

A NOTE TO PARENTS

Jesus told a troubling story to the religious leaders in Israel. He told them of a man who took great pains to plant a vineyard, and then went away, leaving it to the care of tenants. And the tenants abused their privilege. Instead of yielding up the fruit to the rightful owner, they attacked his messengers and finally killed his son. They wanted the vineyard for themselves, and they had absolutely no scruples about the measures they were prepared to take in order to grab it for themselves.

The vineyard image has a long history in the Bible, as a metaphor for God's people, planted in the land that God has given them. The Hebrew prophets often accused the vineyard of failing to produce, and thus arousing the lord of the vineyard to anger. But in Jesus' story, the vineyard has yielded a crop, and the landlord continues to treasure it. It is the tenants in charge of the vineyard who fail. They fail the landlord, and they fail the vineyard. They fail at their duty of caring for what the landlord loves, because they are only out for what they can get. They do not love the vineyard, and they do not love its lord.

Jesus was so angry with the Pharisees and priests, because they had betrayed a trust from God. They were to cherish and protect his chosen people, and direct the fruits of their lives back to God. Instead, they used that position to serve their own egos, and when God sent messengers to remind them of their promise, they turned and attacked the messengers.

All of us, even little children, have a trust from God to care for something that God loves and treasures. For your child, it may be a puppy or a goldfish. For the human family, it includes all our sisters and brothers, and the earth itself. Help your child to realize the privilege and the joy of that trust.

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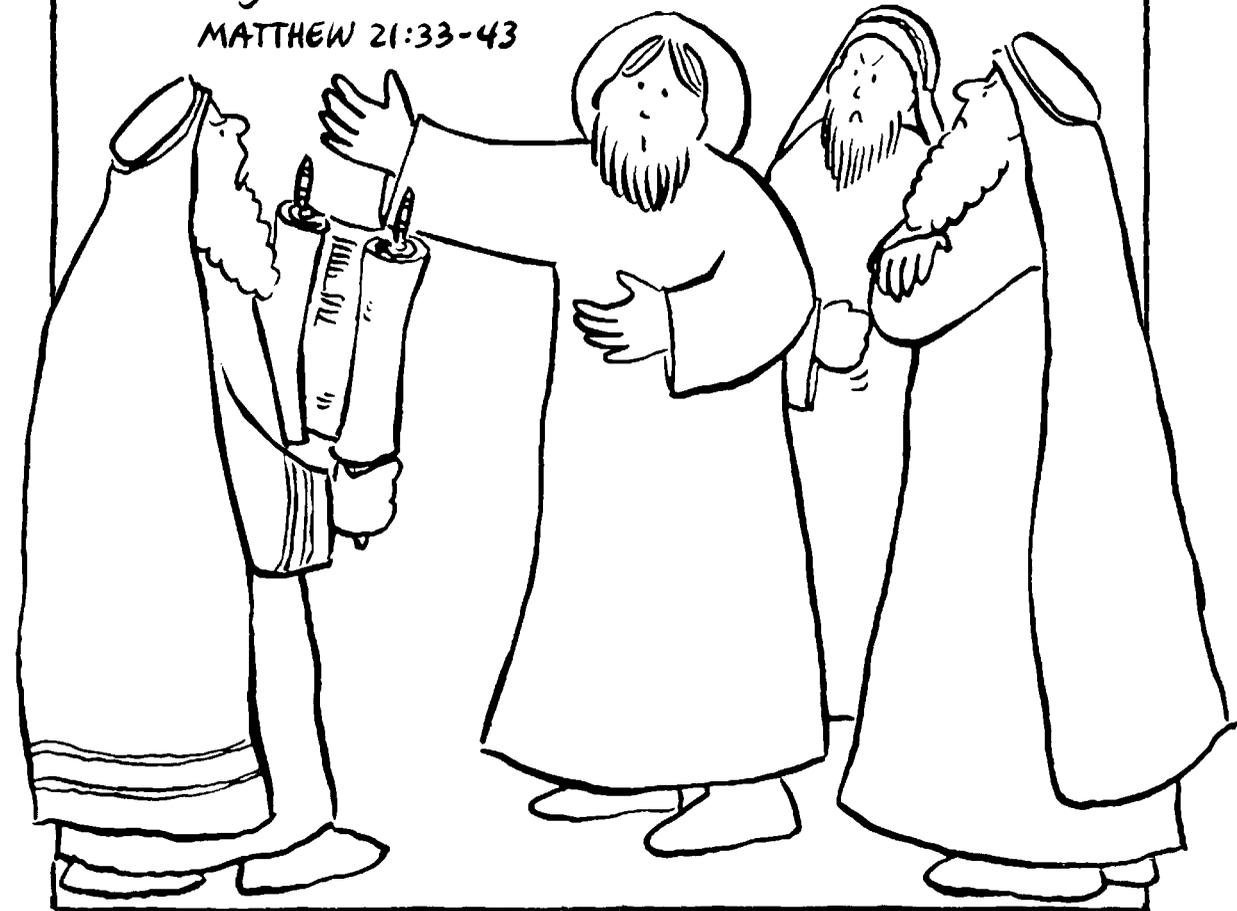


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Year A
PROPER 22
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*Jesus said to the Pharisees and priests,
"God gave you a special job to do,
but you didn't want to do it."*

MATTHEW 21:33-43



JESUS TOLD THIS STORY:

Once a man rented his vineyard to tenants and went away.



He sent a servant to collect the harvest. But the tenants would not give it to him.



The landlord sent more servants, but the tenants beat them up!



Last of all, he sent his son... and the tenants killed him!



God wanted the priests and Pharisees to take good care of his people, Israel. But Jesus said they only cared about themselves.

God loves everything he has made. He wants us to take good care of his world.

Who takes care of these people and things?
How do they take care of them?

