

In preaching to his hearers, the LJ oftentimes used parables. These par of J were not only interesting stories and comparisons which He used as a sort of diversion for the hearers, but they also had a very serious and a lofty purpose. Every parable had its special purpose and taught an important lesson in a striking manner. X would compare the Kingdom of G to something with which the Jews were all well acquainted, thus adding power and appeal to the divine teachings. We may also say of X's parables, ^{and what with say,} that they are the art-glass windows in the glorious temple of the Gospel-story.

In studying the individual parables which were spoken by our Sav, we find that they may be divided into two large groups. In some instances we find very striking similarities between the Kingdom of G and some phase of temporal life and on the other hand we find that these parables teach us the striking differences between the Kingdom of G and the affairs of this world. In order to prove this let us take a brief glance at two well known parables of our L. The first one is that where J says, "I am the good shepherd." X is the good shepherd of our souls. He is the only one who may bear this name with full justice. The first feature which distinguishes him as the true shepherd of souls is this, that He has given his own life as the one complete sacrifice for the guilt of all sinners. He took their place. He interceded and fought for them sacrificing his own life for the sheep. In contrast to this great love shown the sheep by X the good shepherd, the parable speaks of the hireling. Usually a hireling does not care, his interest in the sheep is not so great and his love for them is not so strong as to sacrifice his own life for their safety. The second striking contrast found in this parable is the fact that X knows all his sheep. There is an intimate relationship between the shepherd and the sheep who follow him. One understands the other. However the hirelings, by these X meant the Ph and Scr and false teachers, whose chief concern was money, had no such interest in the flock entrusted to their care and guidance. At the first sign of the enemy they would turn in flight and leave the flock to be devoured by the wolf.

Let us look also at the parable of the rich man and Lazarus to see the great contrast and difference between the Kingdom of G and the sphere of this evil world. The rich man lived only for himself and for the comforts and luxuries of his own body. The needs of his fellowmen did not concern him at all. His trust was in his riches and not in G. We all know the dreadful result. The poor Lazarus, however, was a godfearing man and what he did was done to the glory of his G and the welfare of his neighbor. His trust was placed in G., and we know the benefits which he enjoyed in contrast to the punishment which the rich man had to endure.

~~Our~~ The parable found in our today's text is really in a class for itself, since it combines into one story both elements mentioned in such parables as the above mentioned. Let us direct our attention to the same.

We would then consider THE LORD'S VINEYARD.

- L 1. The call into the Lord's vineyard.
- 2. The labor in the Lord's vineyard.
- 3. The rewards of the Lord's vineyard.

T.1-7. The conditions which present themselves in these words of our T are not entirely strange to us. Similarly, especially in the North and middle Western states one will see the farmer go out to hire ^{men} in order that the harvest may be gathered quickly and efficiently. Our T tells us that the householder went out to call men into his service on five different occasions during the day. The ~~first~~ ^{general} day lasted from six in the morning until six at night. Six o'clock represented the first hour, nine o'clock the ~~second~~ ^{second}, and so on. Now the parable of our text illustrates to us the call of human beings into the service or vineyard of the L.

We find many allusions to the Lord's vineyard in HS, always meaning the Kingdom of G here on earth. The expression as we first find it in the OT refers to the Children of Israel. Later it becomes more general and refers to the church of JX in general.

Show Similarity. More clearly. See outline.

G himself is the owner and ruler of this vineyard here on earth, and J is represented as the vine. We Xtians are the branches of this vine, since we, thru faith in the merits of JX have become new sp creatures, and now live and have our being in our Sav.

As the owner of the vineyard went out to call people into ~~his~~ ^{his} service of so G also does today. He is sending forth his invitation to all people, to the entire world, calling them into His service. He is informing men that all ~~men~~ should be saved, that the work of redemption which X has wrought was meant for all, and that salv therefore is completed for every one. All should therefore come into his vineyard without delay. And this call is today being heard thru-
out the world, ~~where ever the Gos is being preached.~~

But where and how does this call usually find mankind? The householder of whom our T tells us found men standing about idle in the market place, which was a public square in the center of the town. So it is also with the call of the Gos. It always finds men outside, far away from the vineyard. No person is born into the vineyard of the L nor can he of his own accord get into the same, since he is by nature a miserable sinner. By nature he is an alien to the kingdom of G and has no connection whatsoever with the Lord's vineyard. Notice also that our T tells us how the owner of the vineyard went out at the 11th hour and found many idle and said to them "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" Is that not an exact picture of the kingdom of G? Do we not find that thousands and thousands of people are idle all the day of their life, are a shirker in the vineyard of their L? When the call of the Gos is extended to them, they decline to accept it, thinking that their external deeds of righteousness will merit for them the good will of G. And thus they pass their entire life away in the service of sin and satan, being directly on the road to eternal perdition.

