# The Rejection of the Savior

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[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us. There is no greater or sweeter sound than hearing God's people sing as we unite our voices together We see you here and we are thankful for you every Sunday, grateful for our church that so faithfully serves and faithfully gives and is faithful to gather to worship each Lord's Day.

Thank you for your commitment to the Lord and to this local church. We may have some who are normally in this service who are here next hour because they think they're on time but they're not. You guys have the hard job to be here on time and to be here for this service. You had to remember to set your clocks forward and we are glad that you did.
Thank you for being here. There's a reason why Joey read Isaiah 5 and it's not because I was smart enough to tell him to do it.
He knew what I was preaching on and I'm grateful that he read that passage. It's going to sound familiar to you in just a moment because it's the background that Jesus is drawing on as he gives this parable to the people.
[1:41] Just a reminder of what's going on. In chapter 11 of the Gospel of Mark, we studied a few weeks ago about what we call the triumphal entry where Jesus rides into Jerusalem.

In doing so, fulfills prophecy from the book of Zechariah. When he rides into town, he heads to the temple. And it tells us that he looked around at everything that was happening.
We know that part of what was happening at the temple was that many people were gathered there. At any one time, as many as a quarter of a million people would be there in the temple grounds and the complex around the temple.
And what was happening was those who were supposed to be spiritual leaders have instead traded in that privilege of shepherding God's people and instead are trying to get rich off of the backs of those who are supposed to be serving.
And there were those who are supposed to be helping people and guiding and leading them. And instead, they are essentially stealing from them. There were people that are called money changers.
[3:00] And what's happened in that day is they have said that only a certain kind of currency can be used. People are flooding into Jerusalem for Passover. And so, people are bringing with them the currency they have from wherever they live.

And they are forced to exchange their currency with other currency. And in so doing, they are robbing them as they give them back just a portion of what they should.
Jesus also at the temple looks and observes. And what he finds are people who are supposed to provide animals for sacrifice or selling them as high as 15 times what would be a fair price.
And it says that he just takes it in. This place designed to be a place of worship and a place of service has instead become a den of robbers.
Not only because thievery is taking place, it's a den of robbers because a den is a place where people go to feel safe. The robbers felt safe.
[4:14] What an indictment that robbers felt safe at the temple. And Jesus saw that and he took it all in and he retreated because it was evening to sleep.

And he gets up the next day. The next morning he sees a fig tree full of leaves. Because of the time of year we know it was and because of what we know about things in that land, we can understand what's happening.
The tree was full of leaves. It should have had small buds of fruit on it. The pagin should have been on there. They were not. And what Jesus saw was a tree that had all of the outer adornment and no

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fruit.
And in seeing that, it was used as a picture, a metaphor of the nation of Israel. That at the temple, all the outer adornment takes place, but no real fruit of repentance or of worship.
And so he curses the fig tree. He kills it. And then he goes to the temple and he cleanses the temple.
[5:27] And one man steps into that temple complex with hundreds of thousands of people there and buying and trading and the sounds of people and of song and of spoken word and of animals.

And he shuts it all down. And he drives the thieves away. And in so doing, he takes profit out of the pockets of those who would seek to steal from God's people.
The next day, it's a very long day. In the gospel records, it tells us of much that takes place. It's the day that we're currently walking through.
He goes by with his apostles and they see the fig tree that he had cursed the day before. And Peter says, the fig tree that you cursed has withered.
And he begins to teach them about prayer. That you must believe and not doubt. That you must pray with faith. And that you must pray with a heart of forgiveness.
[6:43] That before you would ask the Lord to bless you, you would first have your heart in tune with his will. And that we would see prayer as our way to communicate with the Father.

