



## World Christian Fellowship

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### Common Reward for All Matthew 19:30-20:1-16

**Matthew 19:30-20:1-16,** <sup>30</sup> *But many who are first will be last, and the last first.*

*“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. <sup>2</sup> Now when he had agreed with the labourers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. <sup>3</sup> And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, <sup>4</sup> and said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.’ So they went. <sup>5</sup> Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise. <sup>6</sup> And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, ‘Why have you been standing here idle all day?’ <sup>7</sup> They said to him, ‘Because no one hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive.’*

<sup>8</sup> *“So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, ‘Call the labourers and give them their wages, beginning with the last to the first.’ <sup>9</sup> And when those came who were hired about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius. <sup>10</sup> But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius. <sup>11</sup> And when they had received it, they complained*

*against the landowner,<sup>12</sup> saying, 'These last men have worked only one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.'<sup>13</sup> But he answered one of them and said, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius?'<sup>14</sup> Take what is yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man the same as to you.<sup>15</sup> Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?'<sup>16</sup> So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen."*

**What is the first thing you hear from children when one is being punished?**

This is not fair.

**When someone gets promoted or gets an increment in your company what do you hear?**

This is not fair.

**When you pray nothing happens when the person who sits next to you gets all the answers. What do you say?**

This is not fair.

**When you live a holy life and pray for your marriage someone gets married, or praying for a child someone gets delivered what do you say?**

This is not fair.

Ezekiel was one of the great prophets of the Old Testament. God spoke through Ezekiel to the people of Judah when they were in Babylon in exile.

There were three different times the people were deported from Israel **605, 597 and 586 B.C.**

Ezekiel was in the land of Babylon by the river of Chebar and he was instructing some of the Jews who had been deported into Babylon.

God speaking through Ezekiel that the rest of the people still in Judah would be devastated in a great invasion by the Babylonians yet to come, which would end in the destruction of Jerusalem, which did occur.

But Ezekiel always told the exiles that their condition was the result of their sin. So, through the Prophet Ezekiel, you read about the various sins, which brought about their punishment.

One of the sins that is stated several times in chapter 18.

One of the things that the people of Israel did was accuse God of inequities.

- They accused God of being unjust.
- They accused God of being unfair.

**Ezekiel 18:25**, *“Yet you say, ‘The way of the Lord is not fair.’ Hear now, O house of Israel, is it not My way which is fair, and your ways which are not fair?”*

God through the Prophet, defending His equity and justice. Certainly, this wasn't the first time that God was accused of being unfair by any means, the last time.

Constantly God is accused of being unfair. The Bible defends God against that several times with a familiar line, “God is no respecter of persons.” Repeated several places in Scripture.

But we often say that God is not inequitable in the way he deals with us.

There is a commonality of truth in the gospel.  
There is a commonality of repentance,  
There is a commonality of faith.  
There is a commonality of the application of justification and sanctification of the believer in salvation.  
There is also a commonality in the way God treats us.

## 1. Proverb.

**V 30**, *But many who are first will be last, and the last first.*

This verse should be in chapter 20 verse 1. The chapter division is not right.

This proverb again repeated in Verse 16 of chapter 20 as well. So, the message starts and ends with a proverb.

The parable is an illustration of this proverb.

This is a rather simple proverb.

Somebody might be confused by it.

The Lord used it, apparently, repeatedly.

He used it in another context in **Luke 13:30**.

So, it was something familiar that He used to express a spiritual point.

We could say that it is a riddle to some degree because if the story weren't here, we might struggle to understand it.

But if it were to be considered a riddle it would be a simple one. There is only one way to understand this proverb.

When I was young in my school days I used to run races. I ran the sprint events. I ran for 400 meters and or 880 meters. I used to run.

To figure out what is meant here, I just sort of look back to my athletic background. The last first and the first last.

The only way for the last to be first and the first to be last would be if they all cross the finish line in a dead heat.

Mean if you are last then you are last.

But if you are last and first, and if you are first and last, that means you end in a dead heat.

The only way to be first and last at the same time is to cross the finish line all together.

If there are ten people in a race, and they are all first, and they are all last, it's a dead heat.

