

The Parable of the Worker in the Vineyard



Matthew 20:1-16

- In the Book of Matthew 13:10, Jesus began using parables to teach about the kingdom of heaven.
- According to Mark 4:34, “Jesus did not say anything to them without using a parable and when He was alone with His Disciples He would explain what He meant.”
- Purpose: To assist us in growing in our understanding by exploring these divine truths found Christ teaching.
- Objective: To teach us what they mean and how they relate to our present and future life in Christ Jesus.
- Goal: To allow the Holy Spirit speak to our hearts and draw us closer to Jesus Christ.
- Spiritual Principles: Authority, Organization, Obedience, Stewardship, Agreement, Grace, Faith, Unconditional love, Sowing and Reaping

○ Review Lessons Taught:

1. What is a parable?

- It is a simple yet powerful story that Jesus used to illustrate a great truth. Jesus used parables to help His followers understand spiritual truth.
- The word “parable” is taken from the Greek word that literally means to cast or throw alongside.
- Parables were stories that were “cast or thrown” alongside a truth in order to illustrate a divine truth.

2. These are the parables that have been taught:

- The Parable of the Sower. (Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23)
- The Parable of the Wheat and The Weeds (Matthew 13:24-30)
- The Parable of the Mustard Seed. (Matthew 13:31-32)
- The Parable of the Leaven (Matthew 13:33, Luke 13:20-21)
- The Parable of the Hidden Treasure (Matthew 13:44)
- The Parable of the Pearl of Great Price” (Matthew 13:45-46)
- The Parable of the Dragnet
- The Parable of the Wineskins
- The Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30, Luke 19:12-26)
- The Parable of the Rich Fool (Luke 12:13-21)

- The Parable of the Creditor and Two Debtors. (Luke 7:36-50)

The Parable of the Worker in the Vineyard

Matthew 20:1-16

- In this parable Jesus teaches a powerful lesson about the Kingdom of Heaven and the power of God's grace given to each of His servants or stewards.
- What was Jesus' objective of the Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard?
 - To demonstrate God's amazing grace.
 - To demonstrate that God's generosity was based upon need and not greed.
 - To demonstrate that God is faithful to fulfill His eternal promises.
- In this parable of the Workers in the Vineyard we will explore and examine the expression of God's Grace in all three of these important areas.
 - God's Call. (vs. 1-7)
 - God's Care. (vs. 8-12)
 - God's Chosen. (vs. 13-16)
- What does scripture reveal about the nature of God's grace?
 1. The Lord is gracious. (Psalm 111:4)
 2. He is the giver of grace. (Proverbs 3:34, 1 Peter 5:5-6)
 3. He is the God of all grace. (1 Peter 5:10-11)
 4. Jesus Christ message is called the gospel of grace of God and the Word of His grace (Acts 20:24, 32)
 5. Jesus Christ was full of grace and truth. It is from His fullness that we receive grace for grace. (John 1:14, 16)
 6. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ and not the law. (John 1:17)
 7. God's throne is a throne of grace that every believer can boldly approach in the time of need. (Hebrews 4:16)

8. It was by the grace of God that Jesus tasted death for everyone.
(Hebrews 2:5-9, Isaiah 53:7)

○ There are Five expressions of God's grace.

1. Saving Grace. The power to save through faith in Jesus Christ.
(Ephesians 2:8-9)

2. Sanctified Grace. The power to sanctify and enable us to live holy lives before God. (Titus 2:11-12)

3. Sufficient Grace – The power to live an overcoming life. (Romans 5:17, 2 Corinthians 12:7-10)

4. Sharing Grace – The power to witness and share the good news of Jesus Christ with others. (Matthew 28:8-20, Acts 1:8, Romans 1:16-17)

5. Serving Grace – The power to serve God and others. (Matthew 23:11, John 12:25-26, 1 Peter 4:10, Colossians 3:17, 23, Hebrews 6:10, Ephesians 6:7)

○ There are Four important things that has significant meaning in this parable. (Matthew 20:1-16)

1. The landowner. "God the Father." (vs. 1)

2. The laborers (workers). "God's servants or stewards." (vs. 1)

3. The vineyard is the place (The world and the church). "Where God's call and purpose are fulfilled." (vs. 1)

4. The landowner's agreement to pay a full day wage (denarius) and a promise to pay what is right to all his laborers. "God's reward to the faithful" (vs. 2-7)

○ The First thing we must examine is "God's Call" in this parable. (vs. 1-7)

• (vs. 1) – "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard."

