

Good morning church family. If you would take your Bibles and turn with me to Mark chapter 12. We are entering a new chapter of Mark. And if you guys will pray for me this morning, I've been dealing with congestion in my left ear that it makes me very, very dizzy. So if I look up and pause for a second, it's because I got dizzy, it takes me a second to refocus. So if you'll just bear with me this morning, it's been a few days here, and hopefully it's clearing out soon. But if you see me make weird faces, it's just because I'm busy. So apologize for that. If you would mark chapter 12. We're going to be in verses one through 12. Mark chapter 12, verses one through 12. And once you found the passage, if you would stand with me in honor of the one who gave us this word as we read our text this morning. Mark chapter 12, verses one through 12. It reads, and he began to speak to them in parables. A man planted a vineyard and put a wall around it and dug a vat under the wine press and built a tower and rented it out to vine growers and went on a journey. And at the harvest time, he sent a slave to the vine growers in order to receive some of the fruit of the vineyard from the vine growers. And they took him and beat him and sent him away empty handed. And again, he sent them another slave, and they wounded him in the head and treated him shamefully. And he sent another, and that one they killed, and so with many others, beating some and killing others. He had one more, a beloved son. He sent him last of all to them, saying, They will respect my son. But those vine-growers 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 vine-growers, and will give the vineyard to others. Have you not even read this scripture? The stone which the builders rejected, that has become the chief cornerstone, this came about from the Lord, and it is marvelous in our eyes. And they were seeking to seize him and yet they feared the crowd and for they understood that he spoke the parable against them. And so they left him and went away. This is the word of the Lord. Let's pray. Dear Heavenly Father, we are so thankful this morning for the gathering of the body on your day. We're so thankful for the grace that has cleansed us, that has brought us into right relation with you, and we are wholly and utterly dependent upon Christ for his righteousness and the ability to stand here and worship you today. We pray, Lord, that we would be challenged by this text, that we would see your judgment and your mercy this morning, and that we would understand a little bit more about you working through history to bring about the redemption of your people. I pray, Lord, that you would remove any hindrances for me. I pray that you would help me stabilize today for during the time of the sermon that there'd be no distractions and no hindrances, that your word would be brought forth as you have decreed. We pray, Lord, for all of this to be glorifying to you and that we would focus on lifting you up in our hearts and minds today. In your holy name, I pray. Amen. All right, you can be seated. The title of the message this morning is the judgment and mercy of God, the judgment and mercy

of God. So as we've been going through Mark, especially the last few weeks, we've seen him enter Jerusalem, and he's now in a position of pushing back against the Sanhedrin, specifically the leaders of the Jewish religion, the Jewish nation state. We talked a little bit last week about the power and authority that they have over the temple. They were the absolute authority over the temple and the practices of the Jews there in the temple. And then they had a substantive political pool as well, kind of being a buffer, if you will, between Rome and the Jewish nation. And now he's, he's, we've embarked on last week was the first, but we're going to have several encounters with the leaders of the Sanhedrin. And this is another extension of what we talked about last week. This is essentially the same conversation. So we've moved forward. We saw last week, the questioning of Jesus's authority, in great detail of how Jesus revealed his authority to their question. And in this same conversation, we believe it's the same conversation. Sometimes it's hard to tell and mark whether something is part of exactly what just happened, or whether it's a separate time that this this conversation may have happened. But if we look at Matthew and chapter 21, and Luke and chapter 20, where the same parable is included. It's in the exact same order, a very similar order as Mark has it here. So it's very likely that this is the exact same conversation that they were having last week. So if you remember, the Sanhedrin came, challenged Jesus' authority with what they thought was a trick question. He turned it around back on them to show that his authority came from God, and that's whose authority we sit under even today. And so at that same conversation, Jesus is now switching gears and he's coming to explain the what's going to happen to the leaders. of the Jewish nation from a religious perspective. So, as these men were leading the nation that God had set forth to bring about good fruit, to bring about the things that God had in plan for the temple to be the light in the world, to be the locust day of that time, the location of God for them to be able to see God and to access him, it was the temple. And he had put the leaders of the Jewish nation