



Stories Jesus Told - Day Workers

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: (Page 1)

TRADITIONAL DISCUSSION MODEL

What is the hardest job you ever had?

What movie you have seen has been the most influential in your life?

Read through Matt 20:1-16 and have the group make observations

How do you think this story would have struck Jesus' listeners?

Read the following similar statements made by Jesus: Matt 18:4; 23:12; Luke 14:11; 18:14; Phil 2:8; Mark 10:45. What do you think these statements have in common? What are the differences? In your opinion, what did Jesus mean when he said, "the first shall be last, and the last shall be first?"

Read Gal 3:1-3. What do you think Paul is addressing in these verses?

One of the points in the message was, *Instead of constantly trying to earn God's favor, we should accept his grace.* What are your thoughts on that? What concerns or questions do you have about that statement?

Another point in the message was, *Instead of constantly comparing situations, we should experience his grace.* What are your thoughts on that? What concerns or questions do you have about that statement?

In what ways are you challenged or struggle personally with *accepting* or *experiencing* God's grace?

How have those affected your daily walk as a Christian?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: (Page 2)

What questions remain for you about this parable?

CONTEMPLATIVE DISCUSSION MODEL:

What are you learning about God from this story?

What are you learning about yourself from the story?

What questions does this story bring up for you?

What is God doing in your heart lately?

What things do you feel are getting in the way from what God wants to do in you?

What is the biggest thing causing you concern these days? (something to pray about)



Leader's Guide: Day Workers Matt 20:1-16

Sometimes a story is the *only* way to understand. Stories break through in places where data, facts and creeds cannot. A story can help us understand things that cannot be understood by mere instruction - things like God, love, the world, or ourselves. We lose ourselves in stories, and every once in a while, we find ourselves – especially in *The Stories Jesus Told*.

OUTLINE & SCRIPTURES

Matt 19:30 But *many* who are first will be last, and *many* who are last will be first.

Matt 20:1 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire men to work in his vineyard. 2 He agreed to pay them a denarius for the day and sent them into his vineyard. 3 "About the third hour he went out and saw others standing in the market-place 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 the sixth hour and the ninth hour and did the same thing. 6 About the eleventh hour 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 the eleventh hour 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 men 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, 'Friend, I am not being unfair to you. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius?' 14 Take your pay and go. I want to give the man 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."

Matt 20:16 "So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

1. Instead of constantly trying to earn God's favor, we should *accept his grace*.

Matt 19:27 Peter answered him, "We have left everything to follow you! **What then will there be for us?"**

Two views on my standing with God:

a. **Performance Based: *My standing with God is based on the effort I put in.***

***If my standing with God is based on my performance
then I am the source of my salvation***



Gal 3:1 You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. 2 I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? 3 Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?

b. Grace Based: *My standing with God is based on the redemptive work of Jesus.*

2. Instead of constantly comparing situations, we should *experience* his grace.

- Comparing is fatiguing.
- Comparing is never based on accurate comparisons.
- Comparing will make you judgmental.

The first hired syndrome:

Matt 20:11 When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner. 12 'These men 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.'

Set free is not the same as living free!