

sermon study guide

Speaker: Henry Schorr

Date: November 7/8 2020

Sermon Title: The Kingdom of Heaven Is Like... Part 8: God's Amazing Grace – Parable of Workers in the Vineyard

IN - PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. Can you recall an experience when you were surprised by an unexpected gift? How did this make you feel?
2. Which part of your job do you enjoy the most: the paycheque or the work you do?

UP - PURSUE GOD

Read Matthew 20:1-16

3. Imagine you're one of the workers who worked all day. How would you feel about receiving the same wages as those who worked less? How are envy, fairness, and grace illustrated in this parable?
4. Verse 16 says, "So the last will be first, and the first will be last." How does Jesus' parable illustrate this kingdom principle?

OUT - PURSUE MISSION

5. Pastor Henry said, "Jesus' concern here is that we continue to be amazed by God's grace." How can this parable help us to recognize and celebrate God's grace in our lives?
6. Share one area of life or a relationship in which you can reflect the generosity and grace of God's kingdom this coming week.

For Personal Reflection/Prayer:

Is there envy or unforgiveness in your relationships? Consider the people closest to you and how you can approach the situation with grace. Reflect on God's grace in your life and pray that God would guide you and give His wisdom.

THE WORD (NIV)

Matthew 20:1-16

"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 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."

sermon study summary

The Kingdom of Heaven Is Like...Part 8: God's Amazing Grace – Parable of Workers in the Vineyard November 7/8, 2020 Pastor Henry Schorr

Jesus describes His Kingdom of grace in the parable of the workers in the vineyard to teach us several things about the generosity and graciousness of our LORD, (Matthew 20:1-16). **First**, God's grace is a gift. Jesus' story makes no economic sense; grace is not calculated like a day's wages, not about counting, finishing last or first, nor something we achieve. To understand grace, we must examine the relationship between justice, mercy and grace. **Justice** is getting what you deserve. **Mercy** is forgiving you and not giving you what you deserve. Yet grace is even greater. **Grace** is not only being forgiven of what you deserve but receiving more than you deserve; something only God would do.

The workers were grateful for their pay, except those who had worked the full day (v.10). If one hour's work received full pay, surely they should be getting several times as much. Many think this way. The more I do for God, the more He'll love and bless me; the less I do, the less He'll love and bless me. Serving God and others is a sign of faith in God. But we often serve God in expectation that He now owes us something. We do not get to God's kingdom on our merit. He extends His grace to us because of who we are in Him, His spiritual child created in His image.

The **second truth** is that grace makes us equal to everyone else (v.12). The workers complained that the landowner made them all equal, whereas they had thought themselves superior and more deserving than the others; thus being treated unfairly. The owner never short-changed the workers. They received the pay they agreed to, while the other workers received more than they deserved. The issue wasn't fairness, it was envy. It blinded them to the landowner's goodness in giving them work to provide for their families, instead of celebrating the owner's generosity to the less deserving.

Jesus' concern is that we continue to be amazed by God's grace - that we are saved not by our works but by grace alone. Are we losing sight of God's grace in our own life? How grateful are we for God's amazing grace in Christ is seen by how we respond to those we feel are less deserving of God's grace. We are all equal in God's kingdom. When we make Jesus our Lord, we no longer compare and compete, but cheer one another on to be all we were created to be. We're all righteous only because of what Jesus accomplished for us on the cross.

To illustrate further, recall the woman accused of adultery by the religious leaders and Jesus' response (John 8:3-11). If God extends such amazing grace and forgiveness to us, then how can we not forgive and extend grace to others? Grace breaks the cycle of revenge, allowing relationships to start over. God's grace must be received with open hands. This is repentance: the doorway to grace and into the kingdom of heaven.