

Two Kinds of Sinners

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[0:00] Turn in your Bibles to Matthew chapter 21. Matthew chapter 21.

We'll begin reading in verse 23 and read through verse 32. And then we'll read a couple of verses at the end of the chapter. So Matthew chapter 21, we'll begin in verse 23.

Jesus entered the temple courts. And while he was teaching, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him.

By what authority are you doing these things, they asked. And who gave you this authority? Jesus replied, I will also ask you one question. If you answer me, I will tell you by what authority I'm doing these things.

John's baptism. Where did it come from? Was it from heaven or from men? They discussed it among themselves and asked and said, if we say from heaven, he will ask them, why didn't you believe him?

[1:10] But if we say from men, we are afraid of the people for they all hold that John was a prophet. So they answered Jesus. We don't know. Then he said, neither will I tell you what authority by what authority I am doing these things.

What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, son, go and work today in the vineyard. I will not. He answered. But later he changed his mind and went.

Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, I will, sir. But he did not go. Which of the two did what his father wanted?

The first, they answered. Jesus said to them, I tell you the truth. The tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you.

For John came to show you the way of righteousness and you did not believe him. But the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.

[2:15] Skip down to verse 45. When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus' parables, they knew he was talking about them.

They looked for a way to arrest him, but they were afraid of the crowd because the people held that he was a prophet. Let's hear the word of God. All people are sinners.

No one who takes their Bible seriously would argue with that proposition. For there is none righteous, not even one. There is no one who does good, not one.

For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. And all of us have gone astray. We have turned each one to his own way.

So all people are sinners. But not all sinners are the same. That is, not all sinners sin in the same way, do they?

[3:41] In our text today, Jesus identifies two very different kinds of sinners. On the one hand, some are very immoral and religious and irreligious.

They're not the ones in church, usually on Sunday mornings. They have nothing to do with God and his laws. But on the other hand, there are those who are outwardly moral and very religious.

And these are found in church. Indeed, they're found very active in churches and often in leadership positions. These over here sin in ways that everybody else easily sees.

They're drunkards. They're cheaters. They're thieves. They're foul mouths who misuse the name of Jesus and God. They're murderers, adulterers, prostitutes.

Whereas these over here have an appearance of holiness. And their lives, outwardly at least, are aligned with many of God's commandments. They're respectable, moral citizens.

[4:52] But inside, their hearts are full of sin. Like malice and hatred and bitterness and lust and greed and pride and self-righteousness.

That no one on the outside can see. These over here make no claim of being saved. They know they're not righteous.

Whereas these over here claim to be saved. And they think that they are righteous. Because their lives are following God's commandments.

So we've got these two kinds of sinners. And they were never far from the Lord Jesus Christ while He was on the earth. He dealt with them all the time. And so we're not surprised to find the two of them showing up in the parables that Jesus taught.

Even this parable about the two sons who were sent to work in their father's vineyard. In fact, it's these same two groups of sinners that are found in another parable about two sons.

[5 : 59] The prodigal son and his older brother. Same two kinds of sinners. You find them in many of the parables. How about the tax collector and the Pharisee that went into the temple to pray?

We've looked at that parable and many others. We find them in Jesus' teaching because they were always all around Him. It must have come of something of a surprise to people that Jesus reserved His most crushing words for the self-righteous church-going folk of His day.

And at once again in this parable we find they're the ones who are in the crosshairs of Jesus as He gives this parable of the two sons.

Do you know that one of Satan's greatest strategies for keeping people in his grip without knowing it is to keep them with a form, an outward form of godliness that has not the power of a godly life within it.

An outward show of religion without the inward relationship with Jesus Christ. They think they're members of God's kingdom when in fact they are not.

[7 : 21] And it's a mercy to have Jesus show us that before it's too late to repent. Jesus is on a mission of mercy even as He teaches this parable.

Now every parable has a context. There's a living situation. There's something going on that prompts Jesus to tell the parable. This parable is the same. Here we have it really spelled out clearly for us.

The context was that the self-righteous crowd, these over here who were the religious crowd, they were questioning Jesus' authority. Now we're in the final week of our Lord's earthly ministry leading up to the crucifixion.

