Sermon: (part 1) “**the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you**” (Matthew 21.43)

Imagine a landlord who is fair, but wants rent; if no rent comes should the tenants stay there? Especially if they have the money but repeatedly beat up the rent collectors? TEXT is a bit shocking. We have said earlier in our Call to Worship that God’s judgments are good and always fair, but this seems drastic.

How does this relate to Jesus’ situation and ours?

During the Exile the Torah was the glue that held people together. It represented God’s will. Sadly it came to almost replace God; anything/anyone who was against it had to be wrong. This led to distortion and misrepresentation, and a rejection of God’s true ambassadors – prophets and Jesus. TEXT.

For us, it is important that church rules, traditions, buildings, even the Bible do not replace God, else TEXT

Sermon: (part 2) “**the stone the builders rejected as worthless turned out to be the most imp of all**” (Mt 21.42)

When I buy wood for burning I try to stack it carefully, but inevitably it becomes unstable!

Imagine if that happened to a house. TEXT.

The danger for the religious leaders of Jesus’ day was not just that they might reject Jesus, but that in doing so they might ruin what they tried to preserve.

What do we try to preserve? As a parish we have learnt to let go of old buildings, of hymnbooks, of pews, but no doubt we still hold on to all sorts of stuff – Sunday services with hymn sandwich, certain fellowship meetings. As such there is nothing wrong with these, unless they end up rejecting God.

All we do, all we are must line up with Jesus as the cornerstone – his values, his attitudes, his commitment.

TEXT. Only in this way can we truly hold on to the Kingdom of God which is our raison d’être.