And our way to be able to worship the Lord. But to do so, we worship in spirit and in truth. And then after that, a group of people who didn't like each other that much found common ground.
The common ground they found was in the opposition of Jesus. They collectively were through with him. And as we looked at last week, the chief priests and the scribes and the elders decided they could get along.
Because in their minds, they had a common opponent. They go up to Jesus. And they ask him a very interesting question. What authority do you have to be here?
We didn't give you this authority. We don't recognize this as your place. We've not bestowed on you any kind of authority or clout.
[8:07] By what authority are you here? And what gives you the authority to say these things to us? It's actually a fascinating question.

What authority does Jesus have? And where did he get it? We studied in depth last week.
Jesus says to them, I'll answer your question. Let me first ask you a question. And the question Jesus asked them is, was the baptism of John, and in using that language, he's speaking of the totality of John the Baptist's ministry.
What he did, what he taught, what he believed. Was the baptism of John from heaven or was it from man? In other words, was John the Baptist a prophet of God or was he just doing things on his own accord?
Now that's significant because John the Baptist believed and preached and proclaimed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. He said of Jesus, behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
[9:16] He said of Jesus, he must increase and of himself, I must decrease. The baptism of John was for repentance. The ministry of John the Baptist was all about pointing toward Christ as the hope and the answer.

And so Jesus says, let me ask you gentlemen a question. You're all here. You're all united. You all seem to be getting along quite well today. Let me ask you a question. Was the baptism of John, was his ministry from God or was it from himself?
And they retreat. They call a conference. They say, we need to huddle and talk about this. And as they huddle together, somebody says, we've got a problem, gentlemen.
If we say that John the Baptist was from God, we've got a problem because Jesus is going to say, if he's a prophet of God, why don't we believe him? And the message of John the Baptist was to trust in Jesus.
And these religious leaders won't do that. Somebody else in the huddle says, well, we've got a problem too because if we say the baptism was not from God, the ministry of John was not from heaven, it was of his own doing, our problem then is the people think John the Baptist was a prophet of God.
[10:38] If we go against them and say he's not a prophet of God, they're going to say we're claiming a true prophet is a false prophet. And what they did to false prophets was stone them.

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And if we say a true prophet is a false prophet, they may stone us. And if we answer that way, it may cost us our lives. We are stuck.
And so these leaders, whose job in part was to interpret and teach, step forward and say to Jesus, we do not know.
We punt. And Jesus says, if you don't want to talk truth, I'm not playing your game. And Jesus says, I'm not talking to you about this.
They weren't seeking truth. They were setting a trap. A trap that they walked straight into. This is the scene.
[11:53] These are the words. This is the emotion of what's happening here on this day as we are looking directly toward the cross of Jesus.

Chronologically, it will be just two days from now that Jesus will go to the cross. But between now and then, these final words and conversations are as fascinating as they are provocative.
As he steps forward and continues to speak with a power and authority unlike the world has ever seen. And when we come to Mark chapter 12, where we are today, Jesus is going to tell the parable.
The parable of the tenants. It's an interesting parable that he tells that the believers could understand that was hidden from those who did not believe.
But in this case, it will be different. Even the unbelievers understood. And what they understood him to say infuriated them.
[13:27] When I read this, you're going to hear the words of Isaiah 5 that you had read to you just a few moments ago. We're going to look at this in two parts.

We'll look at it in the beginning today and the second part next week. In this parable, not only will you hear the echoes of Isaiah 5, but you will no doubt see a picture of the cross.
Mark 12 verse 1 says, He began to speak to them in parables. A man planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a pit for the wine press and built a tower and leased it to tenants and went into another country.
When the season came, he sent a servant to the tenants to get from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. And they took him and beat him and sent him away empty-handed.
Again, he sent to them another servant. And they struck him on the head and treated him shamefully. And he sent another.
[14:46] In him they killed. And so with many others. Some they beat and some they killed. He had still one other, a beloved son.

