

# The Parable of the Nobleman

*The Jesus Liberals Hate Exists*

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**Bible Text:** Luke 19:11-27

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Luke 19, beginning in verse 11 going through verse 27 is the parable of the nobleman.  
Luke 19:11,

11 While they were listening to these things, Jesus went on to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately. 12 So He said, "A nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return. 13 And he called ten of his slaves, and gave them ten minas and said to them, 'Do business with this until I come back.' 14 But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.' 15 When he returned, after receiving the kingdom, he ordered that these slaves, to whom he had given the money, be called to him so that he might know what business they had done. 16 The first appeared, saying, 'Master, your mina I have made ten more minas.' 17 And he said to him, 'Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, you are to be in authority over ten cities.' 18 The second came, saying, 'Your mina, master, has made five minas.' 19 And he said to him also, 'And you are to be over five cities.' 20 Another came, saying, 'Master, here is your mina, which I kept put away in a handkerchief; 21 for I was afraid of you, because you are an exacting man; you take up what you did not lay down and reap what you did not sow.' 22 He said to him, 'By your own words I will judge you, you worthless [or wicked] slave. Did you know that I am an exacting man, taking up what I did not lay down and reaping what I did not sow? 23 Then why did you not put my money in the bank, and having come, I would have collected it with interest?' 24 Then he said to the bystanders, 'Take the mina away from him and give it to the one who has the ten minas.' 25 And they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas already.' 26 I tell you that to everyone who has, more shall be given, but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. 27 But these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them in my presence."

You could subtitle this, "Jesus that liberals hate exists." This is powerful and penetrating, the force that this parable ends with. Jesus has been traveling through Jericho. Jericho is about 20 miles from Jerusalem. He's about to leave the city and as he's leaving, he pauses here for one final teaching session and after this teaching session, the parable of the nobleman, he will turn and head to Jerusalem and to the cross.

I. Let's not the purpose of the parable which is to show the whole of the Messiah's ministry and kingdom. Verse 11 tells us very clearly that once again these people were thinking that Jesus was going to establish the physical kingdom of God immediately. Their focus was on a physical kingdom with a physical temporal kingdom blessing within it: get out from underneath the Romans' domination and enslavement of them; the great blessings the Messiah would bring to the people of the day. But what these people did not yet understand was that the spiritual eternal kingdom that reigns in the human heart must be established first, then in time the physical kingdom of God will be established in the earth and that future physical kingdom will be made up of all of those who already have the kingdom established in their hearts. They didn't understand that.

You see, friend, each and every human heart has been taken captive by a foreign evil empire, an empire which we have gladly aligned ourselves with and for God to reclaim these hearts and reign in these hearts, put his kingdom in these hearts, radical steps have to be taken. First of all, the sin and guilt of our evil hearts must be atoned for and that required the death and punishment, or a death and punishment for the sin and the guilt and that's Jesus' primary mission. That's why he's going to Jerusalem. That's why he came to planet earth and he's not going to be deterred. He sets his face like flint to get to Jerusalem and go to the cross.

So sin must be atoned for by death and punishment. Secondly, the new and holy kingdom must be established in the human heart by the new birth. God has ordained the means of being born again and changing the heart and putting his kingdom in the heart primarily under the means of preaching the Gospel or preaching the word which brings about the fruits of conviction of sin and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. That's the means God has employed to begin establishing his kingdom in human hearts and there is no other plan.

The crowd at this time as Jesus is getting closer and closer to going to Jerusalem has come to a fever pitch. Tradition taught that the Messiah would indeed tour Galilee, gather up his followers, take them to Jerusalem and establish his throne in Jerusalem and establish the kingdom on the earth. From all they could tell and all they could discern, Jesus seems to be right on track. Jesus seems to be fulfilling what was expected of the promised Messiah. They really expected the kingdom of God to unfold in a physical sense at any moment but, once again, what did they miss? They missed the heart kingdom. They missed the heart kingdom which must come first and for men's hearts to be changed to become kingdom hearts meant that the Messiah would not at this time immediately establish his earthly throne and an earthly kingdom but that the Messiah at this time would instead go to the cross and wear a crown of thorns, not a royal diadem.