• There are (4) four things about God (The Landowner) in this parable (vs. 1-2)

1. God is the landowner. (vs. 1) “God owns everything.” (Psalm 24:1-2, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20)
 2. God chose to hire laborers or workers. (vs. 1) “God chose and redeemed us by His grace.” (John 15:16, Luke 19:10, Ephesians 1:3-7, 2:8-10, 2 Peter 2:9-10)
 3. God provided the vineyard (world and church). (vs. 1)
 - God provided the grace and place to fulfill our calling. (Matthew 9:35-38, 28:18-20, Mark 16:15, 1 Corinthians 15:58)
 4. God promised to reward each laborer (workers) for their work. (vs. 2)
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- The First thing we must examine is “God’s Call” in this parable. (vs. 1-7)
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 - God provided the grace and place to fulfill our calling. (Matthew 9:35-38, 28:18-20, Mark 16:15, 1 Corinthians 15:58)
 - God’s grace and love expresses (3) three things that relates to the workers in this parable.
 1. The Purpose. (vs. 1)
 - “The landowner went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard.” (vs. 1)
 - There are (3) three things that are significant about the Call. (vs. 1-2)
 - 1) The call came from God and not man. (John 6:44, 12:32, 14:6)
 - 2) The call came to serve God’s purpose in His vineyard and not man. (John 6:38, Psalm 40:8, Romans 12:1-2)

- 3) Without God life here in this world and in the church would serve no purpose at all. (John 15:1-5)
- Dr. Myles Munroe stated, “When you don’t know the purpose of a thing, you will abuse a thing.”
 - The word “purpose” is God’s divine will and plan for the life of His creation.
1. God reveals His purpose in our lives through Jesus Christ that ultimately brings fulfillment to our lives. (1 Corinthians 1:4-9)
 2. The “purpose” for mankind can only be found in the Creator life which is God. (Genesis 2:1-7, John 1:1-4, Colossians 1:16)
 3. God created man purposefully in His image and likeness. (Genesis 1:26-28)
 - The purpose of mankind was to have relationship through genuine fellowship and communion with God.
 - To reflect God’s image and likeness or nature through the entire world. (Isaiah 43:1-7)
 - To rule and have dominion or stewardship over all the earth. (Psalm 8:6-9)
 - To be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth. (John 15:7-8)
 - To bring glory and honor to His name by fulfilling our God-giving calling or assignments. (Ephesians 2:8-10, Matthew 5:13-16)
 4. God is faithful to call and seek help from workers whose heart is willing and eagerly to work and serve His purposes in His vineyard. (2 Timothy 1:8-14)
 - God is faithful. (Deuteronomy 7:9, 1 Corinthians 1:9, Romans 8:28, Hebrews 10:23)
 - The word “faithful” means reliable, fidelity, firmness, stability, trustworthy, dependable or true to one’s word.
 - It’s impossible for God to be unfaithful, to do so would go against His divine nature. (2 Timothy 2:13)
 - God’s faithfulness should never be based solely upon what He does, but simply who He is – God is faithful.

