

SWEET GRAPES
Isaiah 5:1-7 Matthew 21:33-46
by Pastor Jim Bornzin

Grapes,
Purple and plump,
Sparkling with dew in the morning sun.
Grapes,
Sun-drenched and sweet,
Vine-ripened and ready for harvest.
Whose grapes are these?
In whose vineyard have they grown?
Who sent the winter cold,
Giving rest to the vines,
Dormant during winter's chill?
Who sent the spring showers,
Warming and wetting
Roots spreading?
Who sent the summer sun,
Energizing,
New leaves unfolding?
Sparkling, sun-drenched and sweet,
Whose grapes are these?

The earth is the Lord's
And the fullness thereof,
The sea is His, for He made it,
And His hands formed the dry land.
The sun and moon, and stars are His;
The dew and the rain,
And the grapes are His also.

How easy it is
To forget and deny
That God is God
And all are His.
It seems He's gone away
To some other country
To some other venture
An absentee landlord
Leaving us alone
Leaving us in charge
Leaving us to think it's ours,
The world, the vineyard, the grapes.

I have a deed; the house is mine.
I've taken a wife; crack open the wine.
You've got a title for your new car.
The astronomer's name is on his new star.
The paycheck's yours; you earned it.
God claims a tithe; you've spurned it.
This money's mine; I'll do as I please.
This property's mine, and so are the trees.
This is my land, my pond, my well.
It's mine to keep, or mine to sell.
I tilled the soil and dressed the vine.
The vineyard and the grapes are MINE!

Each time you place a coin,
Or a dollar or a check
Into the church offering,
You remind your forgetful,
God-denying self,
That everything you have is God's.

Your paycheck is God's way
Of giving you your daily bread.
Your home is God's way
Of sheltering you from sun and storm.
Your pension or Social Security
Is God's way
Of blessing you during your Sabbath years.
Your children are given to you
As a sacred trust
To nurture and protect
To bless and send forth.
Your grandchildren are God's way
Of reassuring you
There is hope for the future.
Your heart and lungs are God's way
Of breathing his breath of life
Into your body of clay.
Your days are God's precious gift to you;
How you treasure and use them
Is your gift to God.

When harvest comes
God will send his angels
To receive what is His.
Dare we think we can keep anything?
Come today to the Lord's table.
Come drink the sweet wine of God's grapes.
Come drink the sweet blood of God's Son.
Rejoice that the world is His, not yours!
Be glad that you can release everything
Into God's loving hands.
There is a place for you at God's table.
There is a place for you in God's heart.
There is a place for you in God's heaven.

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THEY ARE THE LORD'S!
PRAISE GOD!
THEY ARE THE LORD'S!