So we ask ourselves today as we think about this, "Okay, we're living in the age of God establishing his kingdom in hearts but is there any sense in which we can see God's kingdom on the earth?" Yes there is, it's the church, and that's why it's of utmost preeminent importance that the church be the church, that the church be true as we can be so we might properly reflect what the true kingdom is. If you're successful but you're not true, then you've perverted the image of the kingdom. One of the worst things that could happen is to be a compromising church yet be successful, then you just show a big picture that is a false picture. That would be awful but the church is a little bit of the true kingdom of God in the earth today.

Here are some cross references. 1 Corinthians 13:12. I'm sorry they're not over here but they should be over there. "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known." So right now we are seeing something of the kingdom and as we come together as true saints of God in fellowship together sharpening, encouraging, loving, sacrificing for each other, holding each other accountable, preaching the Gospel, saving new souls, the kingdom gets in their hearts, God adds them to the church and so we taste a little of what the true kingdom of God is. We're seeing it dimly but it is a true thing.

There are a lot of other truths that come jumping out at us when we think about the kingdom of God being established in the earth right now. Jesus, as we remind ourselves, said in Matthew 16:18, "'I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church.'" Jesus is now building the kingdom but it's in the form of the church. This is the church age. Acts 2:47, "praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved." Jesus builds his kingdom. "I will build my church. I will add to the church." That's a great and challenging thing for churches and church elders to discern lovingly always and always with compassion who is God adding and who is God not adding. You look for the evidences of God's work of changing the heart. Those are the ones he's adding to his church.

In Acts 2, we see these things set in motion as he begins adding to the church on the day of Pentecost those who were truly converted. We see the means God uses. Colossians 1:25, Paul says, "Of this church," of this church, "I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God." Paul says, "As I am a minister of the church, the primary means I as God's minister must be involved in is the preaching of the word of God. That's what God uses to birth his kingdom in men's hearts and then they are added to the church and my church is built up."

We have the epistles of the New Testament and the epistles begin to spell out for us all the polity, the functions, the way we're to conduct ourselves as God's church. We see God's design for elders and deacons and preaching pastors. We see how to handle church disputes. We see the roles of men in the church, the roles of women in the church. We see the definitions for how children should conduct themselves in the church. We see specific guidelines for singing in the church, for dress in the church. We find out how to carry out

the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. We learn how to care for the poor among us in the church. We learn that there has got to be a work ethic among those of the church. And on and on we could go. God has given us biblical guidelines and principles for how we function as his kingdom right now as the church in the earth.

Then one day he's going to clean us up and we'll finally be the glorified perfected church. Now, we're getting cleaned up now some but on that day there's going to be a culmination and a perfection of our glorification. Revelation 21:2, "And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband." Folks, that's the church. The rapture has occurred, the church is up there, and he's going to bring it all down in its perfected glory. Here's what Jesus is saying, "Look what I've done. Do you see this bride? I made her what she is. I foreknew her from the foundation of the world. I went to the cross and paid for her sins. I called men of God to preach my Gospel. I sent the Spirit of God to regenerate their hearts. I sealed them by the Spirit. I've kept them in my grace and my power. I've not lost one that my Father gave me and on this day I perfected her and have given her my very glory," and all the universe will erupt with glorious praise to God for what he can accomplish in making us the glorified church of the Lord Jesus Christ. I say, "Even so come Lord Jesus." I'm about tired of me, amen? I'm about tired of some of you. I'm about tired of us. I'll be glad when we get perfected and glorified, amen? Because I love you with all of my heart. I believe you love your pastor with all of your heart but we do get tired of each other every now and then. That's why I'm about to take a July break.

Revelation 21:9, "Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, 'Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.'" That's us. That's the church. Wrought out in time, culminated and perfected in eternity. Ephesians 3:21, "to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations," that's time, "forever and ever," that's eternity. The church is the centerpiece of God's glory for time and eternity. "Why is that? Wait a minute, I thought Jesus..." Listen to me: because the church is the body of Jesus, the bride of Jesus and the centerpiece of Jesus' work so the church is the glory of God because it's the centerpiece of all Jesus has done and accomplished. You see, you're the accomplishment of Jesus.

