



My wife Lisa and I, along with our three young daughters (and a golden retriever!), moved from Columbus, Ohio, in the spring of 1996. Our dream for this church was simple: inspire a group of followers of Jesus who would be about three great things...love Jesus passionately, truly love and care for each other and take God's love to the streets of Cleveland. And that is exactly what has happened over the past 18 years!

Beginning in our home in the fall of 1996, our tiny group met and worshipped God with all our hearts. And we began to dream and pray about our future together as a church. Before we knew it, we had outgrown our home. And then we outgrew a nearby recreation center. And then a local elementary school! Those first few years as a church plant were filled with "God moments" as we learned how to pray for the sick, listen to the voice of Jesus, worship in freedom, see lots of leaders come into their call, and we saw so many come to know Jesus Christ. Sweet years indeed.

Now, in these days, we might be much larger in number...we may have seven pastors on staff, 100 leaders strong, tons of opportunities for outreach including partnerships with churches around the world, but our values remain the same. Love Jesus above all else, take good care of one another, inspire our children to be lovers of God, and, in greater and more creative ways, take the love of Jesus Christ to a Cleveland that God is crazy about! We are truly learning what it means to be "a church for the city."

**Rick Evans** Senior Pastor, Cleveland Vineyard. 6735 York Road, Parma Heights

The Vineyard Movement is a network of over 1,500 churches worldwide, committed to seeing each generation reached by the power of the Gospel. With a view to embrace integrity in Christian character along with the activity of the Holy Spirit, each Vineyard church seeks to be an outpost of God's compassionate love in a broken world.

[www.vineyardusa.com](http://www.vineyardusa.com)

**17th Sunday after Pentecost    October 5, 2014    Green**  
**(16th Sunday after Trinity, Proper 22 [27])**

## Hymn of the Day LSB 544, not in TLH “Oh love, how deep, how broad, how high”

### *Text:*

Though this text has been attributed to Thomas à Kempis due to similarities with his famous devotional book, *The Imitation of Christ*, it is likely an anonymous text. Written in the fifteenth century, the Latin original had twenty-three stanzas. Benjamin Webb translated eight of them into English. These were published in *The Hymnal Noted* in the early 1850s.

The text is fairly stable, with a few variations in the wording of some lines and some differences on exactly which stanzas are included. Some hymnals include a stanza beginning “He sent no angel to our race” as the second, but most omit this one. Though there is some variation in the last doxological stanza, most hymnals have the one beginning “All glory to our Lord and God,” which refers back to the first stanza in its second line, “For love so deep, so high, so broad.”

The first stanza extols the extent of God’s love that prompted Christ to come and redeem us, and the final stanza is a doxology. The intervening stanzas tell the story of Christ’s life, from birth to ascension.

### *Tune:*

The tune most commonly associated with this text also comes from the fifteenth century. DEO GRACIAS, also known as AGINCOURT, comes from music written to celebrate Henry V’s victory over the French at the Battle of Agincourt in 1415. Instead of accepting personal glory for the victory, Henry V insisted that thanks be given to

God for the victory, hence the title meaning "thanks be to God" in Latin. The first use of this tune as a hymn tune is in the *English Hymnal* of 1906, with the text "O Saviour, Jesu, not alone."  
[www.hymnary.org](http://www.hymnary.org)

**Isaiah 5:1-7** New International Version (NIV) (*next week –Isaiah 25:6-9*)

### **The Song of the Vineyard**

5 I will sing for the one I love  
a song about his vineyard:

My loved one had a vineyard  
on a fertile hillside.

<sup>2</sup> He dug it up and cleared it of stones  
and planted it with the choicest vines.

He built a watchtower in it  
and cut out a winepress as well.

Then he looked for a crop of good grapes,  
but it yielded only bad fruit.

<sup>3</sup> "Now you dwellers in Jerusalem and people of Judah,  
judge between me and my vineyard.

<sup>4</sup> What more could have been done for my vineyard  
than I have done for it?

When I looked for good grapes,  
why did it yield only bad?

<sup>5</sup> Now I will tell you  
what I am going to do to my vineyard:

I will take away its hedge,  
and it will be destroyed;

I will break down its wall,  
and it will be trampled.