He's come into town on Palm Sunday, on that day when He came in with triumph and everyone shouted His praises. They recognized Him as the Messiah. Here He is.

And the children are praising Him. And He comes into Jerusalem. And once in Jerusalem He cleansed the temple, you remember, driving out and rebuking those that were selling doves and changing money.

[8 : 29] They turned God's house of prayer into a house of robbers, and He drove them out and rebuked them. Now all this praise of the people for Jesus as Messiah and His work of driving out these workers in the temple got the religious leaders mad and envious of Jesus.

They felt the sting of His rebuke when He drove them out of the temple. I mean, they're the authorities. These are the authorities of what goes on in the temple. And here comes this Jesus of Nazareth and makes a whip and drives them out.

And everybody's praising Him. And so they come to Jesus and ask for His credentials. By what authority do you do these things? Who gave you this authority to come in here into the temple and to act this way?

Well, Jesus promises a response if they will answer a question of His own. John's baptism, where did it come from? Was it from heaven or from men?

Now some people think Jesus is evading the question. You ask me a question, I'll ask you a question. You ask me a trick question, I'll ask you a trick question. Not at all.

[9 : 43] Jesus is not evading their question of His authority. Rather, He is saying the answer to your question is found in the answer to my question.

You see, my authority is bound up. It's one with the authority of John the Baptist. Was He sent from God or from men?

In answering that, you'll have the answer to your question to me. Where did I get my authority? From heaven or from men? Well, they feel the pinch of His question.

Because if they say that John the Baptist's authority was from God, then they must acknowledge His authority as from God. So they start talking to each other. Well, if we say John the Baptist's

authority was from heaven, well, then He'll say, why didn't you believe Him?
Because the Pharisees, the religious leaders, rejected John the Baptist. But if we say from men, oh, we're afraid of the people because they all hold that John's a prophet.
[10 : 53] So we can't just dismiss John the Baptist and say that he's just a self-proclaimed prophet or we'll get in trouble with the people. So what do they do?

They play ignorant. We don't know, they say. They're lying. They're saying we don't know because they don't want to speak the truth for fear of its consequences.
They didn't believe John the Baptist came from heaven. But they're slaves to the fear of man and they don't want to get in trouble. And so they say we don't know. And Jesus says, then neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.
But what He does tell them is a parable that will make things clear as to who's accepted in the kingdom of God, who has the authority of heaven, and who doesn't.
And He begins and ends His parable with a question that will both engage their minds and will leave it to them to condemn themselves. What do you think is His first question.
[11 : 54] He starts His parable. What do you think? We must always have our thinking caps on when Jesus is talking. What do you think about what I'm going to tell you? And so He tells the parable.

Once upon a time, there was a man with two sons. And He went to His first son and said, Son, go work in the vineyard today. Now what is more common than a father giving chores to a son?
That ought to be expected, sons. And the response ought to be, Yes, Dad, I'm going. But this first son answered, I will not.
Go to work in the field today. I will not. Flat out refusal. We gasp at such an in-your-face rebellion, don't we? We ought to. I can't imagine ever having said that to my father growing up in answer to a command, I will not.
It would be the last time I ever said that. But there's people like that. There's children like that. There's teenagers like that today on the earth. And Dad and Mom said, Do this.
[12 : 59] And they say, I will not. I will not. Complete disrespect for the authority of God that he's put in their parents.

But you know what happened? Later on, this guy starts to think and he's feeling sorry for what he said. He changed his mind and he's feeling bad about the way he treated his father's authority. And what does he do? He makes his way out to the vineyard and starts to work. and starts to work. Well, the father went to the other son and he said the same to him.
Son, go to work today in my vineyard. In the vineyard. Though it's the same command, this son had a very different response to his father's command. He answered, I will, sir.
I will, sir. Ever met anybody in the south? Good, respectable, upright training. You've seen how kids talk to their fathers when dad says, do this.
[14 : 07] Yes, sir. Yes, sir. We were taught that as kids. Somewhere we lost it. But, yes, sir. I will, sir. There's respect in the answer as well as compliance and a willingness at least expressed to do exactly what the father commands.

