



Did Jesus \$ Support Wage Discrimination?

Matthew 20:12: (NASB) *These last men have worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the scorching heat of the day.*



Equal pay for equal work! When you hear that statement, you think, who wouldn't think that is a good idea? Who in their right mind would argue against such a thing? Did Jesus teach us a contrary lesson to this principle of equality? When we read the Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard, it sure seems to be teaching that God cares more about playing favorites than about treating people equally. Is that really the lesson that Jesus is teaching here?

To understand what the lesson is, we need to see why the lesson was needed. Jesus taught progressively, so let's go to the verses *before* the Parable.

These verses follow the sad departure of the rich young ruler:

Matthew 19:23-30: (NASB) ²³*And Jesus said to his disciples, Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. ²⁴Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. ²⁵When the disciples heard this they were very astonished and said, then who can be saved?*

The disciples are dismayed because their social structure had taught them that a man who knew the Law, followed it and was wealthy, was blessed and surely fit for the kingdom. In Israel during Old Testament times, God's blessing was tied to the land and people being favored with physical goods.

²⁶*And looking at them Jesus said to them, with people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible. ²⁷Then Peter said to him, Behold, we have left everything and followed you; what then will there be for us?*

Jesus gave them hope, but their reception of the hope had a twinge of personal ego attached: In other words, what are we going to get? We are better than that rich guy who is so blessed!

Jesus gave them a very honest, hope-filled answer:

²⁸*And Jesus said to them, Truly I say to you, that you who have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for my name's sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life.*

This answer proves a really important principle of God's grace:

³⁰*But many who are first will be last; and the last, first.*

This is not about order, but instead about stature. Here is a paraphrase of verse 30: "Those who you look at as privileged and closer to God because of their physical blessings and their strong desire to follow God's (Jewish) Law - those with the greatest (Jewish) social stature - are not necessarily the ones who will receive the greatest blessing. That is reserved for those who simply follow me with their whole heart, mind, soul and strength." This absolutely disputes today's idea of a "Prosperity Gospel."



Having said this, Jesus sees a need to deflate the potential egos of his closest followers:

Matthew 20:1: (NASB) *For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard.*

- **The kingdom of heaven/vineyard:** The context of the development of the true church.
- **Landowner:** God Himself.

This reminds us of:

John 15:1: (NASB) *I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.*



How much does this vineyard owner pay? Is it above minimum wage?

- **Early in the morning:** Jesus was talking to those disciples with him in the earliest stage of the Gospel - their particular time in history.
- **Laborers:** Those who would be working (following Jesus) for the sake and spread of the Gospel.

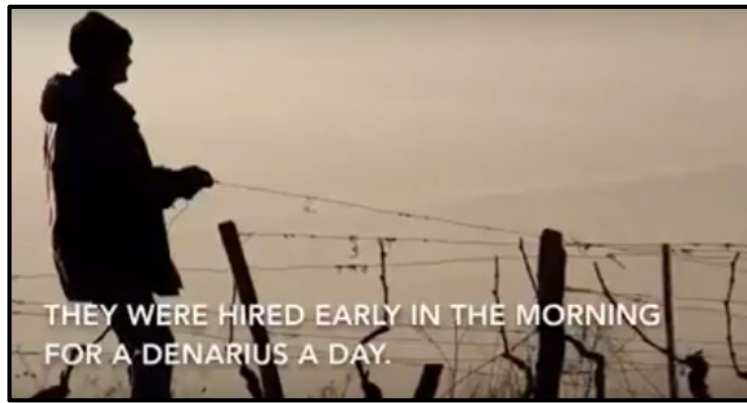
Matthew 9:35-38: (NASB) ³⁵*Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.* ³⁶*Seeing the people, he felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.* ³⁷*Then he said to his disciples, the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.* ³⁸*Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.*



