 22:14 — the context of the statement is critical, so let's step through the parable to determine the context of this verse.

1 Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying, 2 “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son (22:1).

- 141. Jesus now tells this parable—not in response to anything they had _____ per se, but in response *to what He knew they were thinking* in their hearts.
- 142. And when addressing them, *we must never forget that*, though the religious leaders were lost, blind & self-seeking—Jesus still loved them & was going to die for them & so each this parable He gives is spoken to them ____ love.
- 143. It is very important that ____ understand the flow of thought in the larger context—because Jesus’ statement, “**Many are called, but few are chosen**,” must be interpreted in light of the entire parable & the preceding parables.
- 144. This is the third in a trilogy of parables in which Jesus reveals the national consequences of rejecting — Israel’s promised King ____ Messiah.
- 145. Jesus’ first parable (21:28–32) was a parable of accountability, confronting them over their rejection of the message proclaimed by His forerunner, John the Baptist — a solemn message — they ____ refused to believe.

28 “But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, ‘Son, go work today in the vineyard.’ 29 “And he answered, ‘I will not’; but afterward he regretted it and went. 30 “The man came to the second and said the same thing; and he answered, ‘I will, sir’; but he did not go. 31 “Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.”

- 146. Again, this 1st parable is about accountability, as Jesus describes a man who had “**two sons**” and told them to ____ and work “**in the vineyard**.”
- 147. The 1st son initially refused to go, but afterward he “**regretted it**” & ____.
- 148. The 2nd son promised to go as his father commanded, but ____ never went.
- 149. The 1st son, who initially appeared to be rebellious, ultimately proved to be obedient — while the second son — who initially appeared to be righteous — ultimately proved — to ____ rebellious.
- 150. After telling the parable, Jesus then forced these religious leaders to make a judgment, knowing that they had just refused to publicly acknowledge — the authority of — John ____ Baptist.
- 151. So ____ simply asked them, “**Which of the two did the will of his father?**”
- 152. There was only—one answer they could give—the ____ son.

153. The Lord's application to these religious leaders was devastating, as we _____ in the statement that follows (Matthew 21:31b–32).

Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you that the tax collectors and prostitutes will get into the kingdom of God before you. 32 "For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him; but the tax collectors and prostitutes did believe him; and you, seeing this, did not even feel remorse afterward so as to believe him.

154. There was no question that John came "**in the way of righteousness**," _____ the leaders' problem was they "**did not believe him**" (21:32).
155. His message was *a call to repentance*, and John's life should have resonated with these Jewish leaders — because he exemplified — the kind of outward righteousness they claimed to value—prayer, fasting & the giving of _____.
156. Yet, in spite of what they saw and heard in John's lifestyle and message, they still rejected his ministry about Jesus and they refused _____ repent.
157. They appeared to be righteous on the outside, but they proved to be _____ rebellious than the very people they despised.
158. "**The tax collectors and prostitutes**" were the people that no _____ would have expected to respond to John's call for repentance.
159. Yet many of them did, and so they were like the first son in Jesus' parable—initially defiant, _____ afterward repentant & obedient.
160. By contrast the religious leaders were like the second son who appeared righteous, but _____ their refusal to repent they revealed their rebellion.
161. "**The tax collectors and prostitutes**" appeared rebellious — however their repentance to respond to Jesus demonstrated a genuine response to _____.
162. In essence, *the repentance & obedience* of "**the tax collectors & prostitutes**" caused these religious leaders—who _____ rejected John the Baptist's ministry & now Jesus' ministry—to stand condemned before God.
- "**but the tax collectors and prostitutes did believe him; and you, seeing this, did not even feel remorse afterward so as to believe him.**"
163. How great—and how terrible—was their accountability before _____!
164. The Lord gave these spiritually blind rulers of Israel no opportunity to reply—in that _____ immediately follows—with another parable.

165. And so, while the first parable exposed the character of their unbelief, the _____ parable underscored the consequences of their unbelief.
166. Their unwillingness to _____ accountable to Israel's promised King and Messiah could only result in their judgment & punishment.
167. Remember, in the immediate context of the *Parable of the Landowner* (21:33–46), Jesus continues to address the chief priests _____ Pharisees.

33 “Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who PLANTED A VINEYARD AND PUT A WALL AROUND IT AND DUG A WINE PRESS IN IT, AND BUILT A TOWER, and rented it out to vine-growers and went on a journey.

168. The “**landowner**” in this parable _____ the owner of the vineyard.
169. The “**landowner**” is said to have “**planted**” the vines while building a “**hedge**” (ASV) or “**a wall around it**” & then he added a “**wine press**” for processing the _____ while he “**built a tower**” for protection.
170. He provided everything necessary _____ “**the vineyard**” to flourish.

**AND PUT A WALL AROUND IT AND DUG A
WINE PRESS IN IT, AND BUILT A TOWER,**

171. As we'll see, “**the landowner**” represents God & the “**vineyard**” represents the unique — status and privilege — God gave _____ the nation of Israel.
172. Israel owes its very existence to God's sovereign choice to plant this nation for Himself, while calling & making Abraham its founding father, from whose lineage the promised Messiah would _____ (Genesis 12–13).

“ There was a landowner who PLANTED A VINEYARD AND PUT A WALL AROUND IT AND DUG A WINE PRESS IN IT, AND BUILT A TOWER, and rented it out to vine-growers and went on a journey rented it out to vine-growers and went on a journey.