there to bring about that fruit. And so we're going to see in this parable, both the judgment, but also the mercy of God. Now, this very unique that there is a parable here in Mark, this is actually the only major parable after chapter four of Mark, there's no other major parable. So this is very significant that Jesus would turn back to teaching. It's also very significant that as we walk through this, you'll that he was very clear on the meaning of this parable. Oftentimes, when he shared a parable, it was to hide the meaning, except for the inner circle. So if you've been with me through Mark throughout, you might remember where Jesus would teach America or excuse me, teach a parable, and then he would come back to the disciples, the inner circle, and give them the true meaning, while the true meaning was actually hidden from what we call the outer circle. And so he's he's being very clear on this parable, there's no doubt who he's intending it to be heard by. And we'll find out later on in chat in verse 12, that it did in fact land exactly where it was intended to land. And so the contents

of this parable, I want to kind of set the cultural mindset of the time, the idea of having tenants, land tenants was very, very common. It started about roughly 250 years before Jesus came on the earth and was still a practice for many years after. And so ultimately what happened is as the Jews were scattered abroad, their land was not able to be tended by themselves specifically. So they would hire tenants and they would hire people that would work the land. And then the rent, if you want to call it that, in our day, we call it the rent, the rent would be some amount of the produce, whatever, whatever the landowner would agree with the tenants on. And so this, this was a very, very common practice. And I want to make sure and reiterate that because this is not something way outside the purview of what they would understand this, this is speaking their language to them in a way that they can fully and completely understand exactly what he's getting at, as we go through here, because this impacts the Sanhedrin in a very specific way. So with all in mind, let's take a look at number one setting the stage and I do apologize. It's my responsibility to have sermon notes and I failed to get that blame it on my dizziness or whatever the case may be. But I apologize. There's not sermon notes this morning for you guys. I'll try to remedy that next week. But number one, if you're a note taker, number one, setting the stage, setting the stage, we're going to look at just verse one for this point. They reason he began to speak to them in parables, a man planted a vineyard and put a wall around it and dug a vat under the wine press and built a tower and rented it out to vine growers and went on a journey. Now, this is a very unique way to set the stage for a parable, because this is not simply him explaining the stage of the parable itself. But this is a quote from the Old Testament. If you would turn to Isaiah chapter five with me, Isaiah, and chapter five. And so he has been teaching the Sanhedrin. He's in the same conversation. The last, when we left off last week, he says, neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things. So he gives them a final answer on his authority. And now he's going to teach them what's going to happen to them using a prophecy from Isaiah that God himself gave about what is going to happen to Israel. And so to speak truth to them further, he quotes beginning with, I'm just going to read the first two verses of Isaiah chapter five. It reads, let me sing now for my well beloved a song of my beloved concerning his vineyard. My well beloved had a vineyard on a fertile hill. He dug it all around, removed its stones, and planted it with the choicest vine, and he built a tower in the middle of it, and also hewed out a wine vat in it. Then he hoped for it to produce good grapes, but it produced only worthless ones. So he sets the stage by quoting, in part, Isaiah chapter five, verses one and two. So you can see the tower being built, the wine vat being dug, the wall put around it. And so you see this idea here of Jesus referencing what would be a very, very common passage, very well known passage to the Sanhedrin. Isaiah was one of the primary books that the religious leaders would have known. Likely, many of the Sanhedrin very, very likely had it completely memorized. And so

this would not have missed the mark as Jesus was quoting Isaiah 5. But I want to finish reading through verse 7 of Isaiah chapter 5. because I want you to hear the rest of it. Because Jesus is making motion or pointing them toward Isaiah chapter 5 verses 1 and 2, but what's coming is a description of what the rest of this parable is laying out for them. Beginning in verse 3, Isaiah chapter 5 reads, so now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, please judge between me and my vineyard. So remember, the vine planter, the vineyard planter, the one who made it was expecting something. What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have done in it? Why, when I hoped for it to produce good grapes, did it produce worthless ones? So now let me tell you what I am going to do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it will be consumed. I will break down its wall, and it will become trampled ground. I will lay it waste, it will not be pruned