Four guys, **Parable of the Vineyard Workers**, Andy Konigsmark

- (Guy 1) *Yeah, I was on that build yesterday - it was insane. There was like four of us.*
- (Guy 2) *Five.*
- (Guy 1) *Yeah, including that guy who hired us, but he wasn't doing any of the work. Mr. uh....*
- (Guy 2) *Hollingsworth.*
- (Guy 1) *Yeah, whatever. Mr. Crazy is more like it. I mean, four guys to build a house? Come on.*
- (Guy 2) *I was cool with it.*
- (Guy 1) *What do you mean you were cool with it?*
- (Guy 2) *Well, we've been out of work awhile. Most of the time we just hang out by the hardware store hoping that somebody will come by and pick us up for work. Some days, nothing. But yesterday, this Hollingsworth guy pulls up in a pickup truck and says he has work for four of us, and he says he'll give us \$300 a day, which is, you know, twice the going rate.*
- (Guy 1) *So, Steve, Paulie, Slim and I were first in the truck.*
- (Guy 2) *Well, actually Alan was in before you but you pulled him out.*
- (Guy 1) *Hey, I've got a family to feed. Alan's on his own.*





Matthew 20:2: (NASB) *When he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard.*

(Source: Biblical commentary by Adam Clarke) A penny. A Roman coin... worth about seven-pence halfpenny or seven-pence three farthings of our money, and equal to the Greek drachma. This appears to have been the ordinary price of a day's labor at that time.

The reward for the Christian working in the vineyard for the "day" of the Gospel was a fair wage:

John 14:1-2: (NASB) *¹Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me. ²In my Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.*

A common wage in the story represented what is really an uncommon, heavenly reward. Before Jesus came, this was never an opportunity. This shows God's inexhaustible grace!

- *Sent them into his vineyard* - Jesus prepared his disciples for their true ministry by sending them out while he was still with them.

Luke 10:1-4: (NASB) *¹Now after this the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them in pairs ahead of him to every city and place where he himself was going to come. ²And he was saying to them, the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. ³Go, behold, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. ⁴Carry no money belt, no bag, no shoes; and greet no one on the way.*

The story tells us that early in the morning some went to work. The work day began at 6 am.

Matthew 20:3-4: (NASB) *³And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the market place; ⁴and to those he said, you also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you. And so they went.*

- *About the third hour* - Perhaps signifying the Gospel call to the Jews. Jesus began with his Apostles and disciples and built upon that foundation.

(Source: Biblical commentary by Henry Alford) The third hour... our 9 am., and in summer 8, was sometimes called "the height of the market," — when the market was fullest.

(Source: Biblical commentary by Adam Clarke) Verse 3. Marketplace where laborers usually stood until they were hired.

Others standing idle - needing to work; fellow Jews needing a cause.



Pentecost, as witnessed by a Jewish audience:

Acts 2:5-6: (NASB) ⁵Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven. ⁶And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together, and were bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language.

The timing here is what gets our attention:

Acts 2:14-15: (NASB) ¹⁴But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: Men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and give heed to my words. ¹⁵For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, **for it is only the third hour of the day.**

The third hour of the day - 9 am, note this was the same hour Jesus said in the Parable was when the next wave of workers were called to work.

The initial workers were the Apostles and any disciples that followed Jesus at the beginning when he physically was there. He was crucified, raised and after 40 days, ascended to heaven. Ten days later, the whole object of the Gospel message would shift. Something different happened with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost - and the Parable predicted this shift.

Why does the vineyard owner *not* tell the rest of the workers what they will be paid?

Peter at Pentecost continues the “third hour call” to the Jewish nation to work in the “vineyard”:

Acts 2:32-36: (NASB) ³²This Jesus God raised up again, to which we (the early morning workers) are all witnesses. ³³Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. ³⁴For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand, ³⁵until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet. ³⁶Therefore let all the house of Israel (the third hour call to work - the next group of workers hired to work in the vineyard) know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified.



Six guys, Parable of the Vineyard Workers, Andy Konigsmark



- (Guy one) Anyways, we get to the site, and can you believe it? There's just four of us! But, you know, \$300 is \$300, so we go to work. So, we work all morning, just the four of us, and then about lunchtime Hollingsworth pulls up with two more other guys.
- (Guy two) Yeah, guess he finally figured out four of us wasn't going to cut it.
- (Guy one) Yeah, so now there was six.

Matthew 20:4: (NASB) ...and to those he said, you also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you. And so they went.

The response of the “third hour workers” at Pentecost:

Acts 2:37-38: (NASB) ³⁷Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do? ³⁸Peter said to them, Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

This call went out to the Jewish nation. These workers were given a specific and limited task of vineyard work: witness to other Jews.



There was a hint given that others would be called later:

Acts 2:39: (NASB) *For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself.*

Peter probably did not understand all he was saying at that moment, but this was a powerful promise.

