

**Sept 1 – Leader’s Guide -
Read Luke 20:9-19**

1. Jesus' first point in the parable is that God is recklessly easygoing where it seems like He is letting people off the hook and are getting away with evil and injustice all the time. It's a frustrating feeling. How can we respond as Christians to what seems like God not doing anything to confront evil and injustice in a timely manner?

We take hold of the absurdity of faith to believe against what looks to be God's carelessness, negligence, or absence. However absurd it is to believe, it is reasonable to trust in God given His track record in holy scripture and in history. Faith is difficult due in part because of the amount of waiting, endurance, and the mounting cost we must bear as time goes on without witnessing a turn or a change. But ultimately, our belief is not in vain, and God will reward those who seek Him even beyond this earthly life that may be without any vindication.

2. Jesus' next point in the parable is that people can start to test or even abuse how easygoing God is. People can start pushing the envelope. How are we tempted to test God's patience in our own lives and how can we respond in faith and trust instead?

We can begin to abuse God's grace and delude ourselves to keep sinning "because grace abounds more when sin abounds". But that is dangerous thinking that reveals the core priority of our hearts. We cannot have our cake and eat it too. If we genuinely trust God, we will show it in our lives today even though obeying His will is going to cost us and bring us suffering. Instead, we respond in faith to believe that God will reward those who love Him and follow His commands.

3. The punchline of the parable is that Jesus is God's final straw. There's an actual limit to how easygoing God is and that's Jesus Christ. In the end, how any person treats Jesus will determine how God will treat that person. So, how do you respond to Jesus today? Who do you say Jesus is?

Let us respond to Jesus by receiving Him, welcoming Him, and trusting Him as our Lord and Saviour. Let us affirm Him as the resurrected Son of God, the Messiah who is the only One who can restore us and renew the world from all evil and injustice. Therefore, in that same trust, let us live as though the world as we know it is already being made new, even though we do not yet see everything put under subjection to Him. One day, all things shall be subject to Him. Let us then keep in step with that future hope.

4. Jesus quotes from the prophet Isaiah suggesting He is the fulcrum on whom people's eternal fates hung on a balance. Jesus will either be a sanctuary in whom you take refuge, or He will be a stone that will trip you up. How can we encourage one another to take refuge in Jesus as our sanctuary?

Jesus inevitably offends people by His audacious claims and teachings. However, to those who can accept His claims and teachings, He promises to be a refuge and a sanctuary. We can support one another in our Christian journeys to remain faithful to the

hard teachings and claims of Jesus despite how the dominant culture mocks and dismisses what Jesus and the Church stand for. In the end, it is Jesus' opinion of us that will matter, not the culture's, not other people's, not even our own.