

- Maybe you have had this experience: You are at the supermarket in the fruit and vegetable section and you see a sign that says “sweet, juicy peaches (...or apples or pears)”. And you see this delicious looking fruit, so you buy some.
- Now you are at home and can’t wait to enjoy that fruit. You take the first bite andugh!!! The inside of the fruit is dry and sandy. The sign said sweet and juicy – it looked delicious from the outside. But inside where it really mattered, it lacked the goodness we expected.
- It just wasn’t what it appeared to be!!
- Sometimes we experience this in people too.
- Sometimes people we thought were honest, trustworthy, dependable based on their outward appearance are not really that type of person on the inside. Sometimes they say one thing but do something different.
- In today’s Gospel reading Jesus is teaching on this very topic.
- In the reading today, we find Jesus speaking to the religious leaders of His day. Leaders who said they were holy. They liked people to think they were the experts on God and what God wanted. But these leaders weren’t really living good, holy lives. In many ways they were selfish and greedy, they thought they were better than others. They ignored the poor and those in need. They weren’t what they appeared to be.
- So Jesus tells them a parable: a story that teaches a lesson.
- And the point Jesus makes to them, the lesson He wants them to learn is this: It is not good enough to say you are going to do something (or be something). You must actually do it.
- It’s not enough to say you are holy, not enough to look holy: you must be holy.
- And while Jesus was speaking to the religious leaders of His time, He is speaking to each of us too!!
- Jesus is telling us: If you say you’re my follower, be my follower. If you say you’re a Christian, be a Christian.
- Let’s take a moment to think about that. What does it really mean to be a Christian? I’d suggest it means three things.

- First, it means we received an awesome gift from God when we were baptized. That gift is called a Covenant (promise). In that promise, God told us He loves us dearly; we are precious to Him; He wants to be part of our lives. Think about this, in the whole universe, all of creation, with all God has to think about and tend to – He thinks about you – how awesome is that!!
- God promises to always be there for us; to take care of us no matter what. And God promises to give us the help we need to live good lives.
- Being Christian means rejoicing in that promise and trusting in it.
- Second, Being a Christian means we make it our business, or goal, our priority to get to know this God who loves us so much. It means we work at getting to know God more and more. There are so many ways to do this – to let God into our lives.
- One important way is Prayer! Don't we talk with and listen to people all the time? It's how we get to know them, even love them. To know God we need to talk and listen to Him on a regular basis.
- We also need to spend time learning, understanding and following Jesus' teachings. Jesus teachings are at the very center of getting to know God.
- That brings us to the third thing it means to be a Christian. It means taking action. Doing the work God calls you to do.
- In our Gospel today, Jesus tells a story about a man sending his two sons into the vineyard to work. One son yeses the Father but does not do the work. The other son refuses at first but later changes his mind. Jesus asks us to think about which son are we?
- The man in the parable is God, the sons are each of us and the vineyard is the world.
- Make no mistake; God is calling each of us to do something.
- And that call, that work will be unique to each of us. There will be different people, places and events in each of our lives.

- Maybe God is calling you to be a husband or wife. Maybe you will be called to raise a family and care for children. Maybe you will be called to care for a sick or elderly family member or friend. You might be called to a ministry in the Church maybe even to enter into the religious life. You might be called to volunteer. You might be called to a particular career.
- Whatever your call may be, remember you are not there by chance. God has chosen you to be in that place, at that time, to do something important.
- And there will be one thing in common to all of our calls.
- Whether your vineyard is the classroom, your work place, your home – wherever.
- Your mission, your work will always involve bringing God's love to others – some way, some how.
- God counts on us to do this.
- God counts on us to be who we say we are – Christians.