

THE PARABLES OF JESUS
“THE PARABLE OF THE WORKERS IN THE VINEYARD”
MATT. 19:27—20:16

IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT THIS PARABLE IS NOT TALKING ABOUT SALVATION. TO MAKE THE DAYS' WAGE STAND FOR SALVATION IS TO MISS THE POINT OF THE STORY. NO ONE WORKS FOR SALVATION, AND CERTAINLY NOBODY IS GOING TO COMPLAIN ABOUT HIS OWN SALVATION OR SOMEONE ELSE'S. IT IS EQUALLY TRUE THAT JESUS IS NOT TALKING ABOUT GAINING REWARDS. INSTEAD, JESUS IS SPEAKING OF THE DANGER OF HAVING A WRONG ATTITUDE IN SERVICE.

DO NOT MAKE BARGAINS WITH GOD

IT WAS COMMON FOR THE DAY LABORERS TO GATHER IN THE TOWN MARKETPLACE EARLY IN THE MORNING SO THAT EMPLOYERS COULD HIRE THEM FOR A DAYS' WORK. IN THIS PARABLE, WE SEE THAT THE OWNER OF THE VINEYARD WAS ANXIOUS TO GET HIS HARVEST IN BEFORE THE RAINS CAME, SO HE HIRED MEN AT 6, 9, NOON, 3 AND FINALLY AT 5 PM. HE MADE A CONTRACT WITH THOSE HE HAD HIRED EARLIER TO PAY THEM A DENARIUS FOR THE DAYS' WORK. THE LAST MEN HE HIRED HAD NO CONTRACT; THEY SIMPLY TRUSTED THE OWNER TO GIVE THEM WHAT WAS RIGHT IN HIS EYES.

THIS EXPLAINS WHY THE OWNER PAID THEM IN REVERSE ORDER. HE PAID THEM ALL THE SAME, WHICH DISPLAYED HIS COMPASSION AND HIS GENEROSITY. THE WORKERS WHO WERE HIRED EARLIER COMPLAINED, BUT THE OWNER POINTED OUT THAT THIS WAS THE AMOUNT THEY HAD BARGAINED FOR EARLY IN THE MORNING WHEN THEY WERE FIRST HIRED.

ALL OF THIS MEANS THAT WE MUST TRUST THE LORD AND RELY ON HIS WORD AND HIS CHARACTER. GOD WILL ALWAYS GIVE US WHAT IS RIGHT, SO LET US ALLOW HIM TO WRITE THE CONTRACT. HE WILL SEE TO IT THAT WE GET A GENEROUS REWARD IF WE ARE FAITHFUL. HE IS ACTUALLY MORE CONCERNED ABOUT OUR HEART ATTITUDES THAN OUR WORK. IF OUR HEARTS ARE RIGHT, THEN OUR WORK WILL BE RIGHT.

DO NOT WATCH OTHER WORKERS

PETER WAS GREATLY CONCERNED ABOUT WHAT HE WOULD RECEIVE FROM THE LORD BECAUSE HE HAD LEFT HIS FISHING BUSINESS TO FOLLOW JESUS. HE AND THE OTHER DISCIPLES WERE OFTEN GUILTY OF WATCHING OTHER PEOPLE AND DRAWING THE WRONG CONCLUSIONS. THEY WERE MUCH TOO READY TO CRITICIZE OTHERS FOR THE SERVICE THEY WERE RENDERING IN JESUS' NAME, AS IF THE DISCIPLES HAD THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS TO SERVE AND BE REWARDED.

WHEN WE GET OUR EYES OFF THE LORD AND START WATCHING EACH OTHER, THEN CERTAIN DEFINITE SYMPTOMS BEGIN TO SHOW UP IN OUR LIVES. TO BEGIN WITH, WE START TO ENVY THEM AND WHAT THEY HAVE. ENVY IS A SIN AND IT WILL LEAD TO OTHER SINS. WHEN WE START COMPARING, THEN WE START COVETING, AND THEN WE START COMPLAINING! A CHRISTIAN WHO IS A PEOPLE-WATCHER IS NEVER SATISFIED WITH WHAT GOD GIVES HIM BUT ALWAYS WANTS WHAT SOMEONE ELSE HAS. THAT WILL LEAD TO A BITTER ATTITUDE TOWARD GOD.

Presented by Dr. Jimmy Hilton

**SOUTH POINT
BAPTIST CHURCH**

Finding God's Direction for Life



DO NOT BECOME OVERCONFIDENT

“THEY SUPPOSED THAT THEY SHOULD HAVE RECEIVED MORE”(MATT. 20:10). THESE WORKERS WERE OVERCONFIDENT AND ENDED UP BEING DISAPPOINTED. WE CAN ALWAYS HAVE CONFIDENCE IN THE LORD BECAUSE HE CAN BE TRUSTED, BUT WE MUST NEVER TRUST OUR OWN SHORTSIGHTED OBSERVATIONS.

WHENEVER WE ARE TEMPTED TO BOAST ABOUT OUR WORK, OR BELITTLE ANOTHER’S WORK, WE OUGHT TO READ I COR. 4:5. WHATEVER JUDGMENTS WE MAKE TODAY, EITHER OF OURSELVES OR OF OTHERS, ARE BOUND TO BE FAULTY BECAUSE WE DO NOT SEE MEN’S HEARTS. WE SEE THE EXTERNAL ACTIONS BUT WE CANNOT DISCERN THE HIDDEN MOTIVES, AND IT IS THE MOTIVE THAT DETERMINES THE VALUE OF MINISTRY.

JESUS TALKED ABOUT “THE LAST BEING FIRST AND THE FIRST BEING LAST.” THESE WORDS ARE BOTH A WARNING AND AN ENCOURAGEMENT. SOME WHO ARE FIRST IN THEIR OWN EYES WILL BE LAST IN HIS EYES ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT, AND SOME WHO ARE LAST IN THEIR OWN EYES WILL BE FIRST. MANY FAITHFUL WORKERS WILL DISCOVER THEIR REWARDS ARE FAR GREATER THAN THEY COULD EVER IMAGINE. THE PRAISE AND THE POPULARITY OF MEN ARE NO GUARANTEE OF GOD’S APPROVAL.

APPLICATION

THESE THREE WARNINGS ARE GIVEN TO US AS WE SERVE THE LORD. THESE WARNINGS INCLUDE THREE DIFFERENT RELATIONSHIPS: WITH GOD, WITH OUR FELLOW WORKERS, AND WITH OURSELVES. IF WE ARE RIGHT IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH GOD THEN WE WILL BE RIGHT IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS AND WITH OURSELVES. WE NEED TO QUIT WORRYING ABOUT WHAT WE WILL GET OUT OF OUR SERVICE FOR THE LORD. LEAVE ALL OF THAT TO HIM.