

Matthew Chapter 20

- Very closely tied to chapter 19. The rich young ruler walked away not being willing to pay the price; and Peter's declaration that they had left all – having paid the price – what could they expect?
- God will not be a debtor to man, in fact Jesus explains that those who have forsaken all shall receive not only a hundred fold, but everlasting life.

Then in **V: 30** “But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.”

- This same statement is repeated in **Ch. 20: 16** “So the last shall be first, and the first last:...”
 - This opening parable is in between these book end statements, it is not about rewards or salvation. It is about our faithfulness with the opportunities we are given.
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V: 1 Kingdom parable – this somehow relates to the kingdom of heaven, eternity.

- August was the time of the grape harvest, and also the beginning of the rainy season. Threatening rain meant that more workers were quickly needed to save the crop.

V: 2 Agreement for a day's wage, enough for a man to buy bread for his family for one day.

- Possibly a “negotiated” settlement. Sometimes we limit God in saying this is what I want, as opposed God whatever it is that you want for me.
- God always blesses us more than we deserve.

Ephesians 3:20 “Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us”.

V: 3 3rd hour = 0900

V: 4 Trust / faith

V: 5 6th hour = 12:00 / noon. 9th hour = 1500 hrs.

- The grape harvest usually took place in August, which was also the beginning of the rainy season, which would ruin the grapes.
- As the harvest began, if the foreman saw storm clouds approaching, he would quickly go about hiring more help to get the harvest in before the storm.

- So too is our Foreman searching the highways and byways looking for those

V: 6 11th hour = 1700 hrs.

V: 7 “Because no man has hired us” – they haven’t had the opportunity up until this point.

- But now they do, and they take advantage of it.
- Again: “whatever is right, you’ll receive.” – faith / trust.

V: 8 Workers were to be paid daily.

Deuteronomy 24:15 “At his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and sitteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee.”

- When even was come, the end of the work day:

John 9:4 “I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.”

- The end of the work day is likened unto the end of our lives, or even the end of the age, there is an end.
- Some come early, some later, and still others near the end of their lives, or perhaps in the last days – yet they receive the same reward: Heaven, fellowship with our God.

V: 10 This is not about rewards or crowns in Heaven, it’s about something that all the servants of the Lord receive, whether they come early or late – salvation, and our stewardship with the opportunity we are given.

- Sometimes this is confused with “rewards” that individual servants shall receive.
- Each man will one day receive his own reward according to his own labor.

1 Corinthians 3:8 “... every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor.”

Revelation 22:12 “And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”

- There are different judgments: 1st the judgment of sin. For the believer that judgment took place at the cross of Jesus on Calvary. For the non-believer that judgment is still future.

- The 2nd judgment is for the works of the believers, called the Bema Seat.

1 Corinthians 3:9-15 “⁹For we are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building. ¹⁰According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. ¹¹For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹²Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; ¹³every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. ¹⁴If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. ¹⁵If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.”

- It’s important to understand the distinction.

V: 11-12 They received what they had bargained for, they received justice – but God’s grace is always better. In a sense the others received un-merited favor, receiving more than they deserved.

Don’t despise the prize!

- When it comes to salvation, there is no degree of saved.
- The newest convert is on the same level as the greatest of theologians.

V: 13 Didn’t we agree? An agreement is the same as a covenant.

- The first covenant was the Law.
- The later covenant, the newer covenant was in Jesus’ blood, He paid the price – we are the recipients of His bountiful grace – His un-merited favor, the gift that none of us deserve.
- Lesson in faith, trust, God’s grace. Contract / agreement Vs trust.

Ephesians 3:20 “Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us”.

- God is infinitely generous and gracious and will always give us better than we deserve, unless we limit Him or don’t trust in Him!
- We can’t judge or compare our work / performance to others – doesn’t mean anything in God’s economy.

V: 14 A manifestation of God's grace. A denarius was a days wage, the men who had worked only a part of the day has just as much need as those who worked all day. None was paid less than what they deserved, every one was paid according to their need.

- They were paid according to God's grace, which is better than justice.

Ephesians 2:8-9 “⁸For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

- Giving unto the last even as unto the first:

Luke 24:39-43 “³⁹And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on Him, saying, if thou be Christ, save thyself and us. ⁴⁰But the other answering rebuked him, saying, dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? ⁴¹And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. ⁴²and he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. ⁴³And Jesus said unto him, verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with Me in paradise.”

V: 15 The master responds with two questions, both of which are reasonable.

- We see here an attribute of God as this portrays His sovereignty – God can do whatever He wants.

Deuteronomy 32:39 “See now that I, even I, am He, and there is no god with Me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of My hand.”

- Evil / darkened eye.