So we do see something of God's kingdom, very imperfect, very incomplete but as the body of Christ is a Spirit-filled, bible-based, humbled, grateful, genuine, true body, we taste something of kingdom life and, brothers and sisters, the church should not, must not be like the world. This should be the place you walk into and say, "Thank God I'm out of the wickedness for a little while. Thank God I'm out of the filth for a moment or two. Thank God for the respite of God's local church." And do you know what? The sheep of God deserve that. That's why church elders must be diligent to strive for purity and trueness in the church because the sheep deserve a safe sheepfold until we all get home, amen? So the church, the local church, must always be our priority fellowship and our primary fellowship in the Lord until he returns.

Well, that's the purpose, his purpose was to show these people they had it all mixed, they were upside down. They thought, "Oh, the kingdom is going to be wonderful. We're

going to be fed. We're going to be healed. Rome is going to be banished. We Jews will rule the world. It's going to be glorious and it's just about to happen," and Jesus said, "No. No. No. No. First the King is going to a cross, not a throne and first he's going to have to regenerate your wicked hearts and change you from the inside out then yonder later I'm going to come back and we're going to do a physical kingdom on the earth." So he's trying to give them the whole of the Messiah's ministry and kingdom.

II. Unpacking the parable. This is just so obvious and clear what the interpretation of the parable is. First of all, in verse 12a, Jesus is going away to receive his kingdom. He says in verse 12, speaking of himself, the parallel is to him, "A nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return." Now, we knew in this day, now Rome ruled the world but Rome would let its subject nations rule themselves to a degree and so the Roman Senators would summon a leader from one of their surrogates, if you will, nations and they would call that leader to Rome and those Roman Senators would then establish him and give him a kingdom. Call a guy from the Jews to Rome and say, "You are now the new king of the Jews under Roman dominion." So they understood this, how a nobleman could literally go away and receive his kingdom and back back and administer it. They understood that.

So Jesus is telling them that he must go away. "I'm going to go away," he's saying, "and I'm going to receive my kingdom." Jesus is the nobleman. He's going to go to the cross first and there on the cross he will perform the Father's will and earn the right to the kingdom. Then he will rise from the dead and present himself to the Father in heaven and there receive the title deed to his church and to planet earth. He goes to heaven and he receives the kingdom and then there is coming a later time when he will come and occupy and establish that kingdom. He's the nobleman here. He says, "You guys think that the kingdom is going to be established immediately, no, I'm going away to receive the kingdom right now. I'm going to earn it on the cross and be granted the title deed before my Father in heaven in just a few days."

Secondly or B. in the outline: all are responsible to advance his kingdom while he's gone. All are responsible to advance his kingdom while he's gone. Listen to me: the Muslims are not exempt. The Buddhists are not exempt. The secular progressives are not exempt. All are responsible to love, honor and advance Jesus' kingdom while he's gone because his kingdom is the only one that matters because he's the only true King there is and he sits up in heaven at the right hand of God right now and has the title deed to the universe in his hand. He has received the kingdom and just waiting on the appointed time to come back and clean house and set up his throne on the earth.

Verse 13 in the parable, "And he called ten of his slaves," that represents all of us, "and gave them ten minas," a mina is about a hundred days' work so it's a good sum of money, "and said to them, 'Do business with this until I come back.'" So they have responsibility, "Do business on my behalf. Build up my enterprises until I come back." Wow, is that not a time for us to pause and say to ourselves, "Are we about the King's business? Am I busy in the King's work for him with what he has given me until he comes back?" "Pastor, what am I supposed to do?" Here's what I biblically know you're safe doing: put

yourself into a sound local church for the glory of God and if that's wrong, I'll ask Jesus to bear your judgment on me at judgment day. I mean that. If it's wrong for you to say, "For my Lord and to advance my Lord's business I am pouring myself into a solid local church until I die." I'm telling you, you're just 100% safe there. You may or may not be supposed to be a Gideon. You may or may not be supposed to be a part of fellowship Christian athletes and a thousand other things that do good stuff but I know God has ordained his business to primarily be accomplished through his local churches. You're just safe that way and you can stand up at the judgment seat and say, "My pastor exegeted the text, Lord, and we saw it over and over and over again and that's what I gave myself to." I think here's what you'll hear, "Well done, good and faithful servant. You did my work, my way, for my glory." But listen, I'm telling you, God is my witness because I have struggled with this especially early in my Christian pilgrimage. There are going to be a lot of people who did a lot of stuff with some good intentions but it wasn't centered in God's means and God's ways and they're going to end up bankrupt on the judgment day. Maybe not lose their souls but lose reward.