I will, sir. But, he did not go. He got, something happened, but he never got around to getting to the work that the father gave.
He said he would, but he didn't. And Jesus just asked the question, now what do you think? Which of the two did what his father wanted? The first, they answered.
Yes, that's correct. Those who first flatly refused to obey later repented and did the will of the father and went to work in his vineyard.
Whereas the other said he would, but he never did his father's will. We come to the interpretation of the parable. The man with the two sons is God.
[15 : 23] God. And just as fathers have authority to command their sons to go to work, so God has authority to command all of the people that he has created in his human family.

He has the authority to tell them what to do and not to do. That means he has a right to tell every one of you what you should do and shouldn't do. He has that authority.
Even that sovereign authority, it's what's given to, it's his authority that is given in part to fathers.
Now the two sons represent two different kinds of sinners.
And the kinds of sinners are seen in their two different responses to his commands. The first tells us that there are some who say to God, I will not, who later repent and go.

Obey. Now if you can't think of saying I will not to your earthly father, think what an offense it must be to say I will not to the heavenly father who made you, who will judge you.

[16:41] And yet there are some people who do just that. God's word comes do this and they say I will not.

God's word comes and says don't do that and they say I will if I want to. It's in your face rebellion. They don't care who God is, what he says.

They're going to live their own way. There are people like that today, aren't there? You know them. You could point to a chapter and verse that says they shouldn't lie. What would they do? They stop their line?

No, they don't care what that says. Who is the Lord that I should obey him? Pharaoh's response. They're that kind of sinner today, isn't there? And that is sinning when they refuse to obey God's law.

1 John 3, 4 Everyone who sins breaks the law. In fact, sin is lawlessness. And they break the law with a high hand right in your face. I will not. Now, the tax collectors and the prostitutes belong to this group of sinners.

[17:50] They did not make any claim to be holy. They didn't think that they were righteous. They didn't try to impress others to make them think that they were righteous. No.

The tax collectors by their greed and their theft said, I will not to God's law against stealing. And the prostitutes by their gross immorality had said, I will not to God's law against sexual immorality. These are hardened out and out rebels against God and they didn't pretend to be anything else. But later, they had a change of mind toward God.

When they heard John the Baptist preaching, they changed their mind. Many of them underwent this transformation and they repented of their sins and they trusted in Christ.

Yes, at first they rebelled against God saying, I will not. But then they didn't continue in their rebellion. They turned around. They repented and they went and did what God commanded.

[19:01] They left off their sinning. They left their life of sin. They did the will of God, their father, and their lives became shaped by the commandments of God.

I will. Whatever your law says, I will. That's how they lived. They entered the kingdom of God through the narrow door of conversion to Christ and they lived a new life according to Jesus' commandments.

Corinthians. Luke makes special reference to the tax collectors when he describes the ministry of John the Baptist in Luke chapter 3.

Luke is talking about John the Baptist as that voice of one calling in the desert that Isaiah had talked about. Prepare the way for the Lord.

And what was John's message? He's calling on people to repent for the kingdom of God is at hand. And he's calling people to flee the coming wrath, to repent for the forgiveness of their sins, to produce fruit in keeping of repentance.

[20:12] And Luke 3.12 says, Tax collectors also came to be baptized. Teacher, they asked John, what should we do? And he says, don't collect any more than you are required to.

And he preached to them the good news of the coming Christ. Now here in our text, we'll see in verses 31 and 32 that Jesus says that the tax collectors and prostitutes repented and believed John the Baptist.

And they entered the kingdom of God. Whenever anyone repents of their rebellious way and turns to Jesus Christ in faith and embraces his gospel promise, they enter the kingdom of God.

And many tax collectors and prostitutes did that when God called them through the preaching of John the Baptist. You know, Jesus was not ashamed to hang out with tax collectors and prostitutes. Much to the chagrin of the self-righteous crowd over here. They didn't like that about Jesus, did they? He preached to them.

[21:25] He went among them and preached to them their need to repent of their wicked ways and to receive the grace of forgiveness.

He welcomed them to come to Himself, to believe on Him and to be forgiven all their sins. And so they flocked around Him and many of them were converted.

We know at least of one by name, don't we? Zacchaeus, that chief tax collector. Thieving, greedy man that he was.