or hoed, but briars and thorns will come up. I will also command the clouds to rain no rain on it. For the vineyard of Yahweh of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his delightful plant. Thus he hoped for justice, but behold bloodshed, for righteousness, but behold a cry of distress. So here Christ is quoting from Isaiah chapter five where Yahweh himself is using the analogy of a vineyard to describe the nation of Israel. So he is, Jesus is drawing their attention to the very portion of scripture where God laid out that Israel was like a vineyard for him. He took his people, he planted them like a vineyard and he expected good fruit from them, but they received nothing in return but bloodshed and distress. And so we see here a clear depiction of Israel's later life as a nation. They rebelled. In fact, the rebellion started at the foot of Mount Sinai when the law was first given, did it not? Whenever Moses came down the mountain and they hadn't even heard the full implications of the law and had already built a golden calf. And so for the life of Israel, God had the intention of having a vineyard that produced fruit. But it's very interesting that in this Isaiah chapter five, it says Judah as well, for where did Christ come? from the tribe of Judah. And so you see these connections in the prophecy that Jesus is referencing not only about Israel and what the expectations of God for Israel were, but also the reference to Judah specifically and how that particular tribe was guilty of not producing the fruit that it was intended. So Jesus is essentially setting the stage for the Sanhedrin with this text, pointing them to the failure that they have had. that the nation of Israel has had. So this is outside the normal purview of his parable. Jesus generally did not quote Old Testament when he gave a parable. It was simply a word story, an analogy to give a specific point about what he was trying to get across at that particular moment. This is a very special parable. He is reiterating a promise from Isaiah, a prophecy from Isaiah. about what was going to happen to Israel, who did not produce fruit. So he's setting his sights squarely on the leadership of the Sanhedrin. There's there's no doubt and believe me, they knew it. And we'll know later on in verse 12. The meaning of this parable did not miss them one bit. And which is also very different from

parables, as I mentioned before, because generally speaking, Jesus would have to explain the meaning of parables to someone. This was a little bit different context for a parable. He was giving a story and he was making sure they knew exactly what was going, what was being said. And so the tenant farmers, as we move forward, I want you to think about the tenant farmers or the vine growers, we're going to call them tenant farmers, because it's a little bit easier for us to kind of comprehend what the idea is. These tenant farmers are undoubtedly the leaders of the temple. The tenant farmers are undoubtedly the leaders of the Jewish nation. And so the landowner, of course, in this regard, as we can set this stage now that we've looked at Isaiah chapter five, the landowner being Yahweh. So I want you to have those, those understandings of who the players, if you will, the main people in the in the parable is so that we don't have any confusion as we go through this. So now that we've set the stage, number two, the rebellion of the tenants. The rebellion of the tenants. Verses two through eight. So now as we've set the stage, we know the landowner has built everything and he rented it out to the tenants and beginning in verse two, at the harvest time, so now it's come to the time of the harvest, rent is due, if you wanna think of it like that, in our common Western mindset, rent is due, it's time for the rent to be paid. So at the harvest time, he sent a slave to the vine growers in order to receive some of the fruit of the vineyard from the vine growers. And they took him and beat him and sent him away empty handed. And again he sent them another slave, he being the landowner. And they wounded him in the head and treated him shamefully. And he sent another, and that one they killed. And so with many others beating some and killing others, he had one more, a beloved son. He sent him last of all to them, saying, they will respect my son. But those vine growers 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. So as we come to the crux of this parable, we see that the landowner is ready to collect the rent. He's expecting fruit to have been produced. Only the tenants have a different idea. Now remember, with Jesus setting the stage with Isaiah, we know he is pointing the crosshairs at the Sanhedrin. And so now from here going forward, the Sanhedrin understands, just as I've explained to you, the tenants are themselves. It's those who tended the vine, or excuse me, the vineyard itself. So if Israel's the vineyard, the tenants would be the Sanhedrin who tended the vineyard, who helped produce fruit, who led and worked in such a way that fruit would come about and that fruit be rendered unto the landowner that we know is God. Only in this parable, the tenants have decided to rebel. Now, it was common practice in those days that when a landowner was ready to receive his rent at the time of harvest, he would send slaves. That was a very common practice. He would send a slave. They would bring back his portion. Everything would be fine. The tenants would continue to work, and they'd rent it for another year's worth of labor, and they would produce more fruit, and so on and so forth it would go. But in