5. God's will is that everyone hears, receive and believe on the name of Jesus Christ and bring glory and honor to His name. (1 Timothy 2:1-4, 2 Peter 3:9)

2. The Agreement. (vs. 2)

- "Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard." (vs. 2)
- 1) God promised to reward each laborers (workers) for their work. (vs. 2)
- 2) The "agreement" between the landowner and the hired workers was a denarius a full day wage."
- 3) The "landowner" believed in the workers to fulfill their purpose in His vineyard.
 - God believes in His Son Jesus Christ. (Matthew 3:13-17)
 - God believes in the work that His Son Jesus Christ started in your life. (Philippians 1:6)
 - God believes in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit that works in the believer's life. (2 Corinthians 4:6-10)
- 4) The "workers" believed in the landowner to fulfill his promise of the agreement.
 - God has fulfilled His promise of sending His Son Jesus Christ to die for the sins of all humanity. (Genesis 3:13-15, Isaiah 53:5, John 3:16, 8:44, Romans 8:20)
 - Jesus Christ fulfilled His promise of sending the Holy Spirit to dwell with and in the life of every believer. (John 14:15-18, Acts 1:8, 2 Corinthians 4:7)
- 5) God has fulfilled His promise by giving His Son Jesus as the guarantee of a better covenant. (Hebrews 7:20-28)
 - He is the Chief High Priest. There were many Levitical priest that were used by God but they all died. Jesus forever lives!! (vs. 23-24)
 - He able to save all who come to God through Him and He intercedes for them. (vs. 25, John 10:27-30, Romans 8:31-39)
 - He is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners and higher than the heaven. Jesus Christ is exalted above the heavens!! (vs. 26)

- He is not weak like the sinful priest before him that were appointed by the law. He was appointed by God's oath which is permanent and perfected forever. (vs. 27-28)
- 6) God has given us a guarantee toward our future inheritance of eternal life by the presence of the Holy Spirit who lives in us. (Ephesians 1:13-14)
- When a person hears the gospel and believes on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, immediately they are sealed with the promise Holy Spirit.
 - God assures every believer of His commitment to fulfill His promises of eternal life. (Hebrews 6:16-19, Colossians 1:12-14)

3. The Timing. (vs. 3-7)

- 1) The Jewish day began at 6am and ended at 6pm.
- 2) The workday was divided into four three-hour increments that ran from 6am to 6pm.
 - The early call began at 6 am. (vs. 1-2)
 - The third-hour was 9 am. (vs. 3-4)
 - The sixth hour was 12 noon. (vs. 5)
 - The ninth hour was 3 pm. (vs. 5)
 - The eleventh hour was 5 pm. (vs. 6) These workers were hired at 5 pm and worked only one hour, but were paid the same as those who worked all day.
- 3) Each "time" the landowner made the call out to the workers it represented God's grace in action.
 - The landowner went out about the "third hour (9am)" and saw others standing "idle" in the marketplace... (vs. 3)
 - The word "idle" mean unemployed, unproductive, inactive, lazy, useless, or barren.
 - It can also refer to a person's spiritual state of being in the sight of God.

- The landowner made the call for more workers in the “marketplace” (vs. 3).
- a. The “marketplace” is known as a public assembly where people would gather together for different activities such as to buy and sell goods, social gatherings, recreational gatherings for children, hiring laborers or workers, hold trials, and where the sick were brought.
 - There are those who have very little interest in fulfilling God’s kingdom purpose in those marketplaces.
 - The problem is that many will unwisely choose to remain “idle” absent of Jesus Christ in their lives.
- b. The “workers” were immediately hired by the landowner to go and work in his vineyard. He promised to rightly pay them. They left immediately. (vs. 4)
- There are different types of workers both in the world and in the church.
 - 1) The workers (God’s stewards or servants) whose lives bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit as they serve God’s kingdom purposes in the world and in the church. (Galatians 5:22-23)
 - 2) The workers who will continue to reject Jesus Christ and remain “idle” or spiritually inactive, barren, and unproductive in God’s vineyard (both in the world and church). (John 15:5)
 - 3) The workers who seek to serve their own purposes, standing idle and surrounding themselves with idle talkers who never do anything for the Kingdom of God. (Matthew 12:36, 2 Timothy 2:14-16)
 - Their life is filled with nothing but complaints, complacency and compromise.
 - 4) The workers who were once overtaken by the pleasures sin and the cares of this world who responded later to God’s call to surrender their life to Jesus Christ. (Galatians 6:1-5, Ephesians 2:1-5)
 - The urgency of the landowners calls to the workers. (vs. 5-6)
 - The landowner made three more calls for more workers because he knew he needed more help in his vineyard. (vs. 5-6)
 - He goes to the marketplace to call for more workers about the “sixth hour (12 noon)”, and the “ninth hour (3pm).”

