

“TAKE 10”- Worship While Away! (Sunday, October 8, 2017)

Share: Whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.

As the Scriptures promise: the stone that the builders rejected has become the Cornerstone.

This is the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes.

Read these words from a hymn today: *Be Thou My Vision*

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart; naught be all else to me, save that thou art; thou my best thought, by day or by night, waking or sleeping, thy presence my light. Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise; thou mine inheritance, now and always; thou and thou only, first in my heart, High King of Heaven, my treasure thou art.

Read this scripture from worship: Matthew 21:33-46 (*The Message*)

³³⁻³⁴ “Here’s another story. Listen closely. There was once a man, a wealthy farmer, who planted a vineyard. He fenced it, dug a winepress, put up a watchtower, then turned it over to the farmhands and went off on a trip. When it was time to harvest the grapes, he sent his servants back to collect his profits. ³⁵⁻³⁷ “The farmhands grabbed the first servant and beat him up. The next one they murdered. They threw stones at the third but he got away. The owner tried again, sending more servants. They got the same treatment. The owner was at the end of his rope. He decided to send his son. ‘Surely,’ he thought, ‘they will respect my son.’

³⁸⁻³⁹ “But when the farmhands saw the son arrive, they rubbed their hands in greed. ‘This is the heir! Let’s kill him and have it all for ourselves.’ They grabbed him, threw him out, and killed him. ⁴⁰ “Now, when the owner of the vineyard arrives home from his trip, what do you think he will do to the farmhands?”

⁴¹ “He’ll kill them—a rotten bunch, and good riddance,” they answered. “Then he’ll assign the vineyard to farmhands who will hand over the profits when it’s time.”

⁴²⁻⁴⁴ Jesus said, “Right—and you can read it for yourselves in your Bibles: The stone the masons threw out is now the cornerstone. This is God’s work; we rub our eyes, we can hardly believe it! “This is the way it is with you. God’s kingdom will be taken back from you and handed over to a people who will live out a kingdom life. Whoever stumbles on this Stone gets shattered; whoever the Stone falls on gets smashed.”

⁴⁵⁻⁴⁶ When the religious leaders heard this story, they knew it was aimed at them. They wanted to arrest Jesus and put him in jail, but, intimidated by public opinion, they held back. Most people held him to be a prophet of God.

Talk together, responding to these questions:

- Who are the landowner, the farmhands, and the son in this parable?
- Think about our church's two cornerstones. Where are they located, when were they placed, and what is their meaning?
- What is the "kingdom life" to which Jesus refers? How does your life bear fruit for God's kingdom? What is your contribution to this harvest?
- How do the Pharisees respond to this story? How do we react?
- How will I apply these words to my life?

Pray together:

Holy God, Maker of heaven and earth, out of your great love for the world, you sent us Your beloved Son – but we sent him to his death. Have mercy on us, O Lord; forgive us, renew us, restore us, so that we may be the people of your vineyard and good fruit for your holy kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Bless one another:

Take each person's hand and say. "God's grace is for you, God's love is upon you, God's call is within you. Be kind to yourself this week."

Resources Used: *Glory to God*, The Presbyterian Hymnal
Feasting on the Word, Year A, A Worship Companion