this particular case, these tenants have decided that they're going to take matters into their own hands and not pay the rent. They want to be in charge. They want to be the ones who reap the full benefits of their fruit of the vineyard for themselves, not giving what is due to the landowner. That's very, very important. there is an expectation of fruit that is due to God. Out of the nation of Israel, there's an expectation of fruit. We talked about that when Jesus cleansed the temple, did we not? That there was an expectation of fruit to be given, fruit to be produced, by the temple, and that fruit was to bring light to the world to all nations. But the vine growers, the tenants, if you will, the Sanhedrin themselves, were preventing that from happening. So he's building upon his argument that he started from the very first point he came into the temple, which was, this is not what the landowner or Yahweh has intended it to be. So he's reiterating the same thing over and over and over again with the interactions with the Sanhedrin that they have failed to produce the expected fruit of the temple. They have failed their job. But it's not a failure of ignorance. And we're going to continue through this so that we can see that. So this landowner has sent a slave. And the first one that he sent, they beat him and sent him away empty handed. Then he sent another slave. And they wounded him in the head and treated him shamefully. Shamefully here is hard to determine what that could possibly be in the Jewish culture. Shamefully could be a disrobing. It could be shaving off his head. There's many things that that idea of shamefully could mean, but it's definitely not good. So this one, they wounded in the head and treated him shamefully. And then they sent another one. The landowner sent another one and they killed that one. So they're escalating. First they beat one, then they wounded him in the head, which was a more severe beating, right? A head wound is worse than a normal beating. And they treated him shamefully. And now they've killed one. And Mark, for the sake of his concise way of writing, says, and so with many others, beating some and killing others. And so Jesus basically just wraps it up. There was a bunch of them. All the slaves have been sent. He keeps sending slaves, keeps repeating it, hoping that the authority of the slaves, which represented, doesn't stand for the father or the landowners. authority, but at least represented it as a messenger, as one who is representing the landowner. It's very important to remember the analogy there. Now, now that we've come into the point where we're looking at the messengers or the slaves that are being sent, we can understand that this is the prophets of the Old Testament. many of you may have already kind of made that connection but ultimately this is the prophets of the old testament where Yahweh sent the nation of Israel the the vineyard that he planted this this holy nation that was set apart for himself he kept sending prophets to the leaders of that nation saying this is what you're doing this is not the expected fruit this is not the the behavior of my nation. This is not the beautiful vineyard that I planted. This is not how I expected it to be ran. This is not how I expected it to produce fruit. There should be fruit owed to me, not

to you. Why are you keeping all the fruit? Do you see this playing out in how Israel conducted themselves over so many centuries? And so now the landowner has exhausted his supply of people. Because in verse 6 it says he had one more. So, the landowner has exhausted his supply of slaves and servants. Now, don't take the analogy too far. God could have sent as many prophets as he wanted to. But when we think about God reached the limit of how many messengers he was going to send to Israel. He was there was no more messengers now. But he had one more. It says in verse 6, a beloved son. a beloved son. Now, I know the title of the message is the judgment and mercy of God. And as we've read through this, you may be thinking, how is it merciful? Where is God's mercy shown forth through this passage? The fact that the landowner would send his beloved son to appeal to the tenants is an act of mercy. Think about it, a landowner sending his own son was a risk. wasn't it? But the son held more authority than the slaves. In the Jewish culture, a son held the same rights or in the eyes of the law held the same rights as the father. It was his exact representative. He held the same capacity that the father held. He was the next male in line. In other words, if you were speaking to the son in that cultural context, you were speaking to the father as far as the view of the law was. And so ultimately you have the beloved son being sent pleading. The intention was to plead with the tenants to obey the commands of the law, which were when you were a tenant farmer, you gave the fruit to the landowner. That was the tenants of the law. So this beloved son was sent to appeal to the tenants of this beautiful vineyard to follow the law that was given to them. Think about that for a minute. seeking for them to produce the fruit that was intended to be produced to the landowner. Yahweh, do you