- He goes out again about the “eleventh hour (5pm)” and found others in standing in the same “idle” state. (vs. 6)
- He asks them a question, “Why have you been standing here “idle” all day?” Notice their genuine response to the landowner, “Because no one hired us.” He said to them go into the vineyard and I will rightly pay you. (vs. 6-7)
- The reason the workers were standing idle was not because they didn’t want to work, but they remained unemployed because no one hired them. (vs. 7)
- The timing of each of those calls is a powerful display of God’s loving grace in action. (Matthew 11:28-30)
- Daily God deals with the heart of mankind to repent of their sins and receive His amazing gift of salvation, forgiveness and eternal life through His Son Jesus Christ. (John 16:8, Romans 10:9-10, 13)
- It is a daily reminder that it’s not too late to come to Jesus Christ and fulfill God’s will and purposes in the earth. (2 Corinthians 6:2, Hebrews 3:7-8, Revelation 3:20)
- But also keep in mind that time is winding up! We don’t have long to accomplish what God has called us to do here in the earth. (1John 2:17)
- If you’re “standing idle” in the marketplace let me be the first to tell you that God loves you and has need of you.
- This parable also serves as a reminder of how short life is and how important it is to manage time here on earth wisely. (Psalm 90:12, Ecclesiastes 3:1, Ephesians 5:15-21, Colossians 4:5-6, James 4:14, Matthew 6:33)
- A wise steward will always prioritize God and His purposes above their own. An unwise steward will always prioritize the world and his selfish desires above God.
- God requires us as believers to be faithful and to wisely steward every area of our lives such as life, gifts, talents (abilities), money, possessions and time.
- The reality for every steward of God, “We don’t have the same quantity of time, but God has supplied us with enough time to accomplish His will and purposes in the earth.”

- Every believer should wisely use his time here on earth to accomplish God's will by sharing the gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ, with others.
- This parable is a message of urgency and hope.
 - It should encourage people from all walks of life to respond to God's call or drawing without any delay. (John 6:44, 65)
 - It should give hope to those who feel they have wasted time and waited too long to come to God.
 - There's only one way to spend eternity in God's Heavenly Kingdom and that is through grace by faith in Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 2:8-9)
- The Second thing we must examine is "God's Care" in this parable. (vs. 8-12)
1. God's Care is expressed through His love and grace. (vs. 8)
 - (vs. 8) – "So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, "Call the laborers and give them their wages, beginning with the last to the first."
 - The landowner's care is expressed through his love and grace for every worker he called to work in his vineyard.
 2. God's Care is expressed for all His servants no matter their age or how long they have been serving Him. (vs. 8)
 - God chose to offer His love, mercy and grace to all humanity regardless of their age, gender, race, status, ethnicity or background.
 - God chose to show no respect of person (favoritism or partiality) by inviting all to come to Him through faith and belief in His Son Jesus Christ. (Matthew 11:28-30, Romans 9:15, Acts 10:34-35, Revelation 22:16-17)
- 1) God's divine character is love." (1 John 4:7-8, 12-16, 19)
 - 2) God's love is an everlasting love. (Jeremiah 31:3)
 - 3) God has poured out His love in our hearts. (Romans 5:1-5)
 - 4) God's love is unconditional. (Romans 5:6-8)
 - 5) God's love is filled with mercy, grace and compassion. (Ephesians 2:4-7)

6) Without God's grace through the death and resurrection of His Son Jesus Christ all humanity will remain dead in their sins and trespasses. (1 Corinthians 15:16-19)