# Christian Perspectives: Not fair!

The youth centre that I run is an official Electronic waste drop off site. It helps to raise money for our centre. Recently a couple contacted me since they had quite a large selection of electronic waste. They asked if I could come and pick it up with my pick up truck. I normally do not this but I made an exception. So I drove to their home and loaded up my truck. There was also a huge dumpster in the driveway filled with all kinds of other junk. The couple had rented out their home and after a while the tenants stopped paying rent. It took the owners a couple of months to evict the tenants and they were left with a large amount of unpaid rent, extensive damage to their property and a huge mess to clean up.

In the Bible there is a similar story. (Luke 20:9-19) It is a parable told by Jesus: There was a man who bought a prime piece of agricultural land. He proceeded to plant a vineyard. He did not spare any expenses. The best vines were selected and planted carefully. A wine press was installed on site and lastly a wall was built around the vineyard making sure it was well protected. He then hired tenants who were tasked to operate the vineyard making sure it would be profitable and give a return on the owner's investment. The tenants would have a vested interest in making sure the vineyard would produce well: after all it was their livelihood as well. However things did go as planned. The tenants refused to pay rent. The owner made numerous attempts to collect his money. He sent servants? Some were verbally abused, others were physically assaulted and they all returned empty handed. Finally the owner said to himself I will send my only son, surely they will respect him. However when the renters saw the son they said to themselves: this is the owners only son and heir to the estate. If we kill him the vineyard will be ours when the owner dies. So they rushed out and killed the son of the owner. Outrageous!

Jesus told the parable to illustrate the way the people of Israel had treated God. God had given the people the promised land: a land, ?overflowing with milk and honey? However they grew unfaithful, ignored the prophets messengers from God. Finally God the father send His Son: Jesus.

How does this apply to us today you might wonder. How is this relevant in our lives?

I recently came back from holidays. Upon my return I went to the youth centre to check up on things. Sometime during my absence someone (or more than one) had broken into the centre. A window was broken and anything of value was taken. The fridge was emptied and most of the food in the cupboard had disappeared as well. I did not know if I had to be angry, upset or disappointed?. Perhaps it was a little of all 3. I guess in some way I can relate to the owners of both the above stories: it's not right, not fair! As the ?hurt? party I want those responsible held accountable and punished. But those thoughts brought me back to why Jesus came? ?For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him? (John 3:17) I am so quick to point the accusing finger, especially when I feel I have been somehow been mistreated or wronged. I am the first one to cry: Not fair! But, as someone has accurately said: ?If you point the accusing finger, there are 3 fingers pointed back at you?

Am I so different from those who do wrong? We all continually fall short of what God wants from us. We are far from perfect and in no position to condemn anyone else. Aren't we all totally dependent on God's grace? It is the principle of ?casting the first stone? You will find that story in the Gospel of John 8: 1-11. Jesus told the accusers: ?let him without sin cast the first stone? Instead of condemning others, Jesus taught us in the Lord's prayer: ?Forgive us our sins (trespasses) as we forgive those who have sinned (trespassed) against us? It is my prayer that we will be able to do just that even when it has been ? not fair?

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