Finally, he sent him to them saying, They will respect my son. Come. But those tenants said to one another, This is the heir. Come.
Let us kill him. And the inheritance will be ours. And they took him and killed him and threw him out of the vineyard.
What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others.
Have you not read this scripture? The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing.
[15:53] And it is marvelous in our eyes. And they were seeking to arrest him but feared the people for they perceived that he had told the parable against them.

So they left him and went away. Let me show you first in verses 1 and 2 the kindness of God.
The kindness of God. Isaiah 5, 1 to 7 is the backdrop of this parable. What this parable describes was a common thing that would happen in that area.
Now it took a lot of work and it took a lot of expense to do it. The parable that Jesus tells in Mark 12 would be familiar words that they would grasp and understand.
It was some that happened commonly in that area. But to do this work took a lot of time. It took a lot of expense. An owner would have to come to a land and remove the stones that were in that land.
[17:06] They would then take those stones they removed and they would use them to put a fence around the vineyard. They dug a pit for the wine press, a place to collect the juice from the crushed grapes.

They would build a tower on the land. That tower would allow people to go and stand on top of it to be able to keep watch over the land to protect it from animals or to protect it from predators that might be coming.

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the vineyard would do everything needed, everything, the vineyard owner necessary for the workers in his vineyard to be successful.
And in the parable that I just read to you that Jesus told, that's exactly what he describes. Everything was done that the owner should do. Everything was given to the workers to allow them to be faithful stewards of this vineyard.
The owner, of course, is the one who has the rightful claim to his possession. And so he gives the vineyard to these workers, these stewards, to do the work.
[18:18] And when the parable begins in verse 1, that's exactly what he describes. A man planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a pit for the wine press, and he built a tower, and he leased it to tenants and went into another country.

This makes sense to them. They're familiar with this. Verse 2 says, When the season came, he sent his servant to the tenants to get from them some of the fruit of the vineyard.
Now, what we know from history and the geography of that land, this would be actually quite a while down the road, maybe four or five years later when this would have come to fruition and take place. He would press the grapes for drink. It was a source of sugar. It was a source of food. And this tells us of the kindness of God as the Lord uses this parable to show and describe what God has provided for his people.
Even from just this first part of the parable, there are some lessons that we should be seeing, some things we ought to be picking up on to understand what Jesus is saying when he tells this parable.
[19:42] One, it's a picture that God planted Israel in the land in order to produce spiritual fruit. He has chosen Israel out of all the peoples of the world, not because they were strong, not because they were great, but by his sovereign choice.

And it's not that his kindness was to end or terminate on them, they were to be the light of the world. And God in his kindness has chosen Israel and brought them into the promised land.
And they were to produce spiritual fruit. This is exactly what Jesus was calling out on them when he cursed the fig tree the day before.
The tree was all leaves, no fruit. And it's an apt picture of what the nation had become. All external, no heart.
But it's also a picture that the spiritual leaders were supposed to care for the people. Just as the workers in the vineyard were to care for the land and tend the land.
[21:05] So, the leaders of God's people were supposed to care for the people. They were supposed to shepherd the people. This is why Jesus was so upset when he went to the temple and took in all that was going on because these who were supposed to be shepherds have become thieves.

These who were supposed to be protectors and defenders had become robbers. And it wasn't just one or two. The whole thing had become a den of thieves because all of these who were to be leaders felt perfectly at home robbing and stealing because they were among fellow thieves.
Even though the nation owed everything they have to God, in reality, by this point, they have forgotten and have forsaken the Lord.
as Jesus begins to tell this parable, as it says at the end, they perceived he had told this parable against them.
At least give them credit for this. They got that one right. This is a stinging indictment against the people.
[22:24] We see the kindness of God in this picture of the vineyard owner who has done everything necessary to provide for the people.