<sup>6</sup> I will make it a wasteland,  
neither pruned nor cultivated,  
and briars and thorns will grow there.

I will command the clouds  
not to rain on it."

<sup>7</sup> The vineyard of the LORD Almighty  
is the nation of Israel,  
and the people of Judah  
are the vines he delighted in.  
And he looked for justice, but saw bloodshed;  
for righteousness, but heard cries of distress.

**Psalm 80:7-19** (*Psalm 23*)

<sup>7</sup> Restore us, God Almighty;  
make your face shine on us,  
that we may be saved.

<sup>8</sup> You transplanted a vine from Egypt;  
you drove out the nations and planted it.

<sup>9</sup> You cleared the ground for it,  
and it took root and filled the land.

<sup>10</sup> The mountains were covered with its shade,  
the mighty cedars with its branches.

<sup>11</sup> Its branches reached as far as the Sea,<sup>[a]</sup>  
its shoots as far as the River.<sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Why have you broken down its walls  
so that all who pass by pick its grapes?

<sup>13</sup> Boars from the forest ravage it,  
and insects from the fields feed on it.

<sup>14</sup> Return to us, God Almighty!  
Look down from heaven and see!  
Watch over this vine,

<sup>15</sup> the root your right hand has planted,  
the son<sup>[c]</sup> you have raised up for yourself.

<sup>16</sup> Your vine is cut down, it is burned with fire;  
at your rebuke your people perish.

<sup>17</sup> Let your hand rest on the man at your right hand,  
the son of man you have raised up for yourself.

<sup>18</sup> Then we will not turn away from you;  
revive us, and we will call on your name.

<sup>19</sup> Restore us, LORD God Almighty;  
make your face shine on us,  
that we may be saved.

- a. [Psalm 80:11](#) Probably the Mediterranean
- b. [Psalm 80:11](#) That is, the Euphrates
- c. [Psalm 80:15](#) Or *branch*

### **Philippians 3:4b-14** (*Philippians 4:4-13*)

<sup>4</sup> *though I myself have reasons for such confidence.*

If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: <sup>5</sup> circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.

<sup>7</sup> But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup> What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in<sup>[a]</sup> Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. <sup>10</sup> I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, <sup>11</sup> and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

<sup>12</sup> Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. <sup>13</sup> Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward

what is ahead, <sup>14</sup>I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

- a. [Philippians 3:9](#) Or *through the faithfulness of*



<http://mirtam.memphisseminary.edu>

**Matthew 21:33-46** (*Matthew 22:1-14*)

### **The Parable of the Tenants**

<sup>33</sup>“Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. <sup>34</sup>When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit.

<sup>35</sup>“The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. <sup>36</sup>Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. <sup>37</sup>Last of all, he sent his son to them. ‘They will respect my son,’ he said.

<sup>38</sup>“But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, ‘This is the heir. Come, let’s kill him

and take his inheritance.’<sup>39</sup> So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

<sup>40</sup> “Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?”

<sup>41</sup> “He will bring those wretches to a wretched end,” they replied, “and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants, who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time.”

<sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures:

“The stone the builders rejected  
has become the cornerstone;  
the Lord has done this,  
and it is marvelous in our eyes’<sup>[a]</sup>?”

<sup>43</sup> “Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. <sup>44</sup> Anyone who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; anyone on whom it falls will be crushed.”<sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>45</sup> When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus’ parables, they knew he was talking about them. <sup>46</sup> They looked for a way to arrest him, but they were afraid of the crowd because the people held that he was a prophet.

- a. [Matthew 21:42](#) Psalm 118:22,23
- b. [Matthew 21:44](#) Some manuscripts do not have verse 44.

“Verse 44. - Christ proceeds to show the positive and terrible results of such unbelief. Whosoever shall fall (πεσών, hath fallen) on this stone shall be broken (συνθλασθήσεται, shall be shattered to pieces). This may refer to the practice of executing the punishment of stoning by first hurling the culprit from a raised platform on to a rock or stone, and then stoning him to death. The falling on the stone has been explained in more ways than one.” [www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com)  
Pulpit Commentary



“Tuesday, September 27, 2011 Tell Me a Story: Year A, Ordinary 27

**This Week's Lectionary Texts:**

Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20 or Isaiah 5:1-7

Psalms 19 or Psalm 80:7-15

Philippians 3:4b-14

Matthew 21:33-46

**This Week's Reflection:**

The Lectionary texts this week read like a story from Exodus to Matthew. There are gaps in the story and problems with the plot in places, but if we look at the pages just right, we can see how the story of God's relationship with God's people is very clear.