The first are last, and the last are first because everybody finishes the same. Very simple.

“Everyone is the same.”

There is no inequality.

There are no first-place finishers, second-place finishers down the line.

The intent of the parable is to explain the proverb and the proverb is very simple and very straightforward.

Everyone will be treated the same.

Graphically, practically, powerfully, and unforgettably Jesus illustrates it with the parable.

## 2. Parable.

**V 1**, *“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard.*

The kingdom of heaven is the sphere of salvation.

We are talking about the sphere of salvation. This is the realm over which heaven rules. Heaven is just a synonym for God.

This is God’s kingdom, the kingdom over which God rules, which would be the believer.

Those who have been saved,

Those who have received the imputed righteousness of God by faith.

Talking about the Saints who are in the family of God.

The sphere of Salvation then can be likened to a landowner.

The Greek word is ***oikodespotēs***, somebody who rules over a house.

He owns it (**according to V 15**)

He has a vineyard on his estate.

He went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard.

This is not an imaginary scene.

To the people to whom Jesus told the story, it would be very vivid living in an agrarian society. It's a little bit different for us who live in the city. But this is practical for these people, a matter of daily routine.

The land of Palestine resources is its agricultural richness. There are basically two areas, topographically, that produce in the land of Israel. **The plains and the hills.**

The plains are basically the place where grain is grown, which has always been a major enterprise in Israel. The Plain of Esdraelon known as Jezreel Valley in the north the sweeping Jordan valley that goes all the way from the north all the way down to the south, which is as fertile as any place in the world.

Then over the coastal mountains which is known as the Sharon Valley, also a major area for growing green. Inside the coastal valley and then in the Eastern part of the country and the Northern part, you have the mountains.

There on the mountains, on the hillsides and the slopes are where the vineyards were grown.

They basically terraced off the mountains and the hillside, fertile soil of the hillside would produce wonderful crops of grapes. The steepness required terracing. It was a very great amount of effort to do that.

There was a sequence that they followed.

- In spring, they prepared the soil to be productive.
- In summer they pruned and tied for maximum effect.
- In September the harvest came.

It typically would rain coming later in the fall so they had to get the harvest in, or the grapes could be ruined by the rain.

So close on the heels of the harvest came the rain, which squeezed the harvest time down and required that they hire day laborers to do the harvest.

Recently we visited a winery in Madeira they had only 15 people working throughout the year. But last year the grapes came in a bumper crop, and they got to harvest within two days, so they had employed over 200 people to harvest in time and they just managed to get it before the rain came.

This is a landowner who was going out looking for day labourers, beyond his normal staff of servants who cared for everything.

He had to have a very large crew to handle this.

This is the time of harvest so he went out to the city square, the marketplace of the city where day labourers would wait around waiting to be hired.

Even today we have Victoria road **Wicks** where people wait to be hired in the morning. Times we find around 50 to 60 people waiting in the morning.

These labours work and so they can earn some money to feed themselves and their families. It's a similar situation in ancient times.

So, he went into the marketplace where the day labourers would be waiting to be hired. Anybody who was available would show up because they wanted to work.

This was a prime time for work.

The day was from **6:00 AM to 6:00 PM. It was 12-hour** workday, and it was a 6-day workweek, A little different than we have today.

So, the landowner went into town to hire labourers.

**V 2**, *Now when he had agreed with the labourers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard.*

The time would have been about **5:00 am** in the morning when he left, went into town to get them time to be hired and get back out there at 6.00 so they could do a full day's work.

He agreed with them for a denarius for the day and sent them into the vineyard. That was a very good wage. That was what a Roman soldier wage in a day. That was what an employed person made.

These were hired labourers.

They were the lowest class of workers.

They were unskilled and they were only employed a day at a time.

Life for them was a bit unstable and they lived at a certain level of desperation. If they didn't work, they didn't eat and neither did their families.

Slaves and servants typically had steady jobs. Even if they were poor to some degree, they knew where they were going to sleep and they knew they were going to have enough food.

They shared the benefits of the family. But day labourers were never certain as to whether they were going to have enough for the day. Their pay tended to be low, much lower than this offering by this generous landowner.