And secondly, in verses 3 to 5, we see the rejection of the nation. Verse 3, after he has done all of this for them, after the owner has sent his servant to the tenants to get what belongs to the owner, verse 3 says, they took him and beat him and sent him away empty-handed.
Now, they would understand the picture of this because this was a common thing in their lives. This influential servant has come to collect what was the rightful ownership of this vineyard owner, but instead, he is rejected.
He is beaten severely according to the language. Verse 4 says again, he sent to them another servant. Now, just stop for a moment. One thing that's a bit shocking as you read this parable and as it begins to unfold to us, when it says in verse 3, they took the servant and beat him and sent him away empty-handed.

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If there's something you're expecting in verse 4, it's probably the owner comes and deals with the people. That he comes in judgment. You would expect that if a vineyard owner had done everything necessary for people to have success and to take care of them, and he sends his servant to collect what is rightfully his, and the people who are stewards over the vineyard take and beat that servant, we would have every right to expect what would happen next is the landowner would come and bring a final retribution.
[24:23] But that's not what he does in the parable. Verse 4 says, again, he sent to them another servant.

He gave them a second chance. He did not bring the hammer down. He did not come in final retribution and final judgment even though they had rebelled.
And what did the people do? Again, he sent to them verse 4, another servant and they struck him on the head. It's even worse. The first servant, they took him and beat him.
The second servant, they took him and struck him on the head. Their response to the grace of the owner is to be even more rebellious.
And the leaders feared that he was telling the parable against them. They're understanding what's happening here. God had called them and chosen them, brought them into the land, provided for them, given them everything they needed.
[26:03] He gave them his word. He gave them a place to worship. He gave them instructions of what to do when they fall short.

He sent them leaders. He gave them prophets to declare the word of God. And they rejected and rejected and rejected.
Verse 5, and he sent another, and him they killed. So, we've gone from abuse to striking in the head, even more deadly, now to killing them.
and so with many others. He keeps sending servants, one after the other, after the other. And you think to yourself, why is this landowner being so patient?
what does he just say, away with you? Why does he keep sending another servant, and another servant, and another servant, and giving them a chance to do the right thing, giving them a chance to respond in obedience while all the while every servant that comes to them they take and abuse and now kill.
[27:26] In fact, their rejection has become increasingly severe and even more wicked from beatings to stoning to killing. Now make sure you understand the parable.

The landowner is God, the vineyard is Israel, the tenants are the leaders, and the servants are God's prophets.
The servants of God have been sent to the nation, and they are rejected, and they are despised, and they are killed.
Stay open to Mark 12, but also, if you would, for just a moment, turn with me to Hebrews chapter 11. Hebrews chapter 11. look at verse 32.
Verse 32. And what more shall I say?
[28:56] For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David, and Samuel, and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.

Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life.
Now, wait a minute. what just happened here? Hebrews 11 is telling the story of these leaders, these servants who experienced great things.
34, quenched the power of fire. Verse 34, escaped the edge of the sword. They were mighty in war. And without any warning, just flowing from one sentence to the next, verse 35, some women received back their dead by resurrection.
Very next sentence, some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life.
[30:19] Others suffered mocking and flogging and even chains and imprisonment. Verse 37, they were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword.

That's what Jesus is saying in Mark 12. It's true in the history of the people of God, there were some that were powerful and experienced great victory, but in time what the people began to do is they

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rejected the servants, and God sent a prophet, and they ignored him.
So he sent another, and they ignored him. So he sent another, and they ignored him. So he sent another, and they ignored him. And these people sent by God to the people to care for them, the people rejected.
They beat them, they stoned them, they put them to death by the sword, even some that were sawn in two. you can just feel the argument building here as Jesus unleashes this parable on these who are supposed to be leaders and instead were robbers.
sinners. And we learned that God is patient even with the wicked. It is to the patience of God that we owe the reality that people can do what they do and say what they say and not immediately just be consumed in judgment.
[32:08] I saw examples of this this week on television and on the internet. People who said things and spoke things, fought for things, argued for things, did things, declared things, that the very speaking of their toleration of such evil should have brought them immediate judgment if God were not patient.

