

The Workers In The Vineyard

Matthew 20:1-16

Faith Portal Church

ADULT

Unit 3 Lesson 9

Supplemental Texts

Matt 19:27-30; Mark 10:28-31

Focus Verse

“Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?” – Matthew 20:15

Introduction

This parable is an illustration of what Jesus said to His disciples earlier in Matt 19:28-30. The householder, the master or head of the house, typifies God the Father. The vineyard is the place where the work of the Gospel, consisting of nurturing and equipping the souls, is carried out; it is the church. The laborers are the ministers of the Gospel, who are engaged in various duties in the church. The steward is Jesus, on Whom the Father has bestowed the right to reward all.

Deeper Look

He Sent Them Into His Vineyard – Matt 20:1-7

A householder hired workers to cultivate his vineyard. This man could have gone out early to get as many workers as he needed, especially if there was scarcity of workers, as implied in Matt 9:37,38. He agreed to pay a penny, or a denarius, a Roman coin, a usual day’s hire at that time. The man went out at other times in the same day and hired more workers. God is calling us too into His vineyard—church—to get involved in the kingdom work. Will you accept His call? He is calling all people into His service. We, therefore, have no reason to be idle.

When The Even Was Come – Matt 20:8-10

When the evening was come, at 6:00 pm when labor was over, the householder asked his steward to pay the workers their wages. The instruction to pay the last hired first, and the first hired last, was notable. Yet, the householder had the prerogative to pay his workers in an order he chose, as long as he paid them justly. We will be rewarded justly for our labor (Rev 22:12).

They Murmured – Matt 20:11-16

The workers hired first grumbled against the householder (the goodman of the house) when they saw they got equal wages as those who came last into the vineyard. They became jealous of those late workers. We are all invited to the gospel of Jesus to be engaged in its work. No matter the time we get engaged, the inherent blessings of the gospel and eternal life are our reward.

Questions

1. Why did the householder go out to find more workers several times? Did he find any each time he went out? In what way is this played out in the spiritual sense? See John 6:44.
2. Was the householder trying to create jobs for the subsequent workers he hired out of compassion, or was there more work to be done in his vineyard? What do you think? See Matt 9:37-38.
3. What is the role of a steward in the Bible times? How does the steward mentioned in the parable perfectly symbolize Jesus? See Matt 11:27; John 3:35; 5:27; Heb 3:6; Rev 22:12.
4. In what order did the householder pay his workers? Why did he choose the order with which he paid his workers? Would there have been a difference if the order of payment had been reversed? Why, or why not?
5. Why did the first workers complain against the householder? Was their complaint justified? Why, or why not? How should they have felt for the workers hired last when they received their pay? Explain with biblical support.
6. The parable was given in response to Peter's question to Jesus in John 19:27. What did Jesus mean by "So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen"?

Personal Meditation

God is looking for able and willing individuals to participate in the kingdom work. The work is crucial and demands more and more people to become part of it. We need to accept the work because it comes with enormous rewards, in this life and hereafter. The time we start working in the Lord's vineyard is not more important than the fact that we are among those doing the work. We must not once feel that our service deserves compensation, whereas others' do not. Eternal life is the ultimate reward that God has promised to all who believe in Jesus equally. In addition, the Bible teaches that there are rewards for different services (Dan 12:3; Matt 25:21; 1Cor 9:25; 1 Thess 2:19; 2 Tim 4:8; Jas 1:12; 1 Pet 5:4; Rev 2:10; 22:12).

God is just. All who work for Him will be righteously rewarded. Therefore, your faithfulness in God's service is key. To hear the Lord say to you, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant" (Matt 25:21) should be your uttermost desire. Continue to be fervent and diligent in your service to Him and constantly set your affection on the heavenly things (Col 3:1-2).

DAILY STUDY

Monday	Matt 20:1-2
Tuesday	Matt 20:3-5
Wednesday	Matt 20:6-7
Thursday	Matt 20:8-10
Friday	Matt 20:11-12
Saturday	Matt 20:13-16



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