God was concerned about these kinds of people.

Every society has them.

Jesus said, *“The poor you will have with you.”*

But God wanted them to be cared for appropriately.

**Leviticus 19:13**, *‘You shall not cheat your neighbour, nor rob him. The wages of him who is hired shall not remain with you all night until morning.*

If a man worked during the day, you paid him at the end of the day because he had to have the pay to subsist and care for his family.

**Deuteronomy 24:15**, *Each day you shall give him his wages, and not let the sun go down on it, for he is poor and has set his heart on it; lest he cry out against you to the Lord, and it be sin to you.*

God may punish you for the sin of holding back wages for someone who works for you and depends upon being paid at the end of the day he worked.

So, this parable is a vivid story, fits into the Jewish context. These workers who would go out and work the day to get the pay they needed to subsist.

He agreed for a denarius.

A very good wage.

They agreed on its fairness.

He went out about the third hour realizing he needed a greater crew.

*V 3, And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace,*

He went back at **9:00 AM** in the morning.

Saw others standing idle in the marketplace.

To those he said to them you, too, go into the vineyard and whatever is right I will give you.

*V 4, and said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' So they went.*

They didn't debate.

They didn't have a negotiating position.

The day was fast going by, and they were losing money every hour. So, they didn't say anything about wages.

They probably knew him to be a fair man and were aware of what he had offered the others and were glad to get any part of that and went out to work.

*V 5, Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise.*

He went out again.

At the sixth hour **12.00** in the afternoon.

At the ninth hour **3.00 pm** in the afternoon.

**V 6**, *And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, 'Why have you been standing here idle all day?'*

At eleventh hour **5.00 pm** in the evening.

There was no one to take them to work.

They almost wasted waiting for work but there was no one to hire them.

**V 7**, *They said to him, 'Because no one hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive.'*

The landowner says go to my vineyard and work.

They went out to work for just a portion of that final hour.

All through the day he sent people into this vineyard with only the pledge that he would do what was right. At the end of the day.

**V 8**, *"So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, 'Call the labourers and give them their wages, beginning with the last to the first.*

This was a dutiful Jew in the story who did exactly what the Old Testament law required.

He paid them at the end of the day of their work.

He said to his foreman, you take charge of paying them their wages and start with the last group. This is to illustrate a point.

*V 9, And when those came who were hired about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius.*

When those hired about the eleventh hour came, each one received a denarius. This must have been a shock to them.

**What mercy?**

**What graciousness?**

**What kindness?**

**What generosity?**

To receive a denarius.

This is what exactly what they needed. They didn't need any less than that! They needed that amount because a denarius would be enough to support your family for a day.

That's what they needed and that's what they received, a whole day's wage.

**Why?**

**Did they earn it?**

No, because they needed it.

**V 10**, *But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius.*

Finally, the one who came first came at last.  
They also received a denarius.

This is what they needed and that is what had been promised to them.

**V 11**, *And when they had received it, they complained against the landowner,*

*“They grumbled at the landowner.”*

Obviously, their imagination was elevated when they saw these people who worked one hour get a denarius. They might have assumed they were going to get 12 days wages, so they got excited about it.

They couldn't hide their disappointment when they got to the line and they received exactly what everybody else got.

All along the way they had been cherishing secretly. The silent expectation that they were going to get more than everybody else because they worked harder.

Complaining.

They get pretty melancholy about it.

**V 12**, saying, *‘These last men have worked only one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.’*

We have been here with our parched lips and our sun beaten bodies. We have been going for 12 hours. The evenings cool down in Israel.

These people come and they work 1 hour in the cooler twilight. It seems insignificant compared to 12 hot, sweaty hours in the scorching, blazing September sun of Israel.

**How can they get what we get?**

**V 13**, *But he answered one of them and said, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius?’*

*“Friend,”* – now this word in Greek **hetairoi** is usually a rebuking term.

Probably if we were going to use an English equivalent it would be like buddy.

**Have I been faithful to what I pledged?**

**Did I give you what you needed?**

Yes.