35 “The vine-growers took his slaves and beat one, and killed another, and stoned a third. 36 “Again he sent another group of slaves larger than the first; and they did the same thing to them. 37 “But afterward he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ 38 “But when the vine-growers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.’ 39 “They took him, and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

173. The vine growers in the parable represent Israel's priests, rulers, scribes and Pharisees to whom God entrusted the _____ of His vineyard.

174. Their problem is that they did _____ really see God as the owner of the vineyard and themselves as stewards—they thought they were in charge.
175. Jesus is telling this parable _____ unfold their persistent rebellion against God.
176. He sent His servants to “the vine growers” to receive the fruit but they _____ His servants, “**beat one, and killed another, and stoned a third**” and this happened again & again as documented in their Scriptures.
177. God throughout the Old Testament _____ direct commentary on this.
178. Those listening were well aware of numerous cases like Jezebel who killed the prophets (1 Ki. 18:4, 13), of Zechariah who was stoned (2 Chr. 24:21), or men like Jeremiah _____ was beaten and imprisoned (Jeremiah 37:15).
179. Before Jesus’ _____ is complete — He will indict them with “**the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah**” (Matthew 23:35).
180. Not to mention the writer to the Hebrews _____ speak of God’s servants, who were **tortured, mocked, scourged, imprisoned, stoned, sawn in two, killed with the sword** & forced to wander in **deserts & caves** (11:35–38).
181. Then the Lord brings the parable up to _____ when He says, “**Last of all he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son’**” (21:37).
182. This final messenger was of an entirely different stature _____ all the servants who had come before him—not simply greater than them — but fundamentally different — from them.
183. Those who came before Him were merely the Owner’s servants, but this final Messenger _____ His beloved Son (21:38).
184. The message of this parable could not have been clearer because in these few words the Lord Jesus was identifying Himself as the Son of _____.
185. Yet when the “**landowner**” sent his “**son**” their response was telling _____ “**They took him, and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.**”
186. After hearing all that Jesus had said and taught and having witnessed so many of His miracles — you would have thought that these _____ would have stood before Him—in absolute awe and reverence.
187. Paul would later summarize their problem by saying that they had a “**zeal for God,**” but it was “**not in accordance with knowledge**” (Romans 10:2), because _____ sought “**to establish their own**” righteousness (10:3).

188. And so once again as in the previous parable of the two sons it is obvious that these men were being _____ by their sin & their self-righteous spirit, and so Jesus concludes the parable showing them where they are headed.

**40 “Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes,
what will he do to those vine-growers?”**

189. With the wisdom — that only Christ could display — while these men were completely gripped by the story He was telling, He now asked them to serve as their _____ judge and jury—by answering what the owner—should do.
190. It appears that, at least momentarily, they answer His question without thinking, thereby serving _____ both judge and jury, as verse 41 reveals.

**41 They said to Him, “He will bring those wretches to a wretched
end, and will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers
who will pay him the proceeds at the proper seasons.”**

191. Caught up in the story—and speaking—without thinking, they unknowingly pronounce their _____ condemnation.
192. Jesus really did not need to say anything more, because they _____ already pronounced judgment upon themselves.
193. But He went on to give them a prophetic revelation from Psalm 118:22–23, in order to remind and to _____ them — of the folly of — their thinking.

**42 Jesus said to them, “Did you never read in the Scriptures, ‘THE STONE
WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone;
THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES’?**

194. Sadly, these religious leaders had a vision of the Messiah who would come, overthrow Rome, make Jerusalem the capital of a new world empire, and _____ them—places of prominence—in running that kingdom.
195. In their spiritual blindness, they were rejecting the very Messiah that _____ had promised, the One who would become the **cornerstone** of the kingdom.
196. They were looking for “**the kingdom**” on their _____ terms, while standing face-to-face *with the King whom God had promised & the Bible prophesied.*

**40 “Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those
vine-growers?” 41 They said to Him, “He will bring those wretches to
a wretched end, and will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers
who will pay him the proceeds at the proper seasons.”**

42 Jesus said to them, “Did you never read in the Scriptures, ‘THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone; THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES’? 43 “Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it. 44 “And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust.” 45 When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that He was speaking about them. 46 When they sought to seize Him, they feared the people, because they considered Him to be a prophet.

197. That’s the broad context of the *Wedding Feast* parable, but what I want us to see is that Matthew, deliberately places these __ parables together.
198. And when you see how they build upon one another, the meaning of this final parable becomes much clearer—such that we will see what “**many are called, but few are chosen**” (22:14) can & cannot ____.
199. In 1st parable of the two sons they refused the Father’s call & so Jesus exposed their disobedience — where one son initially refused but later repented & went, while the other promised obedience but never ____.
200. We saw how Jesus — applied it directly to these religious leaders — in that they had rejected John the Baptist’s call to repentance — while by contrast “**the tax collectors and prostitutes**” — had believed ____ responded.
201. The issue was simple — will they repent — and do the Father’s ____?
202. In the 2nd parable of the landowner & his vineyard, the leaders of Israel rejected the Father’s Son — and sought only — to murder ____.
203. In this parable of — the leaders of Israel — rejected the Father’s ____.
204. In this parable of the landowner & his vineyard Jesus goes much deeper in that they do not — simply refuse God’s command — they reject God’s messengers — and they ultimately — murder His ____.
205. Jesus ____ the application unmistakable—“**the kingdom will be taken away from**” them & “**given to a people who will produce the fruit of it.**”
206. We could spend much time on this important truth, but simply know ____ God has *not retracted the eternal nature of* the Abrahamic (Gen. 15:17–21), Davidic (2 Samuel 7:16), or of New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:35–37).