Matthew 20:4: (NASB) *...and to those he said, you also go into the vineyard, and whatever is **right <1342>** I will give you. And so they went.*

Right: Strong's #1342 δίκαιος dikaios dik'-ah-yos, righteous, observing divine laws

The third hour workers were not promised a denarius; rather, they were to be paid what was fair. They were not told exactly what they would make, but they could trust the vineyard owner.

The Jews responded to the call because Peter at Pentecost showed them it was built upon the fulfillment of the Law.

Where the Law is fulfilled there is righteousness:

Romans 6:16-18: (NASB) *¹⁶Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in **righteousness <1343>**? ¹⁷But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, ¹⁸and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of **righteousness <1343>**.*

Righteousness: Strong's #1343 δικαιοσύνη dikaiosune dik-ah-yos-oo'-nay;

- 1) in a broad sense: state of him who is, as he ought to be, righteousness, the condition acceptable to God
- 2) the doctrine concerning the way in which man may attain a state approved of God
- 3) integrity, virtue, purity of life, rightness, correctness of thinking, feeling, and acting

Day labor was common in that day. But when you were someone's slave or indentured servant, you were compliant to your master's wishes. Here in Romans, thanks be to God that if you decide to be a slave to righteousness, the Master is our righteous God. It is hard work, but it will not be unfair. God will pay you for your dedication to righteousness.

Did Jesus support wage discrimination? We know the workers hired throughout the day will all get paid exactly the same amount of money. Is that fair? That is not the lesson being taught. Remember, the lesson started with *many who are first will be last; and the last, first.*

This is about stature - where you think someone stands versus where they really stand in God's eyes - who are the most important by their attitude, humility and actions.

The symbol of *the early morning* shows us the Apostles (and a few disciples) are there first, to be joined by many who were ripe to be called of the Jewish nation in that *third hour*. There were just a few workers at the beginning, who worked hard to spread the Gospel when Jesus walked the earth. They were given the





Holy Spirit (God's power and influence) first and it is then passed on through the ages.

Remember the lesson of status given before this Parable and the human propensity to seek status among our peers. Ego gets in the way - the reason for the Parable of the Vineyard. Jesus would not allow ego to dominate the true church. Jesus taught that the workers would need to be humble as he was.

With this pattern of *the early morning* established, we now look for more of the same type of pattern as the Day of the Gospel unfolds and more workers are called in.

Matthew 20:5: (NASB) *Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did the same thing.*



The same thing happens as before: God called for work in the vineyard of the Gospel and offered "what is right" in lieu of a specific wage. Justification and its Gospel Age heavenly reward would be the payment to any who would heed the call.

The sixth hour and the ninth hour - Perhaps this means the call of the Gospel spreading on to the Gentiles in two distinct steps. (More on this soon!)



A caller from Connecticut suggests an illustration of a construction site where workers were polled on their attitude. The first worker was asked, "Why are you here?" He replied that he was putting in his 8 hours for the day. When the second worker was asked the same question, he answered he was making money to pay his mortgage. But the third worker said he was helping to build a temple.

That exemplified the attitude Jesus taught - this was so much bigger than any of the disciples or one individual worker.



The sixth hour perhaps represented the door opening to the Gentiles:


Acts 10:9-16: (NASB) ⁹On the next day, as they were on their way and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop **about the sixth hour** to pray. ¹⁰But he became hungry and was desiring to eat; but while they were making preparations, he fell into a trance; ¹¹and he saw the sky opened up, and an object like a great sheet coming down, lowered by four corners to the ground, ¹²and there were in it all kinds of four-footed animals and crawling creatures of the earth and birds of the air. ¹³A voice came to him, Get up, Peter, kill and eat! ¹⁴But Peter said, By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything unholy and unclean. ¹⁵Again a voice came to him a second time, What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy. ¹⁶This happened three times, and immediately the object was taken up into the sky.

The sixth hour showed a monumental change, for no longer would anyone be excluded from God's favor. Cornelius would be the confirmation of this newly-opened sixth hour door, which would lead to the next phase of the call to work in the vineyard of the Gospel, the ninth hour.