In Exodus 20, we have the life changing moment of Moses presenting the 10 commandments - laws given to the people to help them, to make life easier, a little clearer, ground rules to follow in this new life outside of Egypt. The people responded to this gift by asking that God never speak to them again.

The story moves forward and God is witnessing the results of the people's selfish behavior. In a song, the writer of Isaiah 5 laments the fact that even though the vineyard has been planted and cared for with love and understanding, it has not produced as it should have. The owner decides to give up, let it go, allow it to wither away.

Both of the Psalms join in the story by presenting the character of the people. Psalm 19 reminding us to follow the laws of God and Psalm 80 crying out to God to restore the vineyard, to give us another chance, to allow us to grow once again.

Philippians' part of the story is to point us toward the character of Jesus. With Paul reminding us that without Christ, we are nothing. In fact, it is stressed through Paul's boastful language that even at our very best on our own we can't begin to live up to our best in Christ Jesus. This is the second chance of all second chances. If we want to be the productive vineyard that God desires of us, then we have to allow Jesus to help us.

Then, we have Matthew's part of the story with a story in a story. Here we have another parable of Jesus that leaves us asking lots of questions. As we come to the end of this week's story, the lectionary brings us back around to the Isaiah text as Jesus tells of a vineyard owner who cared for and planted those grapes and waited to see what wonderful things would occur. There is a twist this time, though. All good stories have them. It is a nasty and scary twist. In the climax of this week's story, the vineyard isn't simply left to wither away, but those who have been given the opportunity to tend the vineyard are murderers and thieves. They even go so far as to kill the owner's beloved son. (Remind you of anyone?) And, Jesus leaves the chief priests and elders to whom he was speaking with the question of what they think that owner will do. Repay them, of course. Kill them, get rid of them for good, and find someone who will do what

they should have been doing in the first place. (These elders are none too happy when they realize that they have been made the bad guy in the story.)

It is a story with lots twists and turns. It also has characters that we don't like and morals that make us squirm. Are we to believe that God will allow us to wither away? Worse yet, are we to believe that God will punish us if we do not tend the vineyard like God wants? Remember how the story began? God gave us these commandments as a gift to help us in this life. They are not rules made to give God a reason to get angry with us, but they are safety nets for us to use so that our lives are the very best they can be. Instead, we ask God to stop speaking to us. So, God finds other ways to provide those gifts to us, stories of vineyards, Paul's dramatic turn-around, and Jesus, God incarnate, providing grace upon grace upon grace.

A fellow pastor in the Lutheran Church, Delmer Chilton, puts it this way: "God showers God's people with grace. The people prosper. The people forget God. The people become "wild." God becomes angry and regrets making or saving or favoring the people. God allows the people to suffer. The people cry out for forgiveness. God hears, God forgives, God heals and restores. And so it goes: over and over and over again."

That is the story this week. It is the story of God's relationship with God's people. It is a story that is often filled with pain. And, it is a story that ends with healing and restoration."

<http://mirtam.memphisseminary.edu>

*Miriam's Tambourine is a ministry of Memphis Theological Seminary. The writer is Rev. Tiffany Hall McClung, an ordained minister of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Chaplain at Memphis Theological Seminary (MTS).... As chaplain at MTS, Tiffany plans our worship services each week. She is constantly on the look-out for creative ways to lead a congregation in giving their full selves to the worship of God. She enjoys the challenge that serving over 300 students from 33 different religious affiliations brings to worship planning.*

*While maintaining connection with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Tiffany is currently serving as Transition Pastor for a local Lutheran (ELCA) congregation. Tiffany is also working toward a Doctor of Ministry with a concentration in Theology and Arts. She is a writer, a worship leader, a wife, and mother. She would want you to know that the previous list is in no particular order!*