The only issue was an evil heart of competition here.  
The only issue was jealousy.

**V 14,** *Take what is yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man the same as to you.*

**V 15,** *Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?'*

**Was this illegal?**

**Was it unjust?**

**Was it unfair?**

**Was it without mercy?**

No.

They all had the same need.

A denarius would provide what they needed for themselves and their families, generously.

They all had the same need, and he met the need they had.

Whether they worked a brief time or a long time or anything in between they all had the same need and he met it with generosity.

He had every right to do it because what he gave them belonged to him.

**Are we to assume that his compassion and kindness to others somehow is wrong toward you?**

That is the question.

Just that you are jealous!

### **3. Point.**

**What is the point here?**

The point is that in the end everybody got the same.

This is what the proverb said.

In the end, everybody got the same. This is not an allegory with secret meanings. This is just an illustration.

People coming into a vineyard, working different hours, putting out different effort, in the end, all receive the same result.

A simple illustration.

Makes one point. ***Everybody received the same.***

**The question is, what is the same?**

**What are we talking about here?**

**The householder is God.**

Obviously, God is the one who is the landowner.

**The vineyard is His kingdom.**

**V 1,** *“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard.*

The kingdom of heaven. in the sphere of salvation ruled by God.  
**The laborers are those who are in His kingdom.**

**The day of work is time.**

Some have been in His kingdom a long time, and some have been in His kingdom a very brief time.

**The evening is an eternity when we receive our reward.**

The steward or the foreman corresponds to Jesus Christ who gives out those rewards.

**What is the wage?**

**What is the denarius?**

Eternal life!

It is life in the kingdom of God. Heavenly immortality and the glory of heaven.

Jesus is saying that the eternal benefits of the kingdom of God are the same for all who are subject to the rule of the king whenever and however may be their place or time of service.

Very encouraging thing.

Life may be inequitable, but God isn't, and eternity won't be either.

Every believer, no matter when converted or what manner of service or for how long, will receive the crown which is eternal life.

**James 1:12**, *Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.*

**2 Timothy 4:8**, *Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.*

How wonderful it is to realize that the same glorious, eternal life will be given to the penitent thief as was given to the faithful apostles.

The same eternal life will be given to that sinner who near death turns from a life of wickedness to embrace Christ as is given to that missionary who spent 50 years in a jungle in deprivation and difficult labor.

The person who receives Christ on a deathbed after a life of wickedness will receive the same glorious eternity as one who all his life served Christ and died a martyr.

A tremendous truth.

What Jesus is saying is this, not only do we come as common sinners, depraved, headed for Hell, condemned by the law of God which we have violated. Not only do we come as sinners recognizing our sin, coming to a common attitude of repentance and putting our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and standing at the foot of the cross.

But we receive the common eternal life.

We receive the same eternal life that everybody else receives.

- Some people are going to spend decades of their life, some people will spend a half century of their life in the service of the King.
- Some people have spent their lives in very difficult, challenging, sacrificial kinds of service to Christ.
- Some people have trekked through jungles, swamps, and fought against beasts in the history of the church.
- Some have been martyred. Some today are being martyred for their faith in Christ.
- Some pay a great price.
- Some work diligently to the point of sweat and exhaustion in the service of the King.

Others seem to come into the kingdom at the very last hour, the last moment, the last few minutes, get saved on their deathbed like the thief on the cross and enter into the kingdom.

## **Do they all receive the same eternal life?**

Yes, yes.

- No matter how long the service,
- No matter how short the service,
- No matter how hard the effort was,
- No matter how easy the effort might have been,

We will all receive the same reward because we all need eternal life.

Jesus is saying, the benefits of the kingdom, the ultimate eternal benefits of the kingdom are the same for everybody who comes into the service to the King.

Everybody who comes into the kingdom, who comes into the vineyard, whatever, whenever and however may be their place and time of service.

The same glorious eternal life will belong to us all. Whether you are the thief on the cross or the martyr to apostle Paul, you will receive the same eternal life.

When you read that story, you understand the point.

But do you ever ask the question, “Why here, why then, why in this place does Jesus tell this?”

Go back into **Matthew chapter 19** and it becomes clear.