The ninth hour represented the Gospel spreading far and wide as a result of the call of the Gentiles:

Acts 10:30-35: (NASB) ³⁰Cornelius said, Four days ago to this hour, I was praying in my house **during the ninth hour**; and behold, a man stood before me in shining garments, ³¹and he said, Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God. ³²Therefore send to Joppa and invite Simon, who is also called Peter, to come to you; he is staying at the house of Simon the tanner by the sea. **(Sixth hour confirmation)** ³³So I sent for you immediately, and you have been kind enough to come. Now then, we are all here present before God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord. ³⁴Opening his mouth, Peter said: I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, ³⁵but **in every nation** the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him.

Ninth hour - men of every nation could now work in the vineyard. Peter recognized the magnitude of the Gospel call being open to the whole world!

Workers in the Vineyard Representing Expanding Stages of the Gospel Call			
Hired Early in the Morning	Hired in the 3rd Hour	Hired in the 6th Hour	Hired in the 9th Hour
The Apostles and early disciples with Jesus among them	Predicted the Gospel call would go out to the Jewish nation	Predicted the Gospel call would go out to the Gentiles	Predicted the Gospel call would spread far and wide beyond Israel
	Acts 2:14-15: Pentecost reference to the 3rd hour - the Gospel call went out exclusively to the Jewish nation	Acts 10:9-16: Peter and Cornelius - the Gospel call was expanded to the Gentiles	Acts 10:30-35: Peter announced the call was open to "every nation"
PETER: Matthew 19:27: "What then will there be for us?"	PETER: Acts 2:36: "Let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ."	PETER: Acts 10:9,13: Peter receives the vision. "What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy."	PETER: Acts 10:34-35: "I most certainly understand...in every nation the man who...does what is right is welcome to Him."



The opportunity for the Gospel to go worldwide had already been put in place - it just needed permission to spread outside of Judaism:

Acts 8:3-4: (NASB) ³But Saul began ravaging the church, entering house after house, and dragging off men and women, he would put them in prison. ⁴Therefore, those who had been scattered went about preaching the word.



One last guy, *Parable of the Vineyard Workers*, Andy Konigsmark



- (Guy one) Then about three o'clock, he pulls up and two more of the guys get out.
- (Guy two) So that's the whole gang. Except Alan.
- (Guy one) Yeah, except then about five minutes to quitting time...
- (Guy two) ...It was half an hour.
- (Guy one) Whatever. The truck pulls up once more and Alan steps out. And he works for like five minutes!
- (Guy two) Half an hour.
- (Guy one) Whatever!
- (Interviewer) I don't understand the problem.
- (Guy one) Well, the problem comes when we go to get paid.
- (Interviewer) What happened?

Next comes the eleventh hour.

It was not an hour of prayer, so what does it mean?

Matthew 20:6-7: (NASB) ⁶And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, why have you been standing here idle all day long? ⁷They said to him, because no one hired us. He said to them, you go into the vineyard too.

About the eleventh hour - There is no hour of prayer to reference here; there is only the illustration of the very last call to the work of the Gospel, which would seem to be at the very end of the Gospel Age.

John 9:1-4: (NASB) ¹As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. ²And his disciples asked him, Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind? ³Jesus answered, it was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him. ⁴We must work the works of Him who sent me as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work.

As long as it is still the day of the Gospel, there is work to be done. Even at the very end, there would be workers called in. But at some point this will stop - *night is coming when no one can work.*

Remember, the Parable of the Vineyard is not about time; it is about status and stature.

The idea of only one hour left:

Matthew 26:40-41: (NASB) ⁴⁰And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, So, you men could not keep watch with me for *one hour*? ⁴¹Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Interestingly, Peter figures into the lesson again.

...Why have you been standing here idle all day long? ⁷They said to him, because no one hired us. He said to them, you go into the vineyard too.




Matthew 20:6-7: (NASB) *⁶And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, why have you been standing here idle all day long? ⁷They said to him, because no one hired us. He said to them, you go into the vineyard too.*

There is a necessity for workers to always be entering the vineyard work. The eleventh hour workers were really recipients of grace, being given a chance at an opportunity that was almost over. But the amount of work they had to do was no less than the work of those previously hired. Everyone living today following in Jesus' footsteps at the end of the Gospel Age are those eleventh hour workers. We benefit greatly from those workers who went before us.

Romans 10:12-15: (NASB) *¹²For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; ¹³for whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved. ¹⁴How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? ¹⁵How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, how beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!*

We would be lost at the eleventh hour if not for those working in the vineyard the whole Gospel Age. We are in a special place of blessing with the increase of knowledge. We can do more work in this one "hour." This program is an example. We have hundreds of Bible translations and commentaries available with a mouse click, allowing us to prepare a comprehensive Bible study every week.

