

“Let me tell you a story” Part 5
The Kingdom Functions Differently
Matthew 20:1-16
January 29, 2023

- I. **A STORY with a huge TWIST. (v.1-12)**

 - A. The **NEED** of a **LANDOWNER**. (v.1)
 - B. The **PROMISE** of fair **COMPENSATION**. (v.2,4)
 - C. The constant **STREAM** of arriving **WORKERS**. (v.2-7)
 - D. Injecting **TENSION** by **GENEROSITY**. (v.8-12)

The parables, when we listen to them with an eye on our own heart, can really shake us up a bit. We saw that last week, as the parable of the unforgiving servant made us look at the grudges we often hold against others. This week revisits the idea of grace...and the reality of judgment on those who refuse to love God's use of grace.

- 1. Kid's Question: How would you have felt if you had worked all day and others who worked less got the same pay you did?
- 2. What stands out most to you about this story? Why do you think that is?

- II. **LISTENING to the words of the MASTER. (v.13-16)**

 - A. The **QUESTION** of **FAIRNESS**. (v.11-13)
 - B. The master's **DESIRE** and **RIGHTS**. (v.14-15)
 - C. The **WAY** the workers **SEE** it. (v.15b-16)

There is a lot of meaning in the response of the master to the unhappy servants. He speaks boldly to those who somehow feel cheated by getting exactly what they were promised. His actions expose their hearts...and they miss the opportunity for joy because they feel like they've been cheated or demeaned.

- 3. Suppose this happened to you a real work situation. How would you feel if you were the first hired? The last hired? Does the unfairness bother you?
- 4. Why did the first workers hired expect to receive more? (v.10) When has God not met your expectations?
- 5. If the master had only hired the first shift of workers would they have been angry at the end of the day? Why the difference?

- III. **Letting the KINGDOM shape our SEEING. (v.1; Heb. 12:1-2)**

 - A. **REMEMBERING** who we (and **THEY**) are. (v.12; Jon. 4:10-11)
 - B. **REJOICING** not in what we **HAVE**... (v.11; James 4:1-3)

C. ...but in WHO and HOW God IS. (v.15; 1 Tim. 1:12-17)

D. Embrace the JOY of living GRACIOUSLY. (v.15-16; Heb 12:2)

The perspective we see the world with shapes everything. The call for believers is to put on the glasses of the Kingdom and let that shape how we see the rest of the world. If we can't look with Kingdom eyes, we spend most of the time focused on ourselves and how we feel as if we are missing out.

6. How does everyone being created in the image of God confront you in day to day life?
7. How dependent is your feeling about life on what you have and how things are going?
8. What are some thing you could do this week to cultivate a more gracious life?