

- **Say, Obey, Give It Away - Part 4**

Rocklyn Clarke Sr. - Sunday December 2, 2018

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- **Read the Passage: Matthew 21:23-46**

- ▼ **Realize what the story is and the claim it makes.**

- The Bibles: 1 - Creation; 2 - Rebellion; 3 - Israel; 4 - Jesus; 5 - The Church
- John the Baptist's message heralded the transition from Episode 3 to Episode 4.
- John's message comes in the context of a long-awaited king.
- John's message announces Jesus as that long-awaited king.
- Jesus understood the historical chain that linked him to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ran through John - last of the Old Testament prophets.

- ▼ **Realize the claim that the story is making and agree with it.**

- Jesus responds to a question with a question. This is a useful tactic that forces people to think an issue through rather than dismissing it outright or treating it lightly.
- When something claims to be a revelation from God, take a stand!
- The Pharisees refused to take a stand on John's message and were therefore unable to receive Jesus properly.
- God's revelation demands a response.

- ▼ **Don't just agree with the revelation - obey it.**

- Saying it and doing it are two different things.
- God isn't fooled by phonies - you shouldn't be either.
- We sometimes "freak out" over phonies, but God doesn't. - Matthew 13:24-30
- Genuine relationships with authentic believers overcome negative impact of phonies.
- Awareness of phonies can make you a humbler and more authentic witness.

- ▼ **Build God's Kingdom - not yours.**

- It's God's vineyard and the harvest belongs to him.
- God did not allow the Pharisees to prevent the arrival of his Kingdom.
- God has given the Kingdom to those who will produce it's fruit - keep producing the fruit and keep giving it to him! - Luke 12:22 - 34

▼ **Be grateful for the Kingdom.**

- The Kingdom is like a vineyard - Jesus uses this metaphor twice: Matthew 21:28-32; Matthew 21:33-46 (echoing Isaiah 5)

▼ Vineyards are: common, concrete, have clearly defined tasks.

- Common: the audience is highly likely to have encountered one.
- Concrete: Location clearly defined. You know whether or not you're in a vineyard.
- Clearly defined tasks: Learning what to do in a vineyard is straightforward.

▼ The Kingdom is common:

- Not "ordinary", but in the sense that it was happening all around them. It's happening all around you too; once you're born again, you can see it.

▼ The Kingdom is concrete:

- Not literally, but you know when you're dealing with the Kingdom and when you aren't.

▼ The Kingdom has clearly defined tasks:

- Learning what to do in the Kingdom is straightforward.
- Not the mystery many Christians make it out to be. Not work that has to be outsourced to "paid professionals".
- If you have this "mystery" idea in your head you need to kill it!

▼ You have to know what business you're in!

- What business is McDonald's in?
- If you're working in a vineyard, you're in the grape business - the more grapes and wine you produce, the better!
- What business are we in?

▼ **Possible discussion questions:**

- Are you in "the vineyard"? What team are you working with?
- Do you know what to do? Does your team? Have you asked?
- Are you growing grapes? Are you producing wine?
- What are you "giving away" to the vineyard owner?
- ▼ What are you trying to hold onto for yourself?
 - Your personal time?
 - Known, comfortable relationships?
 - A small comfortable community?