see the connections starting to be made? So this beloved son, in an act of mercy, was sent by the father, by his father, by the landowner, thinking they will respect my son. And yet these tenants, ignored the law and wanted to be land owners themselves. Let me explain. So in the context of how the law worked in that day for tenant farmers, If the landowner perished, and there was not an immediate successor, in other words, a son, an immediate successor to claim ownership of that land, within a certain amount of time, let's say 30 days, the exact amount of time was written out differently for each agreement. But let's say 30 days, if someone did not come to take that ownership of that land, whoever was first in line, it was first come first serve basis. After that 30 days, whoever claimed the land first got to own it. And so how now we have the tenants seeing the sun coming, which in the context of how it would work in those days, if the sun was coming, that meant the landowner was likely dead. So from the from the parable standpoint, the tenants were looking at the sun going, Okay, well, obviously, the father's dead, because the sun's coming. So if we kill him, we'll be heirs of the promise will be heirs of the vineyard, we'll be able to own it ourselves. So we're going to ignore the law that was given to us, the agreement that we have, the covenant, if you will, that we have with the landowner, we're going to ignore that, and we're going to make

ourselves the landowner. Now let's think about this in context of the Sanhedrin. What was the Sanhedrin guilty of? Over and over again, or the leaders of the nation of Israel, making themselves out to be God. They took the law and distorted it. They ignored it. They wanted the praise of men. They wanted the fruit of the temple for themselves. That's why Christ cleansed it, not just two or three weeks ago when we read that passage. So we have these tenants representing the Sanhedrin who are in effect wanting to remove God and make themselves God, the land owner. Do you follow the analogy? And so their reason for conniving for them making this heinous plan was so that they in effect could make themselves the landowners. And so when we apply that parable, the Sanhedrin essentially wants to make themselves God. Now, how often do we do that in our own lives? That's the making ourselves God, the unconverted, the goal of the unconverted is to always what ultimately, to make themselves God. And so the Sanhedrin is doing what man has struggled with throughout human history. Even Adam himself wanted to be like, or excuse me, Lucifer wanted to be like God was sent out. Adam himself through the temptation Eve, everything there wanting to be like God. And so we see the same thing playing out in the nation of Israel, where the Sanhedrin has come to a point, Christ is laying it out here very clearly in the parable, you wanted to be landowner, you wanted to be God, you wanted to receive the fruit yourselves of the nation that I planted. And another reason why this is an act of mercy for the son to come because he's coming to plead. He's coming to plead with him. Please listen to the law that you are subject to. Please listen and do what you've agreed to do. But another reason this is an act of mercy is because the very word that is used to describe sending in verse 6 it says he sent him last of all to them. The Greek word is apostolane. Apostolane. This is a divine commission. This is the same word used that when it describes Jesus sending out the apostles to preach in Mark chapter 3. It's the same word that Jesus used to send out the disciples in Mark chapter 6 with the power to cast out demons. It's the same word that Jesus used to describe the sending of the prophets in Luke chapter 11 and Luke chapter 13 when he's weeping over Jerusalem because the apostles were sent or apostolane. They were given a divine commission, a call to repentance, a call to preach, a call, it was a divine gracious act to send the apostles out and to send the prophets out. And so this word is very key in understanding this merciful act that the landowner, the father here, is doing in sending his beloved son. He's trying to convince them to keep the covenant, the law that they have been given. But in verse 7 it says, but those vine growers said to one another that the tenants looked around at one another and said, this is the heir. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours. And so we see here a perfect summation of the nation of Israel over and over again, the leaders looking to cast aside the covenant that was so graciously given to them to live in a beautiful vineyard that they did not build with their own hands. And they took the son in verse eight, and they killed him and threw him out of the vineyard. I know we have walked through this already but to make sure