Thirdly or C. unpacking the parable: many hate the obligation to serve Jesus. Many hate that we're all expected to honor, submit to and function under his reign and build his enterprise while he's gone. Verse 14, "But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.'" Now, in the cultural context of this day, of course, the Jews rejected Christ. Now, they loved their idea about the Messiah but they didn't like the real Messiah. They had a Jewish cultural interpretation of what Jesus should have done and been like. Now, they loved that but increasingly as Jesus unfolded what he was really about, they increasingly hated him and turned against him and that's so very true today. So very many who walk the earth today, so very many who even claim to be Christians are a part of the broad umbrella of Christendom today, will say that, "We desire to love and serve God," but they want to do it their way and according to their fancy, not God's way according to his will and his word. Are you busy with the Lord's work? And do expect, child of God, do expect many, the majority, in and out of professing Christianity to not really love Christ and really want to do Christ's work Christ's way. Expect that.

I think I told you I was listening to E. V. Hill, a video of E. V. Hill, the African American preacher. What a good preacher he was and he talked about how there were people sitting on the third row pew back in his church and he said, "I'd preach and they were sitting there and I knew they hated me." He said, "for every now and then, I'd just look at them and say, 'Glad you're here. Been expecting you,'" because the Bible says to expect those things. You can expect many to hate the obligation to have to honor and serve Jesus Christ.

D in the outline: Jesus will call all to give an account. Look at verse 15, "When he returned, after receiving the kingdom, he ordered that these slaves, to whom he had given the money, be called to him so that he might know what business they had done." All will be summoned before Jesus to be judged according to the light and the blessings he gave them that they might use that light and those blessings to build up his kingdom. You listen to me: Barack Obama will be summoned before Jesus Christ. There he will humbly

bow and give an account for how he built up Jesus' kingdom. The Supreme Court justices will bow before Jesus Christ and give an account for how they built up Jesus' kingdom while he was gone. And every member of Grace Life Church and Pastor Jeff Noblit, will go before the omnipotent one and give an account for what we did for his kingdom while he has been gone. I'm going to tell you, some of you, it's time to get off of coast and at least put it in first gear. This is the word of God. This isn't Jeff Noblit's rhetoric and rankling, it's the word of God. You've got one life, don't waste it because there's an accounting coming.

Subpoint 1 under D.: true believers receive rewards. Is this not the simplest thing in the world? "The first appeared, saying, 'Master, your mina has made ten minas more.' And he," Jesus, "said to him, 'Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, you are to be in authority over ten cities.'" That new kingdom comes and you're going to see great reward and great blessing. Verse 18, "The second came, saying, 'Your mina, master, has made five minas.' And he said to him also, 'And you are to be over five cities.'" The obvious application is: true believers who made it the purpose and pattern of their lives to win the lost and disciple the saved and build up God's church and God's kingdom, they're going to be blessed and rewarded. I think the reason why he gives one guy brought ten extra minas in, the other guy made five minas, it's not the amount, it's the heart and the diligence you put into it. There are some churches in some areas where they labor with all of their hearts and they don't see results but God will reward them because their heart was diligent to build up the Master's kingdom.

Secondly, notice the wicked unbelievers. In verse 22, he calls these people "worthless slaves." The word can also be "wicked unbelievers." My friend, I know it's not politically correct, I know our culture cringes at it and some of you do, unbelievers are wicked or they wouldn't go to hell. They don't go to hell for being unbelievers, they go to hell for being wicked unbelievers. They have rejected the clear witness of God. They have looked at the clear witness of God in their conscience. They have looked at the clear witness of God in nature. The law of God is written in their hearts, the Bible says. They have heard some degree of preaching, teaching and understand there's a God to whom they must give an account and they spurn that and they reject that and they ridicule that and do their own thing. That's wickedness because it's Jesus' kingdom and they ought to be serving him faithfully.

