

Killing the Heir to Possess the Vineyard

By George Davis

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Years ago, I was to be licensed as a pastor, by a denomination that I will not name. The previous week had been a blur of activity, as the district supervisor shuttled Charlotte and me around the vast state of Montana, showing us the "churches" that were in need of a pastor. On the day of the ordination God spoke to me saying, "If you will give this up and walk away, I will show you what true ministry is." I walked away, realizing that the concept of ministry I previously held was not true ministry. All I had left was God's promise, "I will show you what true ministry is."

From there God led us to a little town in Montana where we attended a little community church and waited to see what God would do. Soon, as promised, God began to reveal true ministry, body ministry. The body began to build itself up in love. The Holy Spirit moved powerfully, knitting joint to joint. Each member of the body began to minister to each other. It was such a sovereign move of God that the leadership knew intuitively not to interrupt with the usual sermons and announcements. In fact, they just sat there quietly as Christ moved by His Spirit, throughout His body.

This went on for about six weeks, continuing to grow in dynamic. People were so excited about what God was doing through the whole body (Head plus body), that they came early and went home late. I have never seen such corporate excitement before or since. Some received dreams and visions in the night by God's Spirit. Others received words of wisdom and knowledge by the same Spirit. A growing excitement and anticipation filled my heart at the very thought of what God might do next.

It became apparent that all this threatened the leadership, so they set out to bring things in tow. They announced the following Sunday that it was time to get things back into order. You could hear the sighs of disappointment coming from the congregation. I could not hide the disheartened look on my face. Instantly things were as dead as ever. Everyone went home right after the service was over. I also went home and went into my bedroom, fell across my bed and cried out to God. Why? Why did they do this? I knew that what I had seen the past six weeks was true ministry. But now we were like dogs returning to our vomit. Then God said to me, "[They have killed the Heir to possess the vineyard.](#)" I had just read about this in Matthew chapter twenty-one.

While addressing the chief priests, scribes, and the elders in the temple at Jerusalem, Jesus told them what is commonly known as the parable of the vineyard. His purpose was to expose the thoughts and intents of their hearts, to reveal whose glory they sought, and whose interests they served. Briefly, the parable goes as follows,



[A certain landowner planted a vineyard, leased the vineyard to tenant farmers and went into a far country. At the season of harvest, He sent servants to collect his produce. One was beaten and sent away empty, another was wounded and many others were wounded or killed. At last, the lord of the vineyard sent his Son saying, "They will reverence my son." But the tenant farmers said among themselves, "this is the heir; come let us kill him and the inheritance shall be ours." And they took the heir and killed him and cast him out of the](#)

[vineyard \(See Mat 21:33-41\).](#)

These "leaders" had resisted Christ and didn't even know it. They tried to take God's heritage to themselves by killing the Heir in the same way that the Scribes and Pharisees had. The Son of the vineyard came to receive His due and they killed Him by denying His expression through His body. In their love for preeminence, these men had in every sense of the word killed the Heir to steal His vineyard. Jesus will never fill all things where there are men with such hearts, who cast Him out of the vineyard by suppressing the means of his expression, His body, "[the fullness of Him that fills all in all.](#)"

There is a lot of talk in the institutional church today about raising up leadership, but almost no mention of raising up the body of Christ. Where in the Bible does God tell us to raise up leadership? Only God himself is capable of such a task. Only He can see the heart and, like David, He is looking for those whose hearts are after Him, who will make Him King. David was not threatened by God's eminence because he spoke of Zion as "[the city of the Great King](#)" (God).

Then there was Saul, man's choice, tall, dark and handsome, who sought to advance his own kingdom and was threatened by the anointing that was upon David.

There is an ongoing suppression of Christ's Body by Saul-like leadership, raised up by men. These oppressors love the preeminence and consequently propagate a system that usurps the body of Christ and thereby inhibits the expression of Christ's fullness. They are threatened by the anointing that God has placed upon the Body of Christ--the priesthood of all believers.