we are on the same page here. The land owner represents God. The tenants or vine growers represent the leadership of Israel, the vineyard itself, the nation of Israel, or the promises of God. And so now we've come to the full culmination where they have cast out the son, the gracious gift given to them by the father, the landowner has cast him out, killed him and cast him out. Now, this idea of judgment, as we're going to start thinking about and thinking through the judgment, so we've seen the mercy, but I want you to retrace with me just briefly the paths and the teachings of the Old Testament where the nation of Israel did, in fact, do this over and over and over again. So I've made allusions to that. Now I want to show you where those allusions come from so that you can see for yourself the grotesque way that the nation of Israel and its leadership acted. Jeremiah chapter 7, verses 25 through 26. It reads, since the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt until this day, I have sent you all my slaves, the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them. Yet they did not listen to me or incline their ear, but stiffen their neck. They did more evil than their fathers. And this was a continuous cycle. Isaiah 56, 7, as we talked about whenever Jesus cleansed the temple, it reads, even those I will bring to my holy mountain and make them glad in my house of prayer, their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on my altar, for my house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples. So this idea of the nation of Israel, the vineyard, being able to produce a specific kind of fruit in the eyes of God had the idea of bringing all nations to himself, being the light, the locust day, the place where God himself inhabited the world. And yet the nation of Israel over and over and over again rejected the plan of the landowner. So as Jesus wraps up this parable, he has an everyday language called to account the men that he's having a conversation with. And remember, this conversation was initiated by them. They came to him to challenge his authority, not 10 verses ago in the end of chapter 11. And now he's teaching them and bringing the authority to bear. So he showed them their authority by referencing the baptism of John. And now he's coming to say, this is what you have done parable. So point number three, we've laid out the parable, we've laid out what it was with the rebellious tenants. Point number three, the judgment, verses nine through 12. It reads, what will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the vine growers and will give the vineyard to others. Have you not even read the scripture, the stone which the builders rejected? This has become the chief cornerstone. This came about from the Lord and it is marvelous in our eyes. And they were seeking to seize him and yet they feared the crowd for they understood that he spoke the parable against them. So they left him and went away. So now Jesus is going to continue with a rhetorical question. What will the owner of the vineyard do? He didn't expect an answer. He's going to give them one. He will come and destroy the vine growers and will give the vineyard to others. This is a very important distinction here. Unlike the prophecy of Isaiah chapter five, where God would destroy the vineyard, the mercy of God is

revealed in the fact that Jesus interprets this as he will come and destroy the vine growers, not the vineyard. And he will give it to others. There's a couple key things here I want us to understand first the owner here the word owner, in verse 9 is Kyrios in the Greek. If you're familiar with Greek a little bit, Kyrios is the word for Lord. God as Lord is the translation. So this is a clear representation of what Jesus is trying to say. The owner, God as Lord, the Lord, what will he do? He will come and destroy the vine growers, but not the vineyard. He's coming to remove the leadership of the vineyard. He's coming to remove those who have been commissioned to work the vineyard, and he's going to bring in others. The word others there carries with it a Gentile connotation in the original language. the others, those who were uncircumcised. He's going to bring in others to work the vineyard to produce the fruit that is owed, the glory that is owed to the landowner, the glory that is owed from the vineyard to the nation of Israel to bring glory to God and a light to the nation will no longer be brought from the leadership of Israel, but will be brought by the Gentiles, those who are grafted in, those who are brought into the vineyard to work instead of the vine growers, the rebellious tenants. This parable has such an immense amount of weight to it in our understanding of God's redemptive plan in bringing in all nations to himself. And so when we think through the others that are brought in, I hope your mind quickly goes to you and I sitting in these seats this morning. because that is an act of mercy that the Lord of the vineyard, the land owner, would not destroy the vineyard altogether but would fulfill his obligation to the covenant which was to bless all nations, to bless the others. The failure of the nation of Israel did not compromise the redemptive plan. God himself decreed that it would still come to pass. And so he brought in others that would produce the fruit that he intended it to produce. And we know this because of verse 10. In verse 10, Jesus is quoting Psalm 118 verses 22 and 23. It reads, have you not even read this scripture? And it's so interesting to me the way Jesus says that when he asks the leadership of Israel, have you not even read? Because in the Jewish culture, they would have likely had all of Psalms memorized as well. That was a very important book to Old Testament Judaism. And so he asked them, have you not read the stone which the builders rejected? This has become the chief cornerstone. This came from the Lord and it is marvelous to our eyes. And so now he's quoting again from the Old Testament to apply to himself to show that he is the true cornerstone that the builders rejected. What did the tenants do with the son? They rejected him. But in so doing, Jesus is now applying this parable real time to himself, that the one that is going to be rejected will become the chief cornerstone of the new locust day. And it's very interesting that Psalm 118 describes Solomon's temple. the temple of God being built, the temple that was being produced to, or excuse me, being fabricated, built to produce the fruit that he intended it to produce among all the nations, which ultimately, as we've discussed several times over the last few weeks, the point of

