

Sermon Outline

Matthew 19:30-20:16

- I.** Structure
 - A.** Framing the passage 19:30 & 20:16
 - “The first shall be last and the last shall be first”
 - “The last shall be first and the first last”
 - B.** Calling the workers
 - 1. The first laborers with discussion v. 1b-2
 - 2. The second laborers vv. 3-4
 - 3. The third and fourth laborers v. 5
 - 4. The fifth laborers with discussion vv. 6-7
 - C.** Rewarding the workers vv. 8-10
 - 1. Instructions to the steward v. 8
 - 2. The last hires paid v. 9
 - 3. The first hires paid v. 10
 - D.** Complaint and response vv. 11-15
 - 1. Accusation of unfair treatment vv. 11-12
 - 2. Declaration of sovereignty and justice vv. 13-15

- II.** The Kingdom of God illustrated in a business deal
 - A.** This is a **Kingdom parable** v. 1a
 - (Not a manual for doing business, but with business implications)
 - See 13:11; 24; 31; 33; 44; 45; 47; 52(?); 18:23.
 - See also 22:2; 25:1; 25:14(?).
 - B.** The central lesson continues the teaching on humility (ch. 18-19)
 - 1. The wage earners are instructed in humility vv. 13-14
 - “I have done you no wrong; you have no complaint.”
 - “I paid you what we both agreed to.”
 - 2. The employer’s generosity shows grace and humility v. 15a
 - “I have paid them as I pleased from what is mine.”
 - 3. The wage earners are warned against envy v. 15b
 - “Will you be envious because I am generous?”

- III.** How is the Kingdom of God like the elements in this story?
 - A.** Of those called into the Kingdom, no one loses out *cf.* 19:28-29
 - God’s rewards and gifts are his to give; they are not earned
 - See 18:1-5; 20:20-23; I Cor 12:4-11.
 - B.** Early entrance and late entrance are the same – all are blessed
 - Cf.* Lk 23:39-43. Consider Acts 1:15-26.
 - C.** The first who enter must be willing to be last (*cf.* 20:23-26)
 - This applies to all the Church, *esp.* elders I Pet 5:1-4.