And today, salvation has come to this house, Jesus says. And we can believe that when Matthew, that tax collector, became a disciple of Jesus and threw a party for his tax-collecting friends, and Jesus was there at the party and He told them how that He had come as a physician to heal the sick and that's why He is found among the wicked, the worst, the lowest sinners. It's not the healthy that need the doctor, but it's the sick. That's why I'm here with these people. And He offered them forgiveness, freely. There was a difference between Jesus' message and the message of the self-righteous crowd.

[22 : 45] The self-righteous crowd would say to those over there, well, you guys have to clean up your act before you can have any grace. And Jesus came to them as they were and said, you just come to me and trust in me to cleanse you from sin.

You turn from your sin in your heart, but come to me to take your sin away. That was different. They didn't have to get themselves ready for grace. They had to just own what they were. Yeah, I'm a tax-collect. Yeah, I'm a thief. Yeah, I'm a prostitute. You mean there's grace for me?

The likes of me? Jesus said, yes, come to me. It was the same with prostitutes, wasn't it? Not saying that the immoral woman at the Samaritan well was a prostitute, but she was a sexually immoral woman who had had five husbands and the man she was living with was not her husband. And she found Jesus to be a friend of sinners who offered her as a sinner the living waters of eternal life. And she trusted in Jesus.

[23 : 58] And so did many prostitutes. You know, Rahab the prostitute was saved by her faith, but she wasn't the only prostitute to be saved by faith.

Many who had the same trade as her were later brought into the kingdom of God under the preaching of John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Remember that sinful woman with a reputation in Luke 7 that washed Jesus' feet with her tears and dried His feet with her hair?

She loved much because she was forgiven much. And to her Jesus says, your sins are forgiven, your faith has saved you, go in peace. Though she had initially said to God's commandment concerning sexual purity, I will not.

She had repented and trusted in the Savior. That's this first group of sinners represented by tax collectors and prostitutes.

[25 : 14] Notice that obedience is the mark of true conversion. How do you know which boy did what his father's will? Well, it's the one that ended up in the vineyard.

That's what his father's will was. When the first son changed his mind after rebelling, he went, didn't he?

He worked in the vineyard. He obeyed. He did the will of his father. He was sorry for his stubborn refusal and he changed his ways and he proved that his repentance was real by obeying his father and going to work in the vineyard.

Repentance is not proved by how many tears you cry. There is a sorrow of the world that leads to death. But there is a sorrow that leads to repentance, that leads to life.

And that's what Jesus is teaching here. These who initially rebelled and said, I will not, proved their repentance by going into the vineyard and working.

[26 : 24] And that's what the tax collectors and prostitutes did when they repented. They obeyed God's commands. They did what they before had refused to do. They bowed to his authority and followed his commandments.

The tax collector quit collecting more than he was requiring to and the prostitutes quit using their bodies in ways that violated God's holy law. That's the sure proof that repentance is real.

And it's no different today. Real repentance, real faith in Jesus will always be seen in going and doing the Father's will. Now there's another kind of sinner in Jesus' parable, isn't there?

We've looked at the first group, those who say to God, I will not and later repent and go. Now there's this other group, those who say to God, I will but never go.

Now the chief priests, the elders of the Jews, the leaders of the people, the Pharisees find themselves in this group of sinners. They're all sinners but this is a different group of sinners.

[27 : 32] They sound so faithful to God to talk to them. They profess to be ready and eager to obey God's commandments. They appear to be in full agreement with what his law says.

But be careful or you'll be deceived by them because this is, it's not what it seems to be. It's not the way it is at all.

They do not actually do what the father wants. They just say they will. They act like they do. They pretend like they do. But in fact, they don't. The second son never made it to the vineyard, did he? For all of his promising talk, I will sir. He never made it to the vineyard. And the religious leaders never made it to pleasing God and doing what he wanted.

Never made it. Because God wanted them to accept his son as their only hope for eternal life.

[28 : 38] And you will not come to me that you might have life, Jesus says to them. And they would not do what God commanded. They just gave the impression that they did.

Even tithing their spices, their mint and cumin and dill, but they neglected the more weighty matters of the law, like justice, mercy, and faithfulness.