the temple was to gather all nations to God to be the Locus Dei, that's Latin for location of God. So the location of God for them to be able to see God. to bless the nations. But yet the true nation, the true temple, the true Israel is Christ and he is the chief cornerstone, but they're going to reject him. Do you see how this all plays in with the Old Testament prophecy coming true in Christ? Oh, I stepped too fast. Remind me to stay still. So as Jesus is now referencing himself as the chief cornerstone, I want to draw something so amazing to your attention here, verse 11. The other two gospels don't record verse 11 in Jesus' quote. I don't know why Matthew and Luke don't record it, but Mark records verse 11, which is verse 23 of Psalm 118. And it specifically says, this came about from the Lord. And it is marvelous in our eyes. The entire thing with the Old Testament Israel came about from the Lord. The failure of the Jewish nation was from the Lord so that he could establish that no human can keep the covenant with God. It required something different, someone different. They could not produce and give the fruit of their side of the covenant. They failed. This is from the Lord. But us as the others, is it not marvelous in our eyes? Is it not beautiful to see God bringing about His redemptive plan through Christ, the true Israel, the true locust day, the true temple, that we can find God through Him and Him alone, by grace alone? Is it not a marvelous thing for us to understand and in our finite minds as best we can grasp the magnitude of the redemptive plan brought about by God Himself? Jesus is not pulling punches here, and he's giving us such a beautiful, beautiful, my mind just went blank, beautiful, slight way to see it. Someone help me out here. A great analogy here. Man, that was a fumble, wasn't it? I'm sorry. A great perspective. There's the word I was trying to think of, a great small perspective into his redemptive plan. And he's letting us see that. And he's letting us see the failure of the chief priests and the scribes in the Sanhedrin right before the very eyes of his disciples in the Jewish nation. Believe me, this conversation very likely was not private. Very likely occurred in the 35 acre as we talked about the magnitude, the size of the core of the Gentiles in the temple. There was likely a crowd around them. The Sanhedrin always had a crowd around them. Jesus always had a crowd around them. This is Jesus publicly telling them the failure that they have and are as leaders and that they are going to reject him. And yet he will be the chief cornerstone and it came about from the Lord. And then verse 12, we see their immediate reaction, and their immediate reaction is exactly as the rebellious tenants that just came in the parable. It's exactly. They seek to seize him. Immediately, they seek to act exactly as Jesus just told them they were acting. They are fulfilling the parable's meaning right before our eyes. They seek to seize him, and yet they feared the crowd. For they understood he spoke the parable against them, and so they left him and went away." Once again, the fear of man. This is the third time since Jesus has arrived at Jerusalem that the religious leader's motivation for their actions is the fear of men. Because ultimately, what did they want? The fruit of

the nation of Israel for themselves. What was the fruit of the nation of Israel according to the Old Testament? The nations looking to God. They wanted the fruit for themselves. They wanted the nations to look to them. They wanted the nation of Israel to look to them for advice, to them for authority, to them to be able to see how they could attain relationship with God. It's literally playing out at the end of the parable. But they left him and went away. And so we've seen a beautiful picture here of the judgment and mercy of God. The judgment being that the vine tenants, the vineyard tenants, will be removed from their position. It doesn't happen even in Jesus's lifetime. In fact, God uses their position to bring about the redemption of the others that he's going to usher in, does he not? And yet in AD 70, the temple is destroyed, the Sanhedrin is leveled and dispersed. and the leadership of the Jewish nation is no longer necessary. He brings about the judgment. And yet the mercy of God is on full display. You can't speak about the judgment of God without speaking about the mercy of God. For instead of destroying the nation of Israel as He said He would so many times because of the rebellious stiff-necked heart, by mercy He uses them in their rebellion to bring about the redemption of the others. You and I are here because God is merciful. Amen? You and I are here because God is gracious. And so the