



## **July 28 - Sermon Study Guide - Pastor Lee Towns** **Jesus Stories /WYSIWYG – Matthew 21:28-32**

*28 But what do you think about this? A man with two sons told the older boy, 'Son, go out and work in the vineyard today.' 29The son answered, 'No, I won't go, but later he changed his mind and went anyway. 30Then the father told the other son, 'You go, and he said, 'Yes, sir, I will. But he didn't go. 31 Which of the two obeyed his father?' They replied, 'The first.'" Then Jesus explained his meaning: "I tell you the truth, corrupt tax collectors and prostitutes will get into the Kingdom of God before you do. 32For John the Baptist came and showed you the right way to live, but you didn't believe him, while tax collectors and prostitutes did. And even when you saw this happening, you refused to believe him and repent of your sins. (Matthew 21:28-32 NLT)*

### A Life Application Study Guide

James 1:22-25 tells us to put into practice what we are discovering in God's word.

### **DISCUSSION POINTS**

1. Pastor Lee says our world is dealing with a crisis of WYSIWYG. What do you think?

- The crisis seems to be one of appearance vs. reality. What examples come to mind in your own life? Where might appearance not line up with "what's really going on? How do you navigate this in your life or as you observe others around you?

- AI— *Artificial Intelligence* or *Deep Fakes* might cause us to be suspicious. WWJD? What would Jesus have us do? Or how do we discover the truth found in God’s word?

2. Context is important when we consider the meaning of any parable. In the preceding verses, it reads: “*When Jesus returned to the Temple and began teaching, the leading priests and elders came up to him. They demanded, “By what authority are you doing all these things? Who gave you the right?”*”

- Break down this passage: who represents the father in this story and who represents the two sons? Why might Jesus have chosen a vineyard as the setting in His story? What is the father requesting of his two sons and why does Jesus juxtapose their responses for His audience?
  
- Appearances matter when they represent the truth. So, who in this story is the obedient son?

- What is at the heart of that question and the truth that Jesus is asking us to discover about ourselves?

3. Jesus steps out from the parable structure and speaks directly to us.

- How is it that “*the least of these*” will get into heaven before His listeners will?

- What does Lee want us to know about the use of the word *before* in the passage and what is its significance?

- The leading priests and elders were His immediate audience; how does their appearance differ from the reality of how they were perceived by their peers and their community at large?

- Our public image or our social media image will not be our ticket into heaven. This may be a stark statement for many to process but how does it inform your daily living and your relationships?

4. Image is important only when it represents the truth of our heart condition. What does your public image tell others about who you belong to? How quickly is it observable to those around you? What gives you away?

- Shame and guilt are very difficult emotions to navigate in our culture today, but they do have a relationship to repentance. How would you define shame and guilt for someone hearing the Gospel message for the first time?

- Why is repentance followed by obedience critical to one's salvation?

- How easily do you share your own faith and salvation story with anyone who may briefly cross your path or is solidly within your sphere of influence?

### **MAKING IT REAL**

- How have you projected the image of being a Kingdom man or woman, but your heart is tied to something outside of the kingdom?
- What is the condition of your heart today and what needs to change? Who will walk that journey with you?