

Kingdom Parables – Week 7 Discussion Questions

The Two Sons Mt. 21:28-32

1. Have you ever been one to procrastinate?
If so, describe a time when you started a project early.
If not, describe a time when you started a project at the last minute.
2. What do you think can cause people to get a late start or to not start at all?

Read Matthew 21:28-32 together

3. If you were an employer, which son would you rather hire? Why? Do you see any strengths in the son you did not choose?
4. What do you learn about the heart of each son in this parable?
5. Who do you think the father in the parable represents?
6. In Jesus' context, which groups of people do you think are represented by the first son? ...by the second son?
7. Both sons have actions that do not match their words, yet one is noted as doing the will of his father. What do you think the parable is telling us about words and actions when it comes to faith? What is Jesus' point?

Read Matthew 21:23-27 together

8. Just prior to this parable, the authority of Jesus is being questioned. What do you think Jesus is saying about his authority in the Parable of the Two Sons?
9. What do you think Jesus is saying about the faith of the chief priests and elders?

Read Matthew 21:28-32 together again

10. Can you describe a time when you have responded and acted like the first son? ...like the second son?
11. Saying one thing and doing another is called hypocrisy. Can you think of instances in your life when you have been hypocritical?
12. Like the father in our parable, God calls us to "go and work." How do you feel God is calling you into action? What excuses might you have for not doing the work to which God is calling you? How might this – and other parables we have studied – help you to overcome these excuses?

Matthew 21:23-32

Jesus' authority questioned

²³ When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and elders of the people came to him as he was teaching. They asked, "What kind of authority do you have for doing these things? Who gave you this authority?"

²⁴ Jesus replied, "I have a question for you. If you tell me the answer, I'll tell you what kind of authority I have to do these things. ²⁵ Where did John get his authority to baptize? Did he get it from heaven or from humans?"

They argued among themselves, "If we say 'from heaven,' he'll say to us, 'Then why didn't you believe him?' ²⁶ But we can't say 'from humans' because we're afraid of the crowd, since everyone thinks John was a prophet." ²⁷ Then they replied, "We don't know."

Jesus also said to them, "Neither will I tell you what kind of authority I have to do these things.

Parable of two sons

²⁸ "What do you think? A man had two sons. Now he came to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.'

²⁹ "'No, I don't want to,' he replied. But later he changed his mind and went.

³⁰ "The father said the same thing to the other son, who replied, 'Yes, sir.' But he didn't go.

³¹ "Which one of these two did his father's will?"

They said, "The first one."

Jesus said to them, "I assure you that tax collectors and prostitutes are entering God's kingdom ahead of you. ³² For John came to you on the righteous road, and you didn't believe him. But tax collectors and prostitutes believed him. Yet even after you saw this, you didn't change your hearts and lives and you didn't believe him.