

**Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost — Proper 21**  
**September 27, 2026**  
**Matthew 21:23-32**

**By Fr. Carlos**

When I was a child, I did not like soup. And there was one little problem: my family was very poor, and many times soup was what my mother could afford to give us. So there was soup... and I did not want it.

But now, many years later, I love soup! Give me a good bowl of soup, and I am happy.

It is a very simple story, but it reminds me of something important: **we change**. Our tastes change. Our ideas change. Our understanding of life changes.

When I was a teenager, for example, I was very interested in some ideas about revolution and some texts of liberation theology. But as the years passed, my perspective changed significantly.

And life has taught me to be careful when I say, “I will never do that,” or, “I will never think differently about this.” Because sometimes life—and sometimes God—surprises us.

And I think that is at the heart of the Word of God today: **the possibility of change**.

Through the prophet Ezekiel, God says, “**Repent and turn from all your transgressions,**” and then gives Israel this beautiful invitation: “**Turn, then, and live**” (Ezekiel 18:30, 32).

God is not waiting for his people to fail. God is inviting them to turn around, to change, and to live.

And then Jesus gives us a very simple story. A father asks his two sons to go and work in the vineyard. The first says, “I will not,” “**but later he changed his mind and went.**” The second says, “I go, sir,” but he does not go (Matthew 21:28–30).

And which one did the will of his father?

The one who **changed**.

Perhaps there is an invitation here for all of us.

Because sometimes, even in the Church, we can talk a lot. We can say many beautiful and correct things about God, faith, love, and service. But Jesus is asking us not only what we say. He is asking us where our lives are actually going.

That is why, when I try to read Scripture every day, I do not want simply to remember something I already know or to gain more biblical knowledge. I want to allow God to ask me: **Carlos, what needs to change in you? What do you need to see differently? Where are you being called to conversion?**

The Psalm gives us a beautiful prayer: **“Show me your ways, O Lord, and teach me your paths”** (Psalm 25:3).

Maybe that can be our prayer this week.

Let us not be afraid to allow God to question us. We may even argue with God sometimes, as Israel does in Ezekiel: “Why, Lord? Why is this happening?”

But let us remain in conversation with God—and, above all, let us remain open.

Because sometimes the people we think are far from the Kingdom may actually be walking ahead of us (Matthew 21:31–32).

Perhaps one of the greatest graces God can give us is a heart humble enough to say:

**“Lord, this is what I thought. This is how I saw things. But if you want to show me another way, teach me. I am willing to change.”**

Because the God who calls us to change is the same God who says:

**“Turn, then, and live.”**

Amen.