

**DAILY SCRIPTURE
READINGS & MEDITATIONS
YEAR A**

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Source: <https://www.dailyscripture.net/>

SUNDAY 1 OCTOBER 2023 – 26th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Scripture: Matthew 21:28-32

28 "What do you think? A man had two sons; and he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' 29 And he answered, 'I will not'; but afterward he repented and went. 30 And he went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir,' but did not go. 31 Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. 32 For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the harlots believed him; and even when you saw it, you did not afterward repent and believe him."

Which son did the father's will?

Meditation: What kind of future are you preparing for? Jesus encourages us to think - to think about the consequences of our choices, especially the choices and decisions that will count not just for now but for eternity as well. The choices we make now will affect and shape our future, both our future on earth as well as in the life of the age to come.

Repaying a debt of gratitude and showing respect where it is due

Jesus tells a simple story of two imperfect sons to illustrate the way of God's kingdom. The father amply provided for his sons food, lodging, and everything they needed. Everything the father had belonged to them as well. The father also rewarded his sons with excellent work in his own vineyard. He expected them to show him gratitude, loyalty, and honor by doing their fair share of the daily work.

Converting both heart and will to do what is good and pleasing to God

The "rebellious" son told his father to his face that he would not work for him. But afterwards he changed his mind and did what his father commanded him. The

"good" son said he would work for his father, but didn't follow through. He sought his own pleasure, contrary to his father's will. Now who was really the good son? Both sons disobeyed their father - but one repented and then did what the father told him. Jesus makes his point clear - Good intentions are not enough. And promises don't count unless they are performed.

A transformed heart filled with gratitude and respect

God wants to change our hearts so that we will show by our speech and by our actions that we respect his will and do it. God offers each one of us the greatest treasure possible - indestructable peace, joy, and friendship with him in his everlasting kingdom. We can lose that treasure if we refuse the grace - the free gift of God's blessing and strength - which the Lord Jesus has won for us through his victory on the cross. The Lord Jesus fills us with the gift of the Holy Spirit who works in and through us for the glory of God. Do you seek to please God and respect his will and loving plan for your life? Allow the Holy Spirit to fill your heart with the peace, joy, and righteousness of God's kingdom (Romans 14:17).

"Lord Jesus, change my heart that I may only desire that which is pleasing to you. Help me to respect your will and give me the strength, joy and perseverance to carry it out wholeheartedly."

DAILY QUOTE FROM THE EARLY CHURCH FATHERS

The Father and his two sons

author unknown, from the 5th century A.D.

"Who is this if not the God who created all people and loves them with a fatherly affection, the God who preferred to be loved as a father rather than feared as a lord, even though he was Lord by nature? On this account, at the beginning of the commandments of the law, he did not say, 'You shall fear the Lord with all your heart' but 'you shall love the Lord with all your heart' (Deuteronomy 6:5). To elicit love is not characteristic of a lord but of a father. Of the two sons in this parable, the older one represents the Gentiles, since they come from their father Noah. The younger son represents the Jews, who come from Abraham. 'And approaching the first, he said, "Son, go and work today in my vineyard." 'Today' refers to this present age. How did he speak to his sons? He didn't address them face to face like

man, but he spoke to the heart, like God. Man only utters words to the ear, but God supplies understanding to the mind." (excerpt from an incomplete Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, *HOMILY 40*)