You know what Jesus says about them two chapters over in chapter 23? He says they say and do not. It's the same folks. Matthew 23, verse 3.

They say I will sir, but they do not go. Isaiah said about these people, they come near to me with their mouths and they honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.

So you'll find them in church singing all the evangelical hymns. But don't be deceived. They'll not be found in the vineyard. They're not doing the will of the Father.

[29 : 39] They just appear to. They have a form of religion, but they deny the power of it. You know, saying is one thing, doing is another. Another. The Israelites are at Mount Sinai and Moses comes down with the law and he reads to them the whole law.

And Israel says, we will do everything the Lord has said. We will obey Exodus 24 7. But many say that never do.

And they did not do, did they? And so another leader, Joshua, arrives on the scene and at the end of his life, Joshua holds out before them again their responsibility and again they say, we will serve the Lord our God and obey him.

But promises are not the same as performances. God says, do this and you say, I will sir, but you don't do it. That too is law breaking as much as the other.

That too is sinning. Sin is breaking the law. They sin in his face, I will not. You sin by lying to him, saying you will and you never do. But it's sin, it's law breaking in either case.

[31 : 05] It comes down to not doing what the father wanted. And that's where these two kinds of sinners are really in the same camp. They do belong in the big category of sinners, though there are differences between them.

You see, there's more than one way to sin. Some folks sin very politely against God. And they're the church going type. And God's law comes and says, do this.

And they say, yes, yes, I will. I will. I will put to death that sin. But they never get around to it.

And God's law comes saying, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ today. And they say, I will. I will. But they never get around to doing it.

They too come short of the glory of God. They too break the law as much as the guy who says, I will not. The first is more, this guy is more honest saying, I won't.

[32 : 12] this guy is very deceptive. Says, I will. You know, there's a lot of the I will crowd in the church in America today. I will.

They profess to be following the Lord, but their life knows nothing of the transforming power of the Lord Jesus Christ. If mere profession of following Christ got people into the kingdom of heaven, heaven would be jammed full.

But it's one thing to profess, I will be going, I am going, Lord, I do believe, I do repent. And it's another thing to possess Jesus Christ, to have him as your Lord and Savior.

Those are two different things. Jesus is saying that. There's two different sons and their reactions show these things. They teach them by way of parable. Jesus drops the parables in his Sermon on the Mount and says, not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

It's only the man who ends up in the vineyard doing what God wants. For many will say to me on that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?

[33 : 34] And then I will tell them plainly, I never knew you. I never knew you when everybody else in church thought you were a Christian. I never knew you then. I never knew you when you were baptized and everybody else said, wow, another Christian.

I never knew you when you joined that church, when you did many, many religious things. I never knew you. you never did the will of your father.

It shows that you are an evildoer away from me. You are my friends if you do what I command. Not if you say you do, if you do what I command. So, religious people who refuse to really repent and really give up their sins and trust in Christ are still under God's wrath, whatever else they may profess to the contrary.

They may be the leaders of the Jews. They may be the strictest party of the Pharisees. They may be preachers, elders, deacons, Sunday school teachers. They may think themselves going to heaven.

[34 : 52] But they show by not doing the will of the Father that they have no part in him. Now, Jesus comes to apply this parable then very pointedly in verses 31 and 32.

He applies it directly to these religious leaders, to the chief priests, the Pharisees, the elders, and he starts it all off with an I tell you the truth. Why does Jesus need to say that?

Every time he opens his mouth he tells the truth. It's not that he lies sometime and sometimes you know why he says I tell you the truth? He says it before he's about to say something that he knows his hearers are going to have a hard time believing could be true.

I know the popular opinion is going to be different from what I say so let me affirm right up front that I'm not kidding. I'm telling you solemnly that which is true. So get your ears up for this.

I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and the prostitutes, those in this crowd of sinners, are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you.

[36 : 00] Now what's so shocking about that is that these religious leaders had looked down their noses at these tax collectors and prostitutes and sinners.

They viewed them as the scum of the earth. They despised them as ever being worthy of entering into God's kingdom. They would be excluded whereas they thought because they were so upright morally and outwardly so clean that they would be included into heaven.