Workers in the Vineyard Representing Expanding Stages of the Gospel Call

Hired Early in the Morning	Hired in the 3rd Hour	Hired in the 6th Hour	Hired in the 9th Hour	Hired in the 11th Hour
The Apostles and early disciples with Jesus among them	Predicted the Gospel call would go out to the Jewish nation	Predicted the Gospel call would go out to the Gentiles	Predicted the Gospel call would spread far and wide beyond Israel	Predicted there would still be Gospel work to be done even at the very end
	<u>Acts 2:14-15:</u> Pentecost reference to the 3rd hour - the Gospel call went out exclusively to the Jewish nation	<u>Acts 10:9-16:</u> Peter and Cornelius - the Gospel call was expanded to the Gentiles	<u>Acts 10:30-35:</u> Peter announced the call was open to "every nation"	<u>Romans 10:15:</u> "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!"
PETER: <u>Matthew 19:27:</u> "What then will there be for us?"	PETER: <u>Acts 2:36:</u> "Let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ."	PETER: <u>Acts 10:9,13:</u> Peter receives the vision. "What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy."	PETER: <u>Acts 10:34-35:</u> "I most certainly understand...in every nation the man who...does what is right is welcome to Him."	PETER: <u>Matthew 26:40:</u> "You could not keep watch with me for one hour?"



The feet of those who bring good news - Picturing the church as a body with Jesus as the head, the feet are furthest away but still part of the body. The feet are the last members who are called, chosen and faithful.



A CQ App user suggests: What about the Christian preachers who say the more stuff we have is proof of how God is blessing you?

Nowhere does Jesus even hint this to be true. In fact, this Parable tells us the opposite. Please see our program, *"Why Aren't You A Wealthy Christian?"* from March 1, 2015, for more on this subject. We cannot confuse the physical blessing of the Jewish nation with the spiritual blessings promised to Christianity.



All paid the same, Parable of the Vineyard Workers, Andy Konigsmark



- (Guy one) What happened is that Big Steve and Paulie and Slim and I - we got ripped off.
- (Interviewer) He didn't give you the \$300 he promised?
- (Guy one) Yeah, he did...he gave me my \$300. He gave Steve, Paulie and Slim \$300, but then he paid the guys who came in at noon - and he gives them three bills, too. I mean, they don't work all morning, they got the same pay as us. But it gets worse!
- (Guy two) The guys that came in at three o'clock they got the same!
- (Guy one) Can you believe that? Now, here's the real kick in the stomach. Alan, who walks in at, like, two minutes to closing and hammers in, like, two nails he gets paid the same \$300. Man, that frosted me.



The lesson is not, "They worked only an hour"; but instead, "They worked under different circumstances." The lesson is about the attitude of the workers.

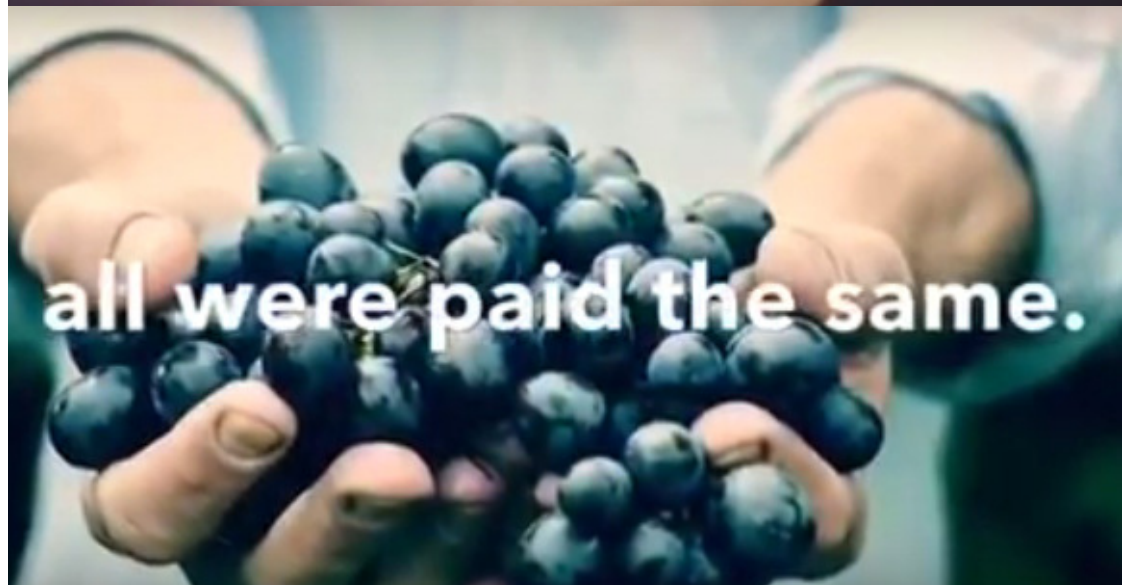
Here the parable changes: It is no longer a prophetic process; rather, is now a pointed question to the Apostles, putting them in the same light as the rich young ruler with his status, privilege and sorrow.

