

## On Good Authority

(Luke 20:9-19)

### Introduction

1. [Series] Resonate: Tune into Jesus' frequency to experience the power of the gospel & impact the culture.
2. See "Parables: Rules of Engagement" (online at the Resonate sermons page: **Resonate Reflection 34**)
  - a. Parable: A short, simple, fictitious story about fictitious people that mirrors our reality
  - b. Purpose: To help us see ourselves & our lives from another perspective through a simple story
  - c. Interpretive questions:
    - i. What does it teach about God & the Kingdom of God?
    - ii. What question does it answer?
    - iii. What's the closing punch line?
    - iv. What does Jesus want the original hearers to learn?
    - v. What action does Jesus expect from me/us?

### God is mercifully patient [Luke 20:9-12]

1. [9-10] The characters understood through simple, uneducated agrarian people's context
  - a. Vineyard: Biblically, God's provision of abundant blessing/fruitfulness.
    - i. In Jesus' teaching: Almost always refers to the blessings of the Kingdom of God.
  - b. Owner: God
    - i. Left for awhile: Not an absent/deserting God; not referring to Christ's return. An overview of Israel's national history when He was silent for 400 years between the Old & New Testament times.
  - c. Tenants: Hired by the Owner, who enjoy the fruit of the vineyard & should have served the Owner.
    - i. Particularly the religious leaders, but also all of the people of Israel
  - d. Servants: Representatives sent to speak on behalf of the Owner, who tell the tenants to give Him what is His.
    - i. Prophets throughout history; those who speak on behalf of God, telling people to give glory & honor to Him, to give all they have, all they are to Him.
2. [10-12] Tenants' rejection of the Owner's servants
  - a. [10] First servant is beaten & sent away.
  - b. [11] Second servant is beaten, dishonored/humiliated & sent away.
  - c. [12] Third servant is traumatically wounded & physically/violently tossed out (head first instead of feet first).
  - d. Why are the servants rejected? Jewish man-made law: If a landlord is absent, those using a field/vineyard for 3 years can claim it as their own.
    - i. By refusing to accept the authority of the servants as representing the Owner, they are rejecting the authority of the Owner.
    - ii. The tenants see themselves as "rightful" owners, in authority, able to reap the benefits.
3. The Owner is patient.
  - a. He continues to send servants, giving opportunity to repent/honor His authority, when they deserve justice.
  - b. God is mercifully patient & compassionate toward us, continuing to give opportunity to repent (cf. 2 Pet 3:9).
  - c. The tenants respond by treating His servants increasingly worse:
    - i. They are increasingly rebellious & unafraid of the Owner, while continuing to enjoy fruit of His vineyard but not bearing any for Him.
  - d. Application: The more patient God is with you (sending messengers to speak into your life, to acknowledge His authority), the more we falsely believe/live as if He will not do anything.
    - i. Are you like the tenants? Do you live as if you can do whatever you want, as if He is absent?

## **God ultimately sends His Son [Luke 20:13-15]**

1. [13] The owner sends His beloved son
  - a. Beloved Son: Jesus (cf. Luke 3:22).
  - b. In ancient near East culture, the son wields the rightful authority of the father.
    - i. The father sends his son who has rightful authority over the vineyard & its tenants/workers.
  - c. But they will treat him worst of all.
2. [14-15] The tenants' response
  - a. [14] Tenants think: The owner has exhausted his resources/manpower, sending his son as last resort.
    - i. "The son is the last obstacle; if we get rid of the rightful heir, the vineyard will be ours."
  - b. [15] They carry their plan out: brutally tossing out the rightful heir & murdering him.
    - i. Jesus prophesies their treatment of Him as the Son of God; though He's the rightful heir of the vineyard & rightful authority over the Kingdom.
    - ii. Jesus' condemnation: He has made clear who He is, but they will not accept His authority.
  - c. Jesus' question: What will the owner/God do to those who reject the authority of the beloved Son & kill Him?

## **The rejected Cornerstone has God's authority [Luke 20:16-19]**

1. [16] The punch line
  - a. [16a] God will judge/obliterate all those who don't recognize the authority of the Son & give the Kingdom to someone else.
  - b. [16b] The crowd's reaction: No!
    - i. They understand all of Israel will be judged; the Kingdom given to those outside
    - ii. He will welcome non-Jewish people in a new community of faith (the Church).
2. [17-19] Jesus switches metaphors but asks the same question:
  - a. [17] (cf. Psa 118:22) What will happen to those who reject the authority of the Cornerstone?
    - i. It means the same as asking "What will God do with those who reject/kill the Son?"
    - ii. Cornerstone: The stone laid first in the foundation, upon which all others must follow & be built on, i.e., the stone of authority.
  - b. [18] The Son/Cornerstone's authority as Judge
    - i. The Cornerstone has the Father's authority to welcome outsiders into His Kingdom or reject religious/false "insiders" from the Kingdom.
    - ii. Either you'll stumble on it, rejecting the authority of King Jesus, or it will fall on you in judgment when Jesus returns as ultimate King/Judge (cf. Phil 2:10-11).
  - c. [19] Religious people think they have authority because of their man-made rules/traditions.
    - i. They understand Jesus is saying they're rejected from the Kingdom for resisting His rightful authority.
3. The root of the problem
  - a. The opposite of authority isn't weakness or lack of authority/power
  - b. The opposite of rightful authority is pride: Pretending to have authority that is not yours for your own benefit.
  - c. Jesus condemns the religious leaders for robbery at the Temple (Luke 19:45-46) for arrogantly abusing authority that is not theirs; Jesus is the Beloved Son with true authority over the Temple worship.
    - i. Their attitude: We can do whatever we want & get away with it for our own benefit.
  - d. The crowd is likewise shocked. Their lesson from the parable: To follow Jesus, you must recognize His authority from God as Son/Heir/Judge/King. If you don't, you're out of the Kingdom.
4. Application: Does Jesus have authority over every area of your life, or do you reject His authority & proudly steal it?
  - a. Wealth: Is Jesus in authority over your choices regarding money, stuff, resources?
  - b. Difficult circumstances: When things don't go your way, do you humbly ask "Why, Lord?" but trust His authority, or accusingly ask "How could You, Lord?", questioning His authority so you can be king over life?
  - c. Church: Is church an activity (religion) or are you the Church? Does Jesus have authority over you to be a participating member of this new community He is building?
    - i. Does He have authority over you to love & accept people at church who are very different from you?
  - d. Relationships: Does Jesus have authority over how you speak to your spouse/family? Co-workers/peers?
  - e. Decisions: Does He have authority over all the big decisions (e.g., what you want for your future or kids)?
  - f. Strangers: Does He have authority over your intentional interactions with people you meet each day?
  - g. Invite Him to come into each of those areas, acknowledging it's His vineyard, not mine.