And Jesus says, you've got it wrong boys, it's just the opposite. They are going into the kingdom of heaven right in front of you.

There you stand. You will not come to me that you might enter the kingdom. And they're filing by one after another. Tax collector, prostitute, down and out drunkards.

Here they come repenting, coming to me, experiencing forgiveness and entering the kingdom. Now that verdict, that verdict that they're in and you're out, that verdict that they're in because they've repented and believed and you haven't, is illustrated by the two different responses to John the Baptist's preaching.

[37 : 22] He says in verse 32, for John came to you to show you the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did.

And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him. He condemns these religious leaders for not believing John the Baptist's message.

and acknowledging his authority and the authority of Jesus as having come from God. Two things that leave them guilty.

Number one, John came to you in the way of righteousness. John wasn't a loose TV evangelist that talks one way and sins high another way.

no, John came to you in the way of righteousness. He lived a life of righteousness. By their fruits you should have known him as a true prophet of mine.

[38 : 26] He came to you in the way of righteousness. He came to show you by his preaching, by his living, the way of righteousness. He preached righteousness. He called on you to leave your sins and to live a righteous life through faith in Jesus Christ.

And yet, you did not believe him. Shame on you for not believing God's prophet who came to you authorized from heaven to show you the way into the kingdom of God.

He called them all to repent. And the Bible says in Matthew 3 that confessing their sins they were baptized by him. Oh, but you were too self-righteous to respond to any call to repent.

Come and confess your sins and repent and be baptized. Well, that's for this group over here.

They're the sinners. They're the ones needing to repent. And you sat over here and you said, I don't have sins that I need to repent of.

You had this high view of yourself that you were so self-righteous you didn't need them to respond in faith and in repentance. to John's message. That's the first thing that leaves them guilty.

[39:47] You thought you had no need to repent. And so when John saw the Pharisees and Sadducees, Matthew 3, coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them, you brood of vipers who warned you to flee from the coming wrath, produce fruit in keeping with repentance.

And do not think that you can say to yourselves, we have Abraham as our father. I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The axe is already laid at the root of the tree and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. This holy righteous looking group, the self-righteous group was leaning on their own performance of the law and leaning on their relationship with Abraham. Oh, we're children of Abraham. We're in. We're in. And John sees right through it and says, don't you tell me, don't you tell me that you are Abraham's children.

God is able to raise up from these stones and yes, from these prostitutes and tax collectors, true children of Abraham.

[40:59] God is able to reject the preaching of John the Baptist because of their high view of themselves. But what adds to their guilt is in the second place that tax collectors and prostitutes did believe.

But even after you saw them repent and believe, you did not repent and believe yourself. You see the two things? First, you refused. When John the Baptist came with all authority from heaven, you refused his message because you thought you were too high and mighty and self-righteous.

But even after you saw this group of sinners, tax collectors and prostitutes, repenting under the power of the gospel, the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, and the power of God cut loose on these sinners, and they used to love to steal, and they used to love to get wages by selling their bodies, and now they repented, and they came home to me, and now they're living a new life.

You saw that power, and you still did not believe. You still did not repent. And I want to say to any who are still unconverted here this morning, you have seen people, boys and girls, brothers and sisters, cousins, and people in this church that you know, who were once going their way, and they've come under the power of the gospel, they believe the message of Christ, and they have repented, and trusted in Jesus, and he's made their life new.

And if you do not believe, the conversion of these all around you just leaves you all the more guilty in your sin. And they will witness one day that, yes, I was saved at Grace Fellowship Church.

[42:50] I rubbed shoulders with them, and I heard the same gospel, and believed God, and took him at his word. And that will condemn any in this place who will show up in the day of judgment, not having repented and believed.

By faith, Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, and holy fear, built an ark to save his family. And by his faith, he condemned the world.

God gave a word, a flood is coming. Nobody had ever seen a flood like that. But Noah believed God, and by his faith, he condemned all those who didn't believe.

You too heard the message, why didn't you believe it? And Noah's faith condemns theirs. And so it was, the tax collectors, the sinners, and so it is in this place, everyone who's been converted, their faith condemns those who remain in their sins and in penitence.