Now let me be clear. it's a good thing for me and it's a good thing for you that God is patient even with the wicked because if he were not, you would be consumed.
God is patient. In the parable, as it begins to unfold, it is a bit shocking to see that the landowner keeps sending another servant.
They take a servant and beat him, he sends another. They take that servant and stone him, he sends another. They take that servant and kill him, he sends another. And you think to yourself, how can this owner be so patient?
Why doesn't he just rain down complete judgment and retribution? patient. But he's patient and he's long suffering even though from Moses to Malachi the nation will reject the prophets.
[33:51] And that brings us to why this parable is being told. Because the people have been wicked.

And the only hope for a wicked people is the grace of God. the God is to Jesus two days before he would hang on a cross is reminding the people that God has been patient even with the wicked. But that patience has a limit. And the days of grace will not reign forever.
Judgment may be delayed but it will not be removed. In a very famous sermon that was preached some time ago the words of the sermon said the judgments of God often have lead and heals! And travel very slowly but they always have iron hands and crush completely completely. And I say today as I've said many times to you before as a congregation please do not mistake the patience of God as indifference.
[35:27] That would be a tragic and deadly mistake. Judgment will come God in His grace has given time after time after time for the people to receive His word.

We will look next week at the second half of this but for just a brief moment let's fast forward to verse 12. They were seeking to arrest Him.
Why would they arrest Him? He's just told the parable. He's just told a story. Well they were seeking to arrest Him because they perceived He had told the parable against them.
They understood that the people they represent are the ones who have rejected the word of God. And in verse 9 as we'll look at next week what will the owner of the vineyard do?
He will come and destroy the tenants. Their thought is if he's saying we're the guilty ones and he's saying he will destroy us we better destroy him first.
[37:08] And so they want to arrest him. Not because they want him in jail. They want him dead. They want him destroyed. And do you get that even in this final moment before the cross in this final moment in which these very people who have rejected Christ will stir up the people and lead them to chant crucify crucify even in this very moment yet again God has been patient and sent to them yet again another reminder of the truth.

Jesus is laying the truth of the gospel out for them yet one final time God has sent his servant and yet again they have rejected.
My friends if you're here this morning and you have in your mind that sometime later you will repent and respond with faith sometime later you will receive the word of God please understand each time you hear the gospel if you do not soften your heart to the things of God that same gospel that breaks one man's heart hardens another learn a lesson from these who are supposed!

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to be leaders whose heart have become so hardened that even with the very son of God in front of them explaining the reality of life to them all they want to do is destroy him so I say you today as scripture declares do not harden your heart do not with calloused ears reject the word the Lord has brought to you today this is an amazing scene the cross is just two sunsets away Jesus will tell these people one more time the reality of the gospel and one more time they will reject it
God has been patient with you he's been patient with me he didn't have to be in kindness and grace he chose to be do not take yet one more opportunity you have to hear believe and respond to the gospel and take it lightly if you do not know Christ as your savior this is the day this is the day to say that's me I've rejected him I've heard the gospel and walked away I've heard the preaching of the word of God and I've walked away I've heard my parents teach me and
[41:04] I've walked away this is your day to say no more I'm through playing games with my life and this day I'm turning to a God who has been more patient with me than I could have ever expected or ever deserved and I'm clinging to his mercy I invite you to do that I invite you this day to not take the patience of God for granted and instead let the kindness of God drive you to repentance for those who do we find even this day a God of forgiveness!

a God of mercy! But rest assured the owner of the vineyard will deal with sin your sin will be dealt with either!
by God dealing with you or through repentance! repentance repentance repentance repentance repentance repentance repentance your sin covered by Christ!
And so I plead with you this day recognize the kindness of God even the rejection of your own heart and respond in repentance!
and trust! The gift that can think that it can make an spirit that can help or know that we can make it like it we can see it this can if it can think it can or have with it can help get with how

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