

**One truth shared:** Being right with God isn't about saying the right things and going through the motions. Being right with God is about knowing that Jesus accomplished it all for us. This leads us to respond with love of our own.

*“What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work today in the vineyard.’ ‘I will not,’ he answered, but later he changed his mind and went. Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, ‘I will, sir,’ but he did not go. Which of the two did what his father wanted?” “The first,” they answered.*

**Matthew 21:28-31a**

### Walk the Walk

“He can talk the talk, but can he walk the walk?”

Words are useless unless they are backed up by action. If you had a boyfriend or girlfriend who told you they love you, that would feel pretty good. However, if they turn around and talk poorly about you to their friends or speak to you in a demeaning manner, they don't really love you. Words must be backed up by action.

Jesus illustrated this point in a parable. There was a father who told both of his sons to go and do some work in the vineyard. The first son told him he wasn't going to do it, but on second thought, he went and did the work asked of him. The second son told him that he would do it, but then he never actually went. Which of the sons showed their father that they loved him? Well, it was the first son who showed his love through action. So, which son are you?

We look a lot like the first son. He said “No, father, I won't go and work as your son.” You and I can probably think of times when we have blatantly said, “No” to our heavenly Father. “No, I'm not going to forgive that person.” “No, I am not going to clean up my language and life.” “No, I'm going to live the way I want to live, and no one is going to tell me otherwise.” But other times, you and I act just as phony as the second son. We say, “Yes” to our heavenly Father, but our words lack action.

Jesus is the perfect Son. He didn't just say that he loved us. He showed that he loved us through his suffering and death on the cross. He showed that he would go to any means necessary to give us eternal life. There has never been any love greater than this.

Jesus wants us to respond to his love with love of our own. He wants us to love him and love our neighbor.

This doesn't mean we just say the right words or go through the motions. We show our love through our actions.

We show our love for God by making time to worship him on Sunday mornings and by following his commandments. We show our love for our neighbor by helping them when they are in need and picking them up when they are down.

When it comes to loving God and others, don't just talk the talk. Walk the walk. Jesus walked the greatest walk ever for you.

**Prayer:** Jesus, thank you for loving me. Help me to always show my love for you and for my neighbor. Amen.

## Foundation Teen Facilitators Guide

### Year A – Proper 21

#### Tell Us a Story

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### Walk the Walk

**Starting the Discussion:** *This first section is intended to be light and easy, to engage and get the conversation going. Have a little fun with these questions.*

Define a “fake person” and the reasons you don't like someone who is “fake”?

**Connecting:** *This section serves as a bridge between the opening conversation and the body of the study/discussion. It should get the group thinking about the topic/text even before they've looked at it.*

In today's story, how was the second son fake? Now go back to Matthew 21:23. Jesus encountered a group of fakers. Who were they? Discuss how they were they were “fake.” (*Help: Pharisees were an exclusive religious men's club who prided themselves on being followers of God and the go-to authority on all matters religious. Jesus was a threat to their authority.*)

**Digging In:** *Here we want to dig into some texts or the text for the day and see what Scripture says. The questions are meant to be open ended to give a beginning of a scriptural conversation. These are a guide for a spiritual and scriptural conversation.*

- These verses (Mt. 21:23-32) take place during Holy Week. How can you see that Jesus does not have much patience for the Pharisees at this point?
- Knowing that this is during Holy week, what do you think the Pharisees were trying to get Jesus to say in response to their question (verse 23)? Why do you think they wanted him to say that?
- What was the way of righteousness John proclaimed to the people?
- How did the Pharisees think that one became righteous?
- Did the Pharisees and tax collectors continue in their sinful ways after believing in Jesus? How did they change?

**Conclusion:** *Here we want to wrap up the discussion, perhaps circling back to the “connecting question” above.*

Christ calls us to “walk the walk” and not “fake the faith.” Discuss specific ways that will be visible in your life this coming week.