

The Parable of the Two Sons



Matthew 21.28-32

Why Parables?

- ❖ Some are no longer open to hearing the plain teachings of Jesus.
 - ▶ Scribes and Pharisees were listening to respond.
- ❖ Jesus begins to speak in parables so that people will receive His truth, even though they might not realize it at the moment.

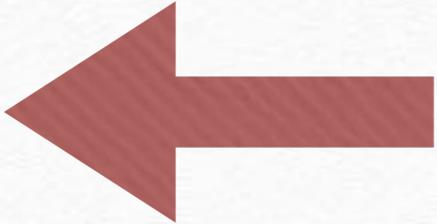
Context of Matthew 21

- ❖ This is the last week of Jesus' life prior to the crucifixion (Matthew 21.1; John 12.1ff).
- ❖ The triumphal entry has occurred (Mt. 21.9).
- ❖ Jesus has cleansed the temple (Mt. 21.12).
- ❖ The fig tree is cursed (Mt. 21.19).
- ❖ Jesus is challenged by the Jews (Mt. 21.23ff).
 - ▶ The nature and origin of His authority.
 - ▶ Jesus answers with a parable.

Parable of the Two Sons

- ❖ A father calls his two sons to work for him.
 - ▶ Son A says no, but eventually goes.
 - ▶ Son B says yes, but does not go.
- ❖ Jesus' simple question ends the parable.
 - ▶ The son who went to work is the son who did the father's will.
 - ▶ Parables drive at one central idea — the idea here is unacceptability of the Jewish elite (vv31f).

The Kingdom of God

- ❖ God's general rule over humanity.
 - ▶ Matthew 13.24; Daniel 4.17
- ❖ Israel's past national relationship with God.
 - ▶ Matthew 21.43 (cf. 21.23)
- ❖ Christ's kingdom, the church.
 - ▶ Matthew 16.19; Colossians 1.13
- ❖ God's eternal kingdom. 
 - ▶ Matthew 8.11-12; 19.23 — All the righteous of all time, fully realized in Heaven (2 Timothy 4.18)

The Elite on the Outside

- ❖ Why would the chief priests and elders of the Jews be on the outside of the kingdom?
 - ▶ They rejected Jesus (21.23f).
 - ▶ They rejected John's baptism (21.21.25).
 - ▶ They rejected John's preaching (21.32).
- ❖ Worse (to their minds), tax collectors and prostitutes would enter the kingdom.
 - ▶ Tax collectors and prostitutes are the first son.
 - ▶ Chief priests and elders are the second son.

What's Here for Me?

- ❖ Evading responsibility does not remove it.
- ❖ God is more concerned with how we finish than how we begin.
- ❖ True repentance will usher some unexpected people into the kingdom of God.
- ❖ We should be in awe of God's forgiveness.
- ❖ When someone comes to us "in the way of righteousness," we must believe them!