Subpoint A., under 1, under D., under II.: they did nothing for Jesus. "Another came, saying, 'Master, here is your mina, which I kept put away in a handkerchief,' I didn't do anything with it. I just kept the one mina. I didn't do a thing with it. Didn't do anything. Jesus will say to so many, "I gave you your eyes. I made your brain. I gave you energy. I made your heart pump. I gave you air to breath. I gave you the witness of the truth. I put my law in your heart. You are to labor for me and my kingdom," and many will say, "Didn't do anything. I didn't even give you thanksgiving. I didn't do anything."

Secondly, B.: they blame Jesus for their failure. He said, "for I was afraid of you, because you are an exacting man; you take up what you did not lay down and reap what you did not sow." Afraid here has the idea of he had a contemptible attitude toward Jesus, his

Master. He seems rather proud of his sin here. You know, it's a fearful thing to sin. It's much more of a fearful thing to defend sin and it's even horrifyingly more fearful to delight in sin. So here's a guy who wasted all that God gave him and he seems to say back to his Master, "I've done the best I could do. I've done what I should have done." It takes us all the way back to Cain, Abel and Cain there in the Garden of Eden when Cain brought his offering and Cain did what he thought was right instead of bringing to God what God required. Are you listening to me? Cain did what he thought was the right thing to do and Cain gets mad about it. Read Genesis, Cain gets mad because God rejected his offering. He's basically saying, "I've done the best I can do and it's your fault if your standards are too high." So what Cain said, that's what these guys are saying. "You're an exacting man. It's too difficult. You didn't give me the means to fix this problem." "Exacting man" in verse 21 when the slave says, "You're an exacting man. I was afraid. I knew I couldn't live up to it so I just didn't do anything to it. You expect too much of us, God." So here the lazy evildoer who instead of honoring and serving Christ, served himself just like his father Cain did and his great grandfather Satan did and then he blames God. "You're the problem. You made me this way. I am what I am and you put this high standard over me. It's your fault."

You know, to the wicked, God's laws always seem burdensome and unfair. "It's unfair. We want equality. We want justice." You'd better not say that very loud. "We are who we are." God always appears hard when he's not seen through faith in his Son, Jesus Christ. Think about the wicked unbelieving Jews in the wilderness. Isn't this what they did? They go into the wilderness following Moses, following God's command to leave Egypt and go to the Promised Land and they are out there in the wilderness and they don't have much to eat. They are half starving to death and they begin to murmur and grumble, "We could have died in Egypt. Why did you bring us out here? God, it's your fault. We're murmuring. We're complaining. We're in unbelief. We're sinning. But God, it's your fault. You put us in a bad spot." Hello? Nothing ancient about this, is there? This is modern stuff.

There is a consistency to how the wicked express their depravity. First of all, they misrepresent God, "You're unfair. Your standards are too high. This isn't right for us to have to keep these laws." Then they excuse themselves. Since God is unfair, too stringent, too exacting, they excuse themselves from loving and obeying God. Every scoffing infidel only echoes his master's creed, his master being Satan, "God, you're not fair and I'm not obligated." Is that not what our culture is screaming right now? "We're not obligated to keep some moral law you found in the Bible."

Verse 21, he says, "you take up what you did not lay down and reap what you did not sow." He's basically just saying, "You're exceedingly unjust. You expect what you do not rightfully earn. God, you're expecting what you shouldn't rightfully get out of me because I am what I am. You gave me little ability. You gave me these particular lusts and desires and I knew you'd expect too much out of me so I've tried not at all." The gay and lesbian, transgendered, bisexual and they have a new category, queer. I didn't give them that, that's their designation of a new type of thing. Their rally cry is, "God made us this way. It's your fault, God."



C. Jesus shuts them up. Now, let's don't just pick on the gay and lesbian, transgendered, bisexual and queers, he's going to shut some of you up. He would shut me up if I need it. He has shut me up before. He'll shut up all the excusing and all the blame shifting. Bill O'Reilly, he has never seen the spin stopping anywhere like the way Jesus is going to stop it. The spin is going to stop right here. Right here.

