

Adult Education Lesson

Week #1

Work on September 20-26th

The Parable of the Vineyard Workers



Read Matthew 20:1-16

20 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. **2** He agreed to pay them a denarius^[a] for the day and sent them into his vineyard.

3 "About nine in the morning he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. **4** He told them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' **5** So they went.

"He went out again about noon and about three in the afternoon and did the same thing. **6** About five in the afternoon he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, 'Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?'

7 "'Because no one has hired us,' they answered.

"He said to them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard.'

8 "When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first.'

9 "The workers who were hired about five in the afternoon came and each received a denarius. **10** So when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius. **11** When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner. **12** 'These who were hired last worked only one hour,' they said, 'and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the work and the heat of the day.'

13 "But he answered one of them, 'I am not being unfair to you, friend. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius? **14** Take your pay and go. I want to give the one who was hired

last the same as I gave you. ¹⁵ Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?'

¹⁶ "So the last will be first, and the first will be last."



Discussion:

1.) This is a parable, a simple story used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson, as told by Jesus in the Gospels. What do you suppose is the *moral*, or *spiritual lesson*, Jesus is trying to convey?

2.) Read Exodus 20:1-17 (The Ten Commandments). Do any of the Commandments relate directly to the parable from Matthew's Gospel? If so, which one(s) and how?

3.) Throughout the Gospels, Jesus refers often to the “Kingdom of Heaven.”
What do you think he might mean by the term “Kingdom of Heaven?”

4.) Who do you suppose is the “ruler in heaven?”

5.) What are the “subjects?”

6.) How is the verse, “so the last will be first and the first shall be last,”
illustrated in this parable?

7.) What is your personal reaction to this parable? Does it upset you?
Why? Are you indifferent to it?

8.) Who do you identify with the most in this parable? Those who were hired early in the morning? Those at midday? Those who were late?

9.) What do you think Jesus' intention was in sharing this parable?



Application:

1.) How should you apply your life to this story?

2.) How do you think Jesus desires you to live?

Other Resources:

Watch Pastor Kyle's Discussion online as he discusses this lesson.

***Don't watch until you have completed the week's assignments (the lesson will be posted online prior to 09/27/2020).

The Huffington Post discussed this parable in relationship to our society in 2011. Here is an article that may help relate to our current world.

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/parable-of-the-workers-in-the-vineyard-commentary_b_961120

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