Matthew 20:8-9: (NASB) ⁸When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last group to the first. ⁹When those hired about the eleventh hour came, each one received a denarius.

Those who worked only one hour got paid in front of everyone else.

(Source: Biblical commentary by Henry Alford) By the Mosaic Law {Deuteronomy 24:15} the wages of a hired servant were to be paid him before night.

The workers are only identified by groups, reinforcing the lesson of God's Grace bestowed upon all who would receive the call of Christ. The Apostles, the called-out Jews, the opportunity for the Gentiles, then the worldwide harvesting of the Gentiles and finally those who would be working only at the very end of the Gospel age.





**It has been a long day and it is time to get paid!
Everyone should be happy, right?**

Matthew 20:10-15: (NASB) ¹⁰*When those hired first came, they thought that they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹When they received it, they grumbled at the landowner, ¹²saying, These last men have worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the scorching heat of the day.*

This is the practical application part of the story for the Apostles.

This was the type of thinking the Pharisees had - a pride of position:

Luke 15:2: (NASB) *Both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, this man receives sinners and eats with them.*

The Apostles had to be made aware of this trap so they would not fall into it. *They themselves were now in the same position as the rich young ruler - they had every advantage, they knew Jesus personally and were there from the start. Their personal egos expected recognition.*

¹³*But he answered and said to one of them, Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? ¹⁴Take what is yours and go, but I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. ¹⁵Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with what is my own?*

Romans 9:20-21: (NASB) ²⁰*On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, why did you make me like this, will it? ²¹Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use?*

The Apostles and the earliest church *did have to go through a kind of heat that those at the end do not* - they only knew the kingdom would come. The Gospel was not yet written down and they could not see prophecy fulfilled, such as Israel becoming a nation in modern time. Their trials were far more (for the most part) physical and their persecution was a very outward manifestation... they bore the heat!

...Or is your eye envious because I am generous?

Romans 9:14-16: (NASB) ¹⁴*What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! ¹⁵For He says to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion. ¹⁶So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy.*

Could we also be the subject of this parable, looking upon ourselves as more blessed and more deserving than others? Are we misapplying God's grace as well? Have we done what we contracted our lives to do?

 **Amazing, Parable of the Vineyard Workers, Andy Konigsmark**

- (Guy one) *Who did he think he was? I worked all day. I mean, those guys put in only a fraction of that time. Ain't he ever heard of fair day's wage for a fair day's work?*
- (Interviewer) *What did Mr. Hollingsworth say to that?*
- (Guy one) *He said, what did I care what he paid the other guys? He said I agreed to work the entire day for \$300.*
- (Interviewer) *You told me earlier that was double the going wage. You should have been very happy with that.*



(Guy two) Well, we were until all the guys got paid the same. I mean, it hardly seems fair, right?

- *(Guy one) We were there long before they were, but you know what the guy says to me? He says, "What do you care if I want to be generous to your friends? It's my money. I can do with it what I want." Can you believe that?*
- *(Guy two) Can you believe that guy?*
- *(Guy one) Unbelievable.*
- *(Guy two) Yeah, unbelievable. Amazing, actually. It's amazing.*

We are not to be like that rich young ruler and end up sorrowful. We are not to be tied up in our self-worth and instead should focus on God's grace.