Notice what Jesus does in verse 22, "He said to him, 'By your own words I'm going to judge you, you worthless or wicked slave. You said you did nothing, okay, then you're going to get judged for doing nothing. I gave you a life. I gave you a brain. I gave you a body. I gave you everything and you did nothing for my kingdom. So by your own words you said you did nothing, I'm going to judge you. You claim,'" in effect, verse 22, "that I'm an exacting man, taking what I didn't lay down and reaping what I did not sow." In effect, he says, "If you thought that to be true, then you ought to have done your best." Romans 3:19 says, "For we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God." All through the days of our lives, all through the decades, all through the centuries of time, men have come up with the most sophisticated, fanciful excuses to explain away to their consciences why they did not have to submit to and honor God but on this day Jesus Christ will stand before them and crush into silence every word of defense they might try to bring. Worthless or wicked slave, Jesus calls them. This is the true Jesus. There is no sympathy on this day. That day has passed. No sympathy. He is an exacting one.

Verse 23, "Then why did you not put my money in the bank, and having come, I would have collected it with interest? If you viewed me as so exacting, if you viewed me as sowing where I did not reap or reaping where I did not sow rather, then you ought to have tried to have done something for me because..." Jesus sort of... "even if you think I'm not just and right in my commands and demands over you, even if you do not agree with my reign over you, I'm still the only true Lord and King and I still have a reign over you. You ought to have tried something."

D. Their possessions, all that they had gained in this life will be glorified, purified, glorified and given to true believers. Verse 24 and 25, "Then he said to the bystanders, 'Take the mina away from him and give it to the one who has the ten minas.'" Well, that doesn't sound fair? That's not economic justice. "And they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas already.' I tell you that to everyone who has, more shall be given, but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away." So he says, "We're going to take all those things away from that wicked unbeliever and we're just going to dump it on, we're going to purify it and glorify it and it's going to be part of their reward and the treasure of the true saints of God who were true believers and who did purpose to build God's kingdom and do Jesus' work while he was away."

The crumbs the wordlings hold onto and refuse to use for Christ will be taken away, purified, glorified, cleansed and distributed to the saints who will have them and share in them forever. Now listen: in Christ and through Christ, we're going to inherit thrones, the

Bible says, and with those thrones, we're going to have crowns. I don't know all that that means but it's really good stuff. You're not going to regret, now listen to me child of God, listen to me: you're not going to regret that you joined a local church that was trying to do God's work God's way and you decided for me and my house right here, we're going to serve the Lord. We may be weak at times and we may be prone to wonder at times but we're going to lash ourselves to a people of God and serve our God until he takes us home or comes back. And some of you, we struggle, don't we struggle? Our faith can get weak. Doesn't our faith get weak? "Prone to wonder, Lord, I feel it. Prone to leave the God I love. Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it. Seal it for thy courts above." But do you know what? If you're a true child of God, wonder, shift, slide, fall down, you just can't stay away. You just get drawn right back to it and get right back to work.

We take a July break. You know, for years we didn't take a July break. We used to think you had to teach your small group every week. We never missed a week of visitation and that was wrong. I ask your forgiveness. That was wrong. The Bible teaches years of jubilee and rest times and so we do that now. So let's take a deep breath. One Sunday School teacher told me this morning, "I love my class. I love teaching the word but I'm ready for this break." I understand that. I can't tell you how much I passionately love to preach. I will never stop unless God shuts me down with illness or something but, man, I need my break. I'm telling you, I need it. Just a reminder to you and it's a reminder to me that your pastor is weak and mortal and you don't look to him, you look to Jesus. That's why God gives you weak men to lead you so that you'll ultimately look through them and look to him. So we need those breaks but listen, listen: after that break, you gird up your loins and say, "This is for King Jesus. I'm getting back to the work of laboring in his church for his glory until he comes back."

E. Their severe punishment, this is powerful, in the presence of Jesus. The way he words this is just penetrating. Verse 27, "But these enemies of mine," they are absolute, willful, undivided traitors against King Jesus. "These enemies of mine who did not want me to reign over them," they said, "We're going to throw off these laws and these morals and these standards. We're going to throw that stuff off." "Bring them here and slay them in my presence." Unbelievers are not only wicked, unbelievers are enemies of Jesus Christ. He didn't say unbelievers are weak, "Well, they're just weak in their faith." No, they're not, they're wicked unbelievers who are enemies of God. Unbelief is not a weak thing, it's a wicked thing. He didn't say, "They're weak." He didn't say, "They're misguided." He didn't say, "They're underprivileged." He said, "They're my enemies."

