

Pint Size Parables

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The Parable of the Workers

Read: Matthew 20:1-17

The message of the Parable of the Workers is four-fold:

- 1) God has the right as creator to do with his blessings as He pleases.
- 2) All are equal in the kingdom of God.
- 3) We should be joyful that others have access to heaven, even if they have lived a longer life of sin that we have.
- 4) Those who make themselves out to be the best will be the lowest, and the lowest will be promoted to being the best

We sometimes forget that God is the One with all the power. Being that He created us all, He has the right to do with us as He pleases (read Romans 9). This is a remarkable statement when you think about it! How often we try to forget that God, as Creator, can do as He pleases. Thankfully, He is a loving God, but He is still all-powerful and can bestow the gift of salvation on whomever He chooses.

Since believers in Christ all have the same gift of heaven to look forward to, we have no reason to be jealous of another believer's higher status since we are all equals in the kingdom of God. We all work for the same boss, for the same purpose, His glory, and should be excited about this bond that we have with each other. Many churches are torn apart by jealousy and a lack of teamwork. It is necessary for us, as Christians, to work together and to instruct and nurture each other in the truth of the Bible, and to work together to reach out to a world that is plagued with sin.

But some conversions may not seem fair. Sometimes we hear about people who have lived very sinful lifestyles who repent and accept Jesus Christ as their Lord on their deathbeds. We may be inclined to grow jealous of these people, since they have lived without conviction for so long (as if sin were something to be jealous of!). However, we must keep in mind that the assurance we have of heaven and the joy of being washed of our sins far outweighs any life of sin. Instead of being jealous, we should be thankful that our new brother or sister in Christ has become a part of the family.

Finally, as Jesus states at the end of these verses, the first will be last and the last will be first. Remember that at this time Jesus was talking to a group of men who thought they were better than everyone else. They thought they deserved praises and attention wherever they went. They thought that since they were parading their supposed righteousness around that they had favor with God. However, they didn't! Instead, they were actually fooling themselves while the gospel was being made clear to the humble.

Study Questions

- 1) How would you respond if someone worked less than you and made the same money?
- 2) How does it make you feel that people can make deathbed confessions and get into heaven when others spend their whole lives in service?
- 3) What would the advantage be of being a follower of Christ throughout life be instead of making a confession later in life?
- 4) Which worker is most like you?
- 5) What should Captain Cutthroat's response have been?
- 6) The manager has the right to do whatever he wanted with his money. In the same way, God can accept whomever He wants to. What does this say about God's power? About His love? Read Romans 7:13-24 and discuss God's sovereign choice.