

The Parables of Jesus

Sawyer Highlands Church


October 2, 2022

9:00 AM

Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard

(Matthew 20:1-16)






(1)

The landowner who went out **early one morning** to hire workers for his vineyard. ² He agreed to pay the **normal daily wage** and sent them out to work.

BACKGROUND:

- “Grapes were one of the most valuable commodities in ancient Israel because they could be transformed into fine wines.
- Landowners need **day labors** to harvest the grapes as soon as possible before they spoiled on the vine. The typical workday starts at 6AM (sunrise) and ends at 6PM (sunset).
- Wages for a full day’s work were typically a fixed amount known to the laborers.
- Normally, the landowner would rely exclusively on the foreman to run his business and thereby hire laborers.



(2)

³ “At **nine o’clock in the morning** he was passing through the marketplace and saw some people standing around doing nothing. ⁴ So he hired them, telling them he would pay them whatever was **right** at the end of the day. ⁵ So they went to work in the vineyard.

At **noon** and again at **three o’clock** he did the same thing.




(3)

⁶ “At **five o’clock** that afternoon he was in town again and saw some more people standing around. He asked them, ‘Why haven’t you been working today?’ ⁷ “They replied, ‘Because no one hired us.’ “The landowner told them, ‘Then go out and join the others in my vineyard.’

BACKGROUND:

- It was customary for the foreman to hire workers from 6AM through noon (midday).
- If laborers are not hired by noon, they return home and try again the next day.




(4)
(4')

⁸ “That evening **he told the foreman to call the workers in and pay them**, beginning with the last workers first.

BACKGROUND:

- It was customary for the foreman to pay the laborers in the order they were hired. Those that worked a full day (hardest and longest) got priority.




(3')

⁹ When those hired at five o'clock were paid, each received a **full** day's wage.


BACKGROUND:

- Labors customarily got paid for time worked (by the hour).



(2')

¹⁰ When those hired first came to get their pay, they assumed they would receive **more**. But they, too, were paid a day's wage. ¹¹ When they received their pay, they **protested** to the owner, ¹² 'Those people worked only one hour, and yet you've paid them just as much as you paid us who worked all day in the scorching heat.'



(1')

¹³ “He answered **one of them**,

‘Friend, I haven’t been **unfair!**

Didn’t you agree to work all day for the **usual wage?**

¹⁴ Take your money and go.

I wanted to pay this last worker the same as you.

¹⁵ Is it against the law for me to do what I want with my **money?**

Should you be **jealous** because I am kind to **others?**’

¹⁶ “So those who are last now will be first then, and those who are first will be last.”



Depths of God's Compassion

- In our sin, we are desperate and broken. Our lives are ravaged by sin.
- God's heart toward us compels Him to quickly come to our rescue, forgive us, and restore us to wholeness.



EARTHLY PRINCIPLE

Some people are **jealous** and **ungrateful**.

HEAVENLY PRINCIPLE

For those who want to be judged based on meritorious living, they will be **judged guilty**.

For those who exercise faith and cast themselves on the mercy of God, they will be **judged righteous**.



Lost Son Application:

Who do we consider **lost causes**?

Do we **engage** with them?

Or do we **ignore** them?



Good Samaritan Application:

Are we willing to be inconvenienced to meet another's needs?

Do we extend compassion instinctively, quickly?

Or do we excuse ourselves?



Immoral Women Application:

Do we consider ourselves **morally better** than others?

Or do we **humble** ourselves before a **just** and **holy** God?



Workers in Vineyard Application:

Are we jealous when God blesses others who we consider **undeserving**?

Do we let others **suffer** in their sin without coming to their **rescue**?