Matthew 6:22-23 “²²The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. ²³But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!”

Proverbs 23:6-7 “⁶Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats: ⁷For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee.”

V: 16 Repeat of **Matthew 19:30** tying it up.

- We need to be careful not to misinterpret this parable thinking that we can just slack off in our relationship with the Lord, or that it doesn't really matter until the very end – then we can accept the Lord on our death bed.

- Not that death bed conversions aren't valid, I can't argue that, only God truly knows the heart.
 - It's just that for most people, by the time they get to their death bed, their hearts are already set, they have lived a life forming and shaping opinions and understandings of things whether true or false that aren't likely to change at that moment.
 - Only God really knows when our time is up, not many are told ahead of time, that it's time – and reasoning at that time, well I suppose that it's time to get right with God, and give my life to Him so Lord, forgive me of all my sins, and help me to serve you all my days...
 1. There is the assumption of notice; most people die un-expectedly – God doesn't always give notice.
 2. This all seems kind of iffy.
 3. The previous chapter describes those who willingly sacrifice all and are told that they will receive not only a hundred fold, but eternal life – I see more security in that.
 - There is another parable that is complimentary as well; the parable of the talents.
- Matthew 25:14-30** Master, gives 5 -2 -1 talents, each according to his ability.
- Last servant, hard man – reaping where you had not sown.
 - The master said that he'd pronounced his own judgment, and he was cast out into outer darkness.
 - Both of these parables present pretty much the same thing, they are about the faithfulness in the opportunities that we are given.
 - Some are given great opportunity, some are given few – were we faithful with what we were given?
 - Those who are faithful are all given the same reward.

Hebrews 11:6 “Without faith, it is impossible to please Him.”

V's: 1-16 Lessons learned:

1. Surprises – 1st is last and last is 1st.
2. Don't be jealous, covet or compare.
3. Use the opportunities you are given.
4. It's never too late to start!

5. Don't limit God!

- “Many are called but few are chosen” **John 3:16** **Romans 10:13**

Matthew 7:13-14 ¹³“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth unto destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. ¹⁴Because straight is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”

V: 17 Going up to Jerusalem, Vs going down to Jericho.

- It's always “up” to Jerusalem. **Luke 10:30**
- Jesus took the 12 aside, He didn't proclaim it to the multitudes, just to the 12 – this was an important point of instruction.

Isaiah 46:9-10 ⁹“Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me. ¹⁰Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.”

Peter would later declare:

Acts 2:23 “Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.”

Jesus is on His way to the cross:

Luke 9:51 “And it came to pass, when the time was come that He should be received up, He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem.”

- Warning
- Encouraging.
- Prophecy.

V: 18-19 3rd mention of His death and resurrection. (Matthew 16:21, 17:23)

- Not just speaking of His death in generalities, but specific information – recorded in prophecies long before it took place.
- Key phrase: “That it might be fulfilled.”

Betrayed:

Psalms 41:9 “Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.” (1200 BC)

Zechariah 11:12 “And I said unto them, if ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver.” (500 BC)

Condemned: falsely accused.

Psalm 35:11 “False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not.”

Mocked & scourged: Psalm 22:7

Psalm 22:7 “All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver Him: let Him deliver Him, seeing He delighted in Him.”

Isaiah 50:6 “I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.” (800 BC)

Crucified:

Psalm 22:16 “For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.”

Zechariah 12:10 “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.”

- Whenever Jesus spoke of the cross, He also talked about the resurrection. The two are inseparable, like “Grace & Peace”.
- This too is spoken of in prophecy:

Psalm 16:10 “For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.”

Psalm 49:15 “But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me.”

V: 19 The disciples kept missing the part about the resurrection, actually the whole thing.

Luke 18:34 “And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.”

- In context, the disciples are looking forward to their rewards in this life, they’re possibly thinking – we’re headed to Jerusalem to set up the kingdom, we’re going to have important roles and positions – and Jesus is saying, we’re headed to Jerusalem all right, but this is what is going to happen – it’s not what you think!
- When we give our testimony, if we talk about our life before the cross, we should follow Jesus’ example and speak of our resurrection afterward, how Jesus is living in us.

Galatians 2:20 “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me, and gave Himself for me.”

- There are those times when we may think that it’s hard to follow Jesus.
- It’s a lot tougher to not follow Jesus!
- How would we ever get through health issues, death, family issues, financial issues, getting fired or laid off, or being prosperous yet being empty on the inside – it is only through Jesus that we can deal with these things, without Him we would be consumed.

V: 20 The previous statement by Jesus is seemingly ignored as Salome, mother of James and John makes her request.