How is it then, you ask, that there are some who are ch of G and workers in the Lds vineyard? It is G himself who calls them. G was moved by compassion and love for lost mankind, and what did he do? He sent his only and dearest son JX as the sacrifice for man's sin. X paid the debt which we were unable to pay. He reconciled us with G. Thus he paved the way in order that we, in spite of our sinful state might become active workers in the Lds vineyard. And the L still has means thru which he calls men into ~~his~~ ^{his} service ~~by his~~ and that is the Gos. Today also, at all hours of the day he is sending out his servants who are proclaiming to all the world, "Come, for all things are now ready." And what does this call contain? It contains the promise of all the sp blessings, the blessings of heaven, forgiveness of sins, the comfort and joy on your journey thru life, victory over the enemies of your soul, and a favorable verdict in the final judgment... Have you, my dear fr, heard and given heed to ~~the~~ this call which has been extended to you by your L? Has his call been so effective in you as to bring you into the realm of his vineyard? O blessed are U if U have heeded Xts call. And having heeded the call of G and entered into his vineyard, the HXtian ch, you also have assumed certain responsibilities and duties.

II.

The householder of whom our T speaks went out to hire laborers. He was not seeking those who would only eat the grapes and drink the wine the vineyard yielded, but he wanted good laborers. And it is self-evident that he wanted men who were willing to work. When you hire help, you expect of them that they perform their duties.. And that is as it should be. Man was made for labor. Adam, even before he fell into sin, was placed into the Garden of Eden to be the keeper of the Garden. And so G has given every person certain physical and mental gifts with which ~~he~~ ^{we} should serve his G and his fellowmen. We all know how idleness will lead to corruption and decay.

Now let us also apply this to the Kingdom of G. When G makes men Xtians he is hiring laborers. And he expects of us that we use the special blessings which he has bestowed upon us, for His glory and our neighbors welfare. Yes, every Xtian owes it to his G that he be active in the Lds vineyard, that he be an active church-worker. Scr says that we should be "zealous and fruitful in every good work."

And what are the duties of a Xtian, a laborer in the Lds vineyard? O there is much work to be done, work for every one. There is the seed of the W of G

which must be sown. there are souls which must be won for the L, the stray sheep are to be brot into his fold again, missions work is to be supported, charity is to be exercised, and ~~many~~ many more such tasks which have fallen upon us Xtians. And in order that these activites may be carried out, he has endowed us all with certain gifts, which we should use for His cause. The one he has given the gift to teach and preach, the other he has given material wealth which he should use for the furtnerance of Gds Kingdom, etc. Every one of you have some gift and have ability in some way which should and must be used for His cause. And ask yourself, and be perfectly honest with yourself in your examination, Have I applied myself in the past, have I done all which I am able to do in order that the Lds vineyard may be increased? What have I as an individual done to bring the news of saly to such who are yet in sp darkness? Have I attempted to bring friends or relatives into his fold? How hard ~~am~~ have I worked in order that our congregation may be increased? There is absolutely no space for an idler in the Church. No one is too young, too old, or too busy to work for the L. We must all be about our heavenly father's business. Let us learn the lesson from X himself when he says "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day; for the nite cometh in which no man can work".

If we work, we naturally also expect wages, or some reward. What does our T tell us about this? III.

In the verses preceding our T we have a conversation betw J and his disc. To our surprise Peter says to Xy 27. And J gives them promise of reward, v28.29. But in order to avoid a misunderstanding in the minds of his disc he adds the parable of our T. They should not get the impression that the LJ owed them anything for their labors, that he was obliged or indebted to them in any way. X also stress that in the parble. For when the evening was come, ^{the day was over} he paid his laborers and gave them all the same amount, a penny, equivalent to about 1/2¢ in our money. In spite of the fact that some had worked only an hour and that others had labored the entire day, he pays them alike. Quite natural that those who had worked hard all day would murmur against the good man. They expected to receive more than the rest. But what does the husbandman tell them? He reminds them first of all of their agreement, that they should receive one penny for their labors. He also tells them that he owes them nothing more, since he may do with his goods as he wishes, and that it was his goodness which prompted him to give those who had worked less as much pay as the rest.

And so it is also in the Kingdom of G. If we are active workers in the vineyard of G he promises to give us a reward. That is frequently already done here in this world, in the form of health, happiness, wealth, honor, etc., and at last reward us with et life. However, we should not gain the impression that the L owes that to us for our labors. G is under no obligations to us for our meager labors. And he who serves G merely for a reward, is serving in a selfish and unjust manner. Of such the statement applies, "The first shall be last, and the last first." We should never forget that we are Gds creatures, and that a creature owes his creator everything, but not that the creator owes his creature something. Furthermore, we are already so much indebted to our G that we have no reason to ask for more reward and blessings. And again, remembering the sins with which we offend G daily, dare we to appear before him asking for rewards? Surely Not! *Show how I call some at each hrs of life & still give them all same - et life & grace.*

Gds reward to us is not a reward of merit, but a reward of grace. He is giving us these blessings out of his own free will and love, just as it pleases him. O that we may all learn this lesson, that all ^{which} we have in life and in et is a gift of the grace of G. No merit, no worthiness on our part. Let us then give earnest heed to the call of G, become diligent workers in his vineyard, knowing that he will finally reward us with et life. And this reward is a reward of pure grace and love.