These are the words Jesus spoke immediately before AND after the Parable:
Matthew 19:30 and Matthew 20:16: (NASB) *So the last shall be first, and the first last.*

The proclaiming of the Gospel is what is focused on in this Vineyard Parable throughout the entire "day" of the Gospel Age. When it comes to receiving their reward, those who would have had to bear the heat of the day, those who had the most stature, will in fact receive their just reward (see what Jesus told the Apostles before the Parable) but *not above* those who labored under *seemingly less strenuous conditions*. This is a lesson of stature - all were called and all labored. Focus on what is most important and not ego. There is only one calling to only one body of Christ. It is a call of grace, by grace and for the bestowing of grace!

God's grace recognizes no position; it only blesses those who align themselves with it. Do not judge others against ourselves. Thank God He is gracious to all His workers!



*So, did Jesus support wage discrimination?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*

*And now even more to think about...
only in the **Full Edition** of CQ Rewind!*



"The happiest people don't bother about whether life is unfair. They just concentrate on what they have." — Andrew Matthews

"Fortunately, God doesn't keep score the way we humans do." — Dr. Tim and Darcy Kimmel

A little more by way of context to help us understand the unusual saying, *So the last shall be first, and the first last.*

The rich young ruler account:

Matthew 19:16-22: (NASB) ¹⁶And someone came to him and said Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life? ¹⁷And he said to him, why are you asking me about what is good? There is only One who is good; but if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments. ¹⁸Then he said to him, which ones? And Jesus said, YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER; YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY; YOU SHALL NOT STEAL; YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS; ¹⁹HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER; and YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF. ²⁰The young man said to him, all these things I have kept; what am I still lacking? ²¹Jesus said to him, if you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the



poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me. ²²But when the young man heard this statement, he went away grieving; for he was one who owned much property.

This set up the conversation with the Apostles, which set up the Parable of the Vineyard:

Matthew 19:23-30: (NASB) ²³And Jesus said to his disciples, Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. ²⁴Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. ²⁵When the disciples heard this, they were very astonished and said, then who can be saved? ²⁶And looking at them Jesus said to them, with people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible. ²⁷Then Peter said to him, Behold, we have left everything and followed you; what then will there be for us? ²⁸And Jesus said to them, Truly I say to you, that you who have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for my name's sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life. ³⁰**But many who are first will be last; and the last, first.**

This mention of first and last seems to refer to this life - those who we would consider to be ahead (first) of the rest of society (the rich man) will very likely be the ones who will lag behind in the receiving of the Gospel. There is only one calling to one body. It is a call of grace, by grace for the bestowing of grace!

Lesson: God's grace recognizes no position; it only blesses those who align themselves with it.

¹⁶*So the last shall be first, and the first last.*

The definitions of *first* and *last* show us that this does not have to be about some kind of numerical order and can refer to positioning and status:

First: Strong's #4413 πρωτος protos pro'-tos

- 1) first in time or place 1a) in any succession of things or persons
- 2) first in rank 2a) influence, honor 2b) chief 2c) principal 3) first, at the first

Last: Strong's #2078 εσχατος eschatos es'-khat-os (in the sense of contiguity);

AV-last 46, lowest 2, uttermost 2, last state 2, ends 1, latter end 1; 54

- 1) extreme 1a) last in time or in place 1b) last in a series of places
- 1c) last in a temporal succession 2) the last 2a) last, referring to time
- 2b) of space, the uttermost part, the end, of the earth
- 2c) of rank, grade of worth, last i.e. lowest

The lesson to Peter and the Apostles - rejoice in your privilege and in whatever the privilege of others might be as well:

Romans 14:5-13: (NASB) ⁵One person regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God. ⁷For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself; ⁸for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living. ¹⁰But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹For it is written, as I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me and every tongue shall give praise to God. ¹²So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God. ¹³Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this—not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way.



We also must be on our guard against such pride of position:

Luke 15:27-32: (NASB) ²⁷And he said to him, your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him back safe and sound. ²⁸But he became angry and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began pleading with him. ²⁹But he answered and said to his father, Look! For so many years I have been serving you and I have never neglected a command of yours; and yet you have never given me a young goat, so that I might celebrate with my friends; ³⁰but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him. ³¹And he said to him, Son, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³²But we had to celebrate and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and has begun to live, and was lost and has been found.

Other various uses of the denarius illustrating Jesus always using those things common to teach:

Matthew 18:28: (NASB) But that slave went out and found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and he seized him and began to choke him, saying, pay back what you owe.

Matthew 22:19: (NASB) Show me the coin used for the poll tax. And they brought him a denarius.

Luke 10:35: (NASB) On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.