They could have been God's friend. They could have been God's subjects. They could have been God's very own children. But of their own free will they chose to be God's enemy. You say, "Pastor, you believe in free will?" Yes, man freely always chooses to sin against God unless God intervenes. Psalm 21:8, "Your hand will find out all your enemies." Your hand will find out. Will find out all your enemies. "Your right hand will find out those who hate you." Psalm 2:2-3, "The kings of the earth take their stand And the rulers take counsel together Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying," here it is, "Let us tear their fetters apart And cast away their cords from us!" "God is restraining me. God is hindering me. God, I can't do this. I reject these little rules and

these laws. I will not have it. I'll push it off." God said, "Very well, be my enemy. Reject my reign over you."

That's what he says in verse 27, "They did not want me to reign over them." That means they are willfully disobedient. They are not misguided. They are not blind. They are willfully disobedient and since they would not acknowledge God's law over them, they would not embrace God's Son and God's salvation for them. Now, did you get that? And to all of these preachers out there that is preaching a soft-pedaled Gospel, a watered-down Gospel which is really a false Gospel where they are not faithfully preaching the wicked depravity and sinfulness of man, man has to see the law that is over them under God so that they will see their need for the salvation of God's Son. You cannot preach one without the other and preach the Gospel. They would not say, "Yes, you deserve to reign over me and yes, though I fail every day, your law is right and I am wrong every day." Amen? So I come with helpless bankruptcy and say, "Oh God, if your Son, Christ, cannot cleanse this wretch, I have no hope." But I'm going to tell you, his Son, Jesus Christ, can and will cleanse any wretch who will turn to him in his hopelessness but you do not turn to him rejecting the right of him to make the rules and make the laws and reign over you. You acknowledge his reign as right and you acknowledge yourself as a wicked failure and look to his Son who is mighty to save.

The Jews are standing before Pilate. Pilate stands Jesus up, bruised and bloodied and spit upon and probably barely can hold himself up and he says, "Okay, what do you want me to do with your king? He says he's King of the Jews. What do you want to do with your king?" What did the Jews cry? "We have no king but Caesar." What a blasphemous statement for a Jew to make. They're saying, "Whatever else is true, we'll not have him ruling over us. He's not our king." Enemies of God.

So Jesus through the parable says, verse 27, "But these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them in my presence." Wow. I'm sorry, liberal theologian, Jesus does not go hide his face in the corner weeping, wishing that something different could happen. He boldly stands with eyes like a flame of fire and face firm as flint and sees to their executions. Don't you listen to these secular progressives as they try to redefine who our Jesus is. He is to be feared and trembled before.

"In my presence." How sobering and how penetrating. Now, here's the point, here's what I want you to hear about this particular verse: "Slay them in my presence," Jesus says. Here the only being in the universe who can intercede for them and rescue them from wrath will be silent on that day. Far from interceding that they might escape the judgment, he is calling for their judgment. And friend, if Jesus speaks on your behalf, even God the Father will honor his request. Yes! If I, the wretch that I am, stand before a holy God and God's Son, Jesus Christ, says, "Father, that one is mine. My blood stoned for him," the Father says, "That is acceptable to me. Welcome, my child." If Jesus speaks on your behalf, even God the Father will honor that request. But if Jesus speaks to your guilt and deserved punishment, no thing and no one will or can come to your aid, whether it's the President of the United States or all the militaries in the world, impotent before

him. Christ rules over all. Those who will not be ruled by his grace will one day be ruled by his wrath.

The text says Jesus is in Jericho. Jerusalem is just ahead. He has turned and he is headed to Jerusalem but he pauses one more time and he turns to the crowd and says, "Let's see if you can get it this time. Here's what it's all about," and he gives the parable of the nobleman telling them, in effect, "I'm Lord God, ruler of all. If you do not turn to me in faith, you'll be plunged into ruin and wrath by me when I return to set up my kingdom." And having taught that parable, Jesus turns to Jerusalem and heads to the cross.

Let's bow in prayer.