judgment and mercy of God is on clear display here. Now there's several points of application that we can walk away with this morning. First of all, and I hope it's ringing true in your hearts and minds, is the providence of God, the sovereignty of a holy God that would bring about through countless centuries, no, we can probably count them, through many centuries of the Old Testament, the nation of Israel, and its history and life, God bringing about the perfect time from the very nation that he said, and Isaiah would not produce the fruit that he called, he brought about the fruit anyway, for the Lion of Judah came to conquer death. And all of that coming from God's providence in all things. The next thing we see is Jesus' authority and role that he fully embraces. He fully embraces it. He is putting himself out there as the son of the vineyard, the son of the landowner, the beloved son, the one whom they will reject, but he will become the chief cornerstone. There is no way that they didn't understand what he was calling himself. based on their accusatory question not a few verses ago on whose authority he does this by. So we clearly see God's providence and Christ's authority, and every one of us should exhale a sigh of relief that we serve a providential sovereign God. And we worship the son who has full authority to do everything he's promised to do. And so we rest in that. We rest in the victory. We rest as the others who are brought in, who are grafted in, in another parable that Jesus uses, as we are grafted into the true vine as extra branches. by His mercy and grace. So let us live our lives in confidence in the plan of God and His sovereignty. If He can bring about everything that we just saw laid out here for us, He can bring out exactly what He wants in our lives. And it's always, as we know from Scripture, for our best good and for His glory. It doesn't mean our definition of good, by the way. It

means his definition of good. But it is always for our best good and for his glory. And that should cause us to exhale a sigh of relief. And we should put our heads on the pillows every night going, I serve and worship and am united with the one who has all authority and the landowner, the father, who has a great sovereign plan that cannot be changed, altered, or defeated. Because our confidence doesn't lie in the tenants that rebelled. That's not where our confidence lies. Our confidence doesn't lie in the law. Our confidence lies in the one who fulfilled the law. And so my prayer this morning is that we take our eyes off ourselves quit desiring to be God and let him be God and acknowledge him as the Lord and ruler of all and rest in his sovereignty. Because even in our converted state, if you are converted, if you do trust Christ, and have placed your faith in him, do we still not sometimes want to be the landowner? Do we not still want to be the one to make the call the one who is the final authority, the one who throws everything else out and wants to just keep the fruits for ourselves? How many times this week alone? Have I been guilty of wanting glory for myself? Glory theft is an easy thing to fall into. Because the fruit of the nation of Israel was glory to God, was it not? The fruit of the vineyard as we are the others tending it now is glory to God. And how dare we want to keep the fruit for ourselves? So let us live lives in confidence of the one who is sovereign and use all that we are and everything that we have for his glory and his glory alone. So in conclusion, we've seen God's judgment and mercy shown in this parable. and understand that He will bring judgment on those who deserve it. It's undoubted. We can take that to the bank. His judgment is coming for those who deserve it. And I plead with anyone here who has not placed their faith in Christ to do so. If the Spirit is calling you now as someone who has not placed your faith in Christ and Christ alone, understand you will face the judgment and be destroyed just as the rebellious tenants were because you are not God. And if that's something you haven't done, Wes and I would be more than happy. to explain that to you. But we also see his mercy shining forth as he brings in the others. You can be an other if you're not already. But next week as we've seen his judgment and mercy laid out in clear form, next week we're going to see the Pharisees come to him again to cause him, try to cause him to say a statement that will bring him to guilt. Now they're going to shoot for Rome to come take care of him. And we'll look at that next week as we discuss taxes. But I want us to walk out of this room today with solid understanding that God does judge those who are worthy of judgment, and he gives mercy to some by his own decision. It comes about from the Lord. And I would like everyone in here to join me in saying it is marvelous in our eyes. Is it not? Ready? It is marvelous in our eyes how beautiful it is to see the judgment and mercy of God and his sovereign will. Let's pray. Dear Heavenly Father, we are so thankful for your grace and your mercy. We're so thankful for your righteous judgment as well. Lord, I pray that you will help us to remember who we rest in, the authority of the one that we're united in, the completed work that he finished on the

cross, and that we would all ever repeat, it's marvelous in our eyes
to see your mercy. We love you and praise you in your holy name,
amen.