

## Overcoming Rejection

- **Rejection** has impacted us all.

Matthew 21:33 (ESV)

*"Hear another parable. There was a master of a house who planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a winepress in it and built a tower and leased it to tenants, and went into another country.*

Matthew 21:34-35 (ESV)

*When the season for fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to get his fruit. <sup>35</sup> And the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another.*

Characters in the Parable:

- ◇ The Landowner - God
- ◇ The Vineyard - Israel/World
- ◇ The Tenants/Farmers - Jewish Religious Leaders
- ◇ Landowner's Servants - The prophets that God sent to Israel to share his message of grace and judgement

- **Rejection is a hill that we all have to overcome.**

Matthew 21:36-39 ESV

*Again he sent other servants, more than the first. And they did the same to them. <sup>37</sup> Finally he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' <sup>38</sup> But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.' <sup>39</sup> And they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.*

- **Jesus** is the son.

- We have all played the role of the **rejecter**.

Matthew 21:40-41 (ESV)

*When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" <sup>41</sup> They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons."*

Matthew 21:42-43 (ESV)

*Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?" <sup>43</sup> Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits.*

Psalm 118:22-23 (ESV)

*The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. <sup>23</sup> This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.*

- **Jesus has come to redeem the rejecters and the rejected.**

Acts 4:10-12 (ESV)

*let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well. <sup>11</sup> This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. <sup>12</sup> And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."*

Ephesians 2:19-22 (ESV)

*So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, <sup>21</sup> in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. <sup>22</sup> In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.*

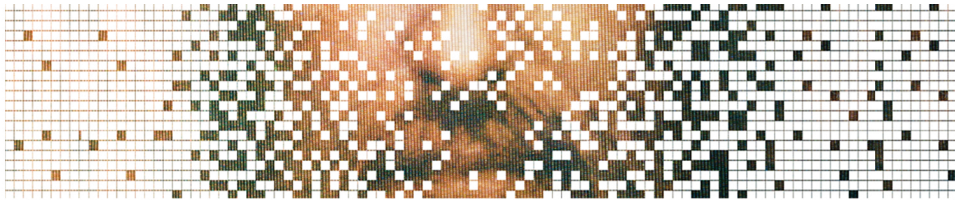
- **The rejected stone is the crucified Jesus; the cornerstone is the resurrected Christ.**



MANGER

THE MIDDLE

TOMB



## PARABLE OF THE TENANTS MATTHEW 21:33-43 #NVSTORYSHARE

### CONNECT THE STORY

What happened in our last story? What key principles or truths did we discover through the story of the temptation of Jesus? Can someone retell the story?

### TELL THE STORY

Tell the story: as best as you can, do not stop and teach, try not to make points (Commentary), just tell the story.

### REBUILD THE STORY

As a group: chronologically rebuild the story from memory. Ask questions if necessary. Like – “What happened first?”, “What happened next?”, “Did we leave out anything?” Finally, have participants look at their Bibles and see if anything was added or left out of the story as they go through it one more time.

### ASK QUESTIONS

- **Where do you see yourself in this story?**
- **What do we learn about Jesus/God in this story?**
- **What do we learn about man in this story?**
- **What is Jesus teaching you personally through this story?**
- **What application/adjustment do you need to make in your life due to the truth discovered in this story?**

### ADULTS

- In one sentence, what do you think is the main point of Jesus’s parable?
- How is this parable relevant for the church today?
- Can you see evidences of fruit in your own life?
- In what ways are you rejecting Jesus - the Chief Cornerstone?

### COLLEGE

- Why does Jesus use this metaphor? Who is the landowner referring to?
- The Cornerstone was the most important in the construction of a building. Why is it important that the foundation of our lives be built on our relationship with Christ? What are things that get in the way of that?
- The tenant farmers (religious leaders) had hardened hearts and no true love for God and even rejected His Son. Have you come to know Christ as your Lord and Savior, or do you reject Him like the religious leaders did?

### STUDENT

- Is there anyone you know who has heard the Gospel but has rejected Jesus? Share their story.
- Why do people reject Jesus?

### CHILDREN

- Older Child – Do some people reject Jesus? Why do you think this is?
- Older Child – How can you be better at taking care of what God has given you?
- Younger Child – What happens to people that reject Jesus?
- Younger Child - Is there anyone you know who has heard the Gospel but has rejected Jesus? Share their story.

### KINDERGARTEN/PRESCHOOL

- What did the workers do to the servants who came to collect grapes?
- What did the workers do to the owner’s son?
- What did people say the owner should do to the workers?
- How does Jesus want us to treat people?
- Who will you tell about Jesus and His love this week?

# THE MIDDLE

MY  
TIME  
WITH  
GOD

## MONDAY

### READ MATTHEW 21:33-45

Matthew records the landowner as 1) planting a vineyard, 2) putting a wall around it, 3) digging a winepress and 4) building a tower. It records two groups of slaves being sent and mistreated. The first group had one slave beaten, another killed and another stoned. Cultural context: Walls were often built around vineyards to keep out animals. The winepress and vat were constructed such that the grape juice would flow to the lowest point. A watch tower served as a lookout to guard against thieves and fire. Wealthy landowners often leased their land out to tenant farmers in a sharecropping deal where rent was paid as a portion of production. During the first century, the landowners were usually Roman, which did not sit well with Galilean Jews.

## TUESDAY

### READ MARK 12:1-12

Mark records 1) planting a vineyard, 2) putting a wall around it, 3) digging a vat under the winepress and 4) building a tower. Matthew records three initial slaves who were beaten, wounded in the head and murdered. Subsequent slaves were treated just as badly. Cultural context: There is an ascending level of ill treatment: 1) beating, 2) killing and 3) stoning. Stoning is considered worse as an execution for apostasy or false prophecy and implies disgrace as well as death.

## WEDNESDAY

### READ LUKE 20:9-19

Luke is the most abbreviated and records only 1) planting a vineyard. It records only three slaves sent with each being beaten. Matthew 21:43 is the only account that further explains the parable. Here Jesus associates the vineyard with the kingdom of God. Verse 44 is an allusion to Isaiah 8:14-15. Luke also loosely translates Isaiah 8:14-15.

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## THURSDAY

All three accounts share that the son of the owner was sent, and after deliberations, the vine-growers murdered him. Matthew and Luke record the murder outside the vineyard and Mark inside. Cultural context: With the arrival of the son, tenant farmers presume that the landowner has passed away. In murdering the heir, the vineyard becomes an ownerless property which becomes available to the first squatters according to Jewish law. However, the parable portrays the tenants as being too presumptuous, because there are a number of ways the land could have been inherited and not necessarily through the son. The parable is intended to portray the tenants as wicked and stupid. All three accounts ask the question, "what will the owner do?" And all three report that the owner will destroy the offending vine-growers and get new ones. Why did the landowner take so long to evict the evil tenants? In answering the question, the listeners pronounce judgment on themselves.

## FRIDAY

When Jesus asks, "Have you not read?" He is calling attention to Psalm 118:22-23, which in effect, says that the Scriptures points to Jesus Himself. Psalm 118 is a song praising God's loyal love. It describes a man of God who was appointed by divine choice to a high position in the nation of Israel. This elect champion found himself rejected by his friends and fellow countrymen, and at the same time violently opposed by his enemies. With faith in God he battles for his nation, and he triumphs in such a manner that displays the power and goodness of the Lord.

## SCRIPTURE MEMORY

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read the Scriptures: 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.'" Matthew 21:42