

Sermon Notes | God's Grace is Scandalous - Matthew 20:1-16

Matthew 20:1-16

Parables – Simple stories to illustrate a spiritual point.

"But many who are first will be last, and the last first." (Matthew 19:30)

"So the last will be first, and the first last." (Matthew 20:15)

Characters

1. The master of the house
2. Early Workers
3. Late Workers

"And every man will receive their own reward according to their own labor." (1 Cor. 3:8)

"Well done, you good and faithful servant." (Matt. 25:23)

Eternal Rewards

1. Crown of Joy (1 Thess. 2:19) – leading people to Christ
2. Crown of Glory (1 Pet. 5:2-4) – mentoring
3. Crown of Righteousness (2 Tim. 4:8) – purity
4. Crown of Life (James 1:12) – endurance
5. Enduring Crown (1 Cor. 9:25) – discipline (athlete)
6. Joyful acceptance of persecution (Matt. 5:11-12)
7. Financial Generosity (Matt. 6:19-21)

The Story (Matthew 20:1-16)

20 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. 2 After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. 3 And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, 4 and to them he said, 'You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.' 5 So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. 6 And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all day?' 7 They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You go into the vineyard too.' 8 And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.' 9 And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. 10 Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. 11 And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, 12 saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' 13 But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? 14 Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last

worker as I give to you. 15 Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?' 16 So the last will be first, and the first last."

Big Idea

God's Grace is Scandalous

1. God's Grace is Love-based, not merit-based

"...I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you." (v. 14b)

2. God's Grace Makes us Equal in Christ

v. 12 "...you have made them equal to us ..."

Grace is not opposed to 'effort', it's opposed to 'earning'!

Jonah sat on the brow of the hill outside of Nineveh and pouted when God spared the city. The elder brother thought his father a doting old fool when his father invited him to join the celebrating at the prodigal's return. The Pharisee at prayer thanks God that he is not like the sinful publican. Divine grace is a great equalizer which rips away presumed privilege and puts all recipients on a par. – Walter Brueggemann.

Who do you need to pray for or have for dinner that you have judged?

Who do you need to encourage that you have said "we'll see"?

Who have you been jealous of that you need to celebrate?

3. God's Grace is Incredibly Generous

"...will receive a hundredfold..." (Matt. 19:27+29b)

"What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived – the things God has prepared for those who love him—" (1 Corinthians 2:9)

"They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 'Worthy are you...'" (Revelation 4:10b-11a)

"For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— 8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:6–8)

Application

- Worship God more dearly
- Humble yourself and celebrate others
- Accept the fullness of God's grace

Discussion Guide | God's Grace is Scandalous - Matthew 20:1-16

Read Matthew 20:1–16

- What did God speak to you through this weekend's message?
- Which character in the parable do you most identify with? Why?
- Share a time when you saw God bless someone and it made you feel jealous.
- Do you tend to struggle more with being self-righteous or with self-loathing?
- How do you respond to the idea that God's grace is "scandalous"?
- What is one way you can intentionally celebrate someone in Christ this month?