



Matthew 19:27-20:16

THE MIND-BLOWING NATURE OF GOD'S GRACE

Children contrast with the rich man simply because there is no question of their having yet been able to merit anything. Jesus' point is, there is nothing that any of us can do to inherit the kingdom. We must simply receive it like little children. And little children haven't done anything. The New Testament world was not sentimental about children and had no illusion about any pretended innate goodness in them. Jesus is not suggesting that heaven is a huge playground for Cajun infants. Children are our model because they have no claim on heaven. If they are close to God, it is because they are incompetent, not because they are innocent. If they receive anything, it can only be as a gift.

—Brennan Manning

In Matthew 19, Jesus begins His journey to Jerusalem where He will be arrested, rejected, and crucified. Along the way, He instructs His disciples, preparing them for ministry in the coming church age. One of the lessons that they need to grasp is the amazing nature of grace.

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." (Matt. 19:14)

- Little children receive everything as a _____.
- The rich think they can _____ everything on their own.

PETER'S QUESTION (19:27)

We've given up everything to follow you. What will we get?

- Peter puts the focus on what they have _____.
- Peter puts the focus on what they will _____.

Peter thinks like most people do—if you serve longer, work harder, and sacrifice more, you deserve more. If you do more, you get more.

JESUS' ANSWER (19:28-30)

- Yes, as My disciples, you will be _____.
- Yes, all of My disciples will be greatly _____.
- But, no, God's rewards do not operate the way that you think.

The ultimate test of our spirituality is the measure of our amazement at the grace of God.

—D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

All God gives is of grace. We cannot earn what God gives us; we cannot deserve it. What God gives us is given out of the goodness of His heart. What God gives is not pay, but a gift, not a reward, but a grace.

—William Barclay

Peter's words sound both smug (we, unlike that young man, have done what you have asked) and mercenary (God owes us).

—R. T. France

Peter and the others are thinking in terms of deserving or earning God's favor.

—D. A. Carson

Regeneration. Grk, *palingenesia*, "new birth [Titus 3:5]; renewal; renovation; the restoration of the perfect condition of things which existed before the fall of our first parents [Adam & Eve]" (Thayer)

This is a picture of the millennial earth, not heaven... The kingdom, while postponed, is certain of fulfillment following His second coming.

—John Walvoord

JESUS' PARABLE (20:1-16)

During NT times, when the harvest came, landowners would often go out into the marketplace and hire day laborers to help bring in their harvest.

- All the workers work in the landowner's vineyard but they are hired at different times in the day—6AM, 9AM, 12NOON, 3PM, and 5PM.
- Only the earliest workers had an _____ on wage.
- All the workers are paid at the end of the day—from the last ones hired to the first ones hired (cf. Lev. 19:13; Deut. 24:15).
- All the workers are paid the _____ wage...even though they work different hours and accomplish different amounts of work.
- Only the earliest workers _____.
- The landowner is both fair and abundantly _____.

The landowner represents God and the workers represent Jesus' disciples. But there are at least five different interpretations of the *first* and the *last*:

1. The *first* are Jewish believers; the *last* are Gentile believers.
2. The *first* are the wealthy; the *last* are the poor.
3. The *first* are saved young; the *last* are saved near death.
4. The *first* are spiritually strong; the *last* are spiritually weak.
5. The *first* are the grumbling; the *last* are the _____.

OUR RESPONSE

- Stop _____ yourself to others!
- Stop _____!
- Start savoring the super-abundant, freely-given grace of God and serving Him with the joy and gratitude of an 11th hour worker!

These men were hired laborers; they were the lowest class of workers, and life for them was always desperately precarious. Servants were at least to some extent attached to the family. ...They would never be in any imminent danger of starvation in normal times. It was very different with hired day-laborers. They were not attached to any group; they were entirely at the mercy of chance employment; they were always living on the semi-starvation line. ...With them, to be unemployed for a day was disaster.

—William Barclay

The extraordinary behavior of this landowner in adding more workers after he has already recruited all he needs...indicates not that he could not calculate his labor needs in advance but that he was acting compassionately to alleviate the hardship of the unemployed.

—R. T. France

This story scarcely models good labor practices but it does disclose profound truths about the nature of God.

—Craig L. Blomberg

Murmured. Greek, *gonguzo*, "to mutter, grumble, say anything in a low tone" (Vine) [cf. Phil. 2:14]

As long as a man is alive and out of hell, he cannot have any cause to complain.

—C. H. Spurgeon

Murmuring is the rising up of self against God. I set myself against God as if I am wiser than He.

—Thomas Watson (1620-86)

An unthankful and complaining spirit is an abiding sin against God, and a cause of almost continual unhappiness; and yet how common such a spirit is.

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