Let the examples of others encourage you, young people, older people. Let the conversions, the transformations of the gospel, right here in this place, let it encourage you to come to Christ.

[44:14] Christ. He's saving people in this place. Why not you?

Why not you? He saved them, he'll save you, he turns none away. You see, the message of this parable is that we have a savior, Christian. We have a savior for all kinds of sinners.

We have a savior for the bar hopping crowd, if you will, the tax collectors and the prostitutes.

Because our gospel is that Jesus Christ provides the righteousness that makes you right with God. So it doesn't matter what you've done in the past. It doesn't matter how bad you have in your face rebelled against God. If you will come and repent, he will give you righteousness.

You come and trust in Jesus, he'll give you a perfect righteousness to make you stand before God. That's the gospel. by his perfect life and his atoning death. He has all that you need to be presented as clean as Jesus before God in heaven.

[45:24] And you know that's the same gospel that we offer to the Sunday go meeting crowd who are self-righteous. And we're so thankful that they're not like this crowd and that don't see their sin and their need of a savior.

We have the answer for them. It's the same gospel. You need Jesus. So you've got a righteousness. How good is it? Come on, let's see it. Does it go into the vineyard? Does it do all that he said?

Does it love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength? Does it love your neighbor like you love yourself? My friend, if you don't reach that standard, you can't enter the kingdom.

But I'm here to offer you a righteousness that is the righteousness of God, approved by God, sent by God. And if you will trust in his son, he will give you that righteousness to present you holy in his presence.

You see, believers, we have the message. It doesn't matter who it is you're working beside, who it is you're living beside. We have the gospel. We have the gospel that all kinds of sinners need to hear.

[46:36] And maybe you are the sinner here, this morning. Jesus is the Savior for both kinds of sinners, and all in between, the self-righteous, the Pharisees, and the scandalous prostitutes.

You know, Jesus is willing to forgive any repenting sinner. Many have repented, why not you? George Whitefield once said to a self-righteous woman, Jesus Christ receives the devil's castaways.

Yeah, he saves the irreligious. He saves those that don't go to church. And that offended her because she was church going and moral.

And she thought she had something above that group. And Whitefield says, if you don't have Christ's righteousness, you don't get in. And many of them are going into the kingdom in front of you. Because they're acknowledging their sin, fleeing to Christ, repenting, and obeying the gospel. You know what's frightful is the last two verses of chapter 21. It's the hardening and the hardness of these people's hearts. For when the chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus' parables, they knew he was talking about them.

[48:04] They got the point. But they looked for a way to arrest him because they were afraid of the crowd because the people held that he was a prophet. They're still having problems carrying out their murderous plot, but here's the point.

They heard the Son of God with the truth of God, with the gospel of God calling them, and they knew it was talking to them. And they did not respond by repenting and believing.

but by further scheming on how to arrest and kill Jesus. They were offended. Their self-righteous religious pride was offended.

And what I find so frightful is how hardened their hearts had become to have the Son of God in the flesh standing before them, urging them to repent and believe and they will not.

These were once nice little boys who attended Sabbath school and heard all the stories of the Old Testament. These were those who grew up and remained religious right on through their teen years and right into early manhood.

[49:21] Very religious, but very lost. and they heard the preaching of John the Baptist and they rejected the call to repent, thinking they had no need.

And now they're rejecting Jesus' own call to come to him, even though they knew he was talking about them. Unconverted person, every time you hear the gospel and reject it, every time you see others hearing the same gospel and accepting it.

If you do not repent and believe, your heart is growing harder and harder and harder. So today, today, if you hear his voice, harden not your heart.

Come to Christ and receive this forgiveness of sins and glory in a gospel in which God provides everything that's needed. Let's sing to his praise.

If you need this Christ, even while we sing, you come to him. We're going to sing song number 395. 395.

[50:37] Come to the Savior now, today, if you hear his voice, harden not your heart. Let's stand as we sing. 395.

Thank you, our Father, for the gospel again this morning. Thank you that Jesus did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Oh, find us all out afresh this morning as sinners and lead us afresh this morning to the Savior of sinners who provides all the righteousness and send us on our way to work in the vineyard with joy and gladness.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.