



Getting to Know You...

Have you ever owned property and rented it out?

What was your experience?

If you were the renter(s), what was your experience with the owner or manager of the property?



Opening Prayer:

Lord Jesus, you are the Vine and we are the branches. If we remain in you, we will bear much fruit. Lead us to be faithful and fruitful renters of your kingdom even during times of uncertainty and fear, producing fruit that will last for eternity. To that end, bless our study today. In your name we pray, Amen.

Digging In:

- First read through the Old Testament reading of Isaiah 5:1-7 that's paired with our parable in Sunday's readings. It is helpful in studying the parable for today. Briefly discuss the imagery.
- **Now read Matthew 21:33-43.** This parable is in a string of parables during Holy Week by which Jesus issues final calls to religious leaders to turn from their course of spiritual destruction.

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- Identify the 1) landowner 2) tenants 3) servants 4) the heir.
- Name some of the servants God sent in the Old Testament, and if able, tell their fate as Jesus described in the parable.
- Though not the main point of the parable, what remarkable feature of God is described in verse 37?
- Why does Jesus make them answer his question about the fate of those who kill the heir and refuse to share the fruit? (v.41)
- When and how did the transfer of managing God's vineyard occur? (v.43)

Application:

- What are some parallels you see in the “growing conditions” that God has provided in our land for being a productive, spiritual vineyard?
- What causes renters in the church of God's vineyard to begin to think, “I own the place!” rather than viewing the vineyard as God's and the fruit as God's, too?
What is the cure for this takeover of God's property?
- What are some of the dangers or fears that trustworthy renters in God's vineyard face today as they faithfully proclaim and live out God's Word in our world?
What promises of God give us strength to do so?
- Discuss Jesus' words in the last verse as it applies to us as a congregation and individually. Have you seen any modern day examples of this kind of transfer?

Closing Prayer Suggestion: Hymn 322:1 CW

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