“Worshipping / kneeling”

- Worshipping: (G 4352) proskuneo, pros-koo-neh'-o; meaning to kiss, like a dog licking his master's hand; to fawn or crouch to, prostrate oneself in homage, do reverence to, adore: worship.
- Worshipping & desiring: motive?
- True worship is giving, not receiving.

John 4:24 “must worship in Spirit and in Truth!”

V: 21 Salome may have made this request, ignoring verses 18 & 19, assuming like the others that Jesus was going to Jerusalem to declare His kingdom and assume the throne.

V: 22 This cup = death, the baptism = the suffering.

“They said unto Him, we are able.”

- Sincere, but ignorant.

Romans 7:18 “In us dwells no good thing...”

- I wonder what they were thinking when they saw Him being scourged and later crucified.

Psalm 139:23-24 ²³Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: ²⁴and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

1. Jesus tells them - “You don’t know what you’re asking....”
2. “Are you able to drink this cup?”
3. “Are you able to receive this baptism?”
4. “Do you love Me?”

- So often Jesus would ask a piercing question; intended to bring us to an understanding of who we are and what we really are.

V: 23 “You shall indeed drink of my cup (death) and be baptized with My baptism (suffering).”

- 10 years later James was put to death by the Sword. **Acts 12:2**
- John would later be persecuted and exiled to Patmos.
- It would be said that James died a martyr’s death, and John lived a martyr’s life.
- Suffering with Christ also means rejoicing with Him later.

Romans 8:16-17 “¹⁶The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: ¹⁷and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.”

2 Timothy 2:12 “If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him: if we deny Him, He also will deny us:”

2 Timothy 3:12 “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”

Philippians 3:10 “That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death.”

V: 23b

- While salvation is a gift of Grace, not of works. Rewards in Heaven are in some way appointed, but not on a worldly standard.
- This points to the functional hierarchy within the Godhead, the Son being equal, yet submitted to the Father.

Philippians 2:8 “And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

V: 24 Because they wanted to sit there too.

James 3:13-4:3 [Turn to / read:](#)

Wisdom from above leads to peace, worldly wisdom brings strife and indignation.

- The disciples are much more fixed on their rewards or their own glory, than the suffering of their Lord.
- To me this is part of why communion is so important – proper focus.

V: 25-27 Again Jesus gathers His disciples together for instruction:

- Our motives are all important:

2 Corinthians 5:14 “For the love of Christ constraineth us...”

1 Peter 5:2-4 “²Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; nor for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; ³Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. ⁴And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”

- “Minister” = “servant” (G-1249) diakonos, dee-ak'-on-os; an attendant, a waiter (at table or in other menial duties); servant.

V: 27 “Servant” = “bond servant” / “slave” (G-1401) doulos, doo'-los

- God’s economy described, 3rd time.

V: 28 4th mention of His death. He was sent for that purpose.

1 John 4:10 “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”

Isaiah 53:10-12 “¹⁰Yet is pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. ¹¹He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities. ¹²Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong; because He hath poured out His soul unto death: and He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”

- Too many ministries want to be ministered to – please send your money – as opposed to ministering to. If ministry is to reflect Jesus, then we’ll minister to others.

V: 29 Jericho / location – checkpoint.

- Contradiction with **Mark 10:46**? (near to to Jericho) No.
- Jericho in Jesus’ time was 3 miles south of the Jericho of Joshua’s time. It became upper and lower Jericho. When leaving the one you could be entering the other. This information came via the result of recent archeological discoveries.

V: 30 One of the blind guys is named “blind Bartimaeus”. **Mark 10:46**

- “Cried out” – Greek = “crazo”, as a woman in childbirth, **Desperate, Unguarded, and Loud!**
- “Oh Lord” (Kyrios, supreme Lord, NT equivalent to Jehovah), combined with “Son of David” – exactly correct!

V: 31 The crowd then, just like today, discouraged those in need from calling on the name of Jesus.

V: 32 *“Jesus stood still”* – He didn’t go to them, they had to come to Jesus!

2 Corinthians 5:7 “For we walk by faith, not by sight.”

Matthew 5:3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for there is the kingdom of heaven.”

Matthew 6:8 “Be ye not therefore like unto them: For your father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him.”

V: 33 Open our eyes Lord, give us sight!

- They first saw Jesus with the eyes of their heart, then they saw Him face to face.

1 Corinthians 13:12 “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.”

Psalms 119: 18 “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.”

V: 34 Jesus has compassion! (feelings of deep sympathy, bowels yearn, accompanied with a desire to alleviate suffering) *Present tense.*

- His touch!
- Healed immediately!
- Amazing Grace!
- Jesus served & ministered to two blind beggars, and now to me!

Thank you Jesus!