Jesus is still trying to educate His hardheaded disciples.  
The Rich young ruler.

**V 16, *Now behold, one came and said to Him, “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?”***

He comes and he wants to know the way to eternal life.

**How do I get eternal life?**

**How do I get into the eternal kingdom?**

Jesus leads him through a thinking process, in which He asked him about sin.

The young ruler won't admit any sin. He has got a problem right there that keeps him out of the kingdom because he won't acknowledge his sin.

Jesus wants to test and see if he will not only repent of his sin but if he will submit to His lordship.

Jesus tells him to take everything you have and sell it and give it to the poor and then follow me.

He walked away sadly!

- One, he wouldn't admit his sin,
- Two, he wasn't about to obey Christ.

If you won't admit your sin and submit to Christ, you can't get in the kingdom.

Coming to the kingdom is to be confessing your sin and embracing Christ as Lord and Saviour.

He wouldn't do either. Bottom line is that he did not give up anything.

**V 27**, *Then Peter answered and said to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?"*

Peter articulated things that they were all thinking.

Peter was kind of the spokesman for everybody.

Peter answered said to Jesus' sense of elevation and pride.

Peter was saying to Jesus that we are not like that rich young ruler.

We left everything.

Peter, James, John, Andrew had a fishing business operated out of Capernaum.

Matthew could have said, I had a very lucrative tax business tax collectors made a lot of money, and we left it all to follow you.

We dumped our whole career.

We set our business aside.

We put everything on hold, and we have followed you.

This hasn't been easy. Lots of persecution, hostility, animosity, and hatred.

We don't make any wages.

We subsist on whatever food people give us or whatever we can buy out of the meager treasury which our friend Judas holds. This is not exactly high living.

We have made some immense sacrifices.

**So, what is in it for us?**

The assumption is this. These are the complaining 12-hour workers, these disciples.

We got in at the start of this ministry and we have been banging our heads against the wall through all this difficulty. We have been with you everywhere and feeling all this hostility and barely able to survive.

We have said goodbye to everything that shaped and formed our lives in the past.

We have given up everything.

**What are we going to get out of this?**

Jesus' response is this that you are going to get exactly what everybody else gets.

No more and no less.

To show you how deeply ingrained this idea of superiority was in their minds. They thought that when they got into the kingdom and going to be two levels.

There are people who think that today and its bad theology. They thought when they got into heaven there was going to be some superior level of elevation for them.

Later in **chapter 20, James and John** they have the cheek to send their mother to Jesus and ask if they could sit at His right and left hand in the kingdom.

Their pride was all caught up in this. They must have had a little discussion among themselves saying we are going through an awful lot. We have made all these sacrifices and suffered all this. No idea how this is going to end.

Jesus has already been talking about this especially dying to self.

There ought to be some special thing for us. We are the ones who have borne the burden in the heat of the day. We have been in the scorching sun through the whole deal.

Jesus' response is He tells them, there is going to be a time in the millennial kingdom when they will be twelve thrones over the twelve tribes of Israel. You will sit in a place of authority. There will be a special opportunity of service for you.

But the bottom line is you are going to receive the same thing that everybody else in my kingdom gets, and that is eternal life.

That is the whole point.

What an incredible, wonderful promise.

Selfish, confused, envious, jealous perceptions on the heart of the apostles were intolerable to our Lord.

Jesus says to them you are going to have the wonderful opportunity to have a leadership in the kingdom.

**V 28-29**, *So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. <sup>29</sup> And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.*

But in the end, it's just going to be all equal.

First or last, last or first. Bottom line, eternal life is the same for all of us.

We will all live in the Father's house.

**John 14:2**, *In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.*

We will all be part of the bride for the bridegroom.

We will all inherit the whole inheritance.

There is, laid up for us, an inheritance, undefiled, incorruptible, it never fades.

- We will all be made like Jesus Christ.
- We will all be conformed to the image of God's Son.
- We will all be a part of that hallelujah chorus, forever praising God and saying, "Worthy is the lamb."
- We all come to the foot of the cross. All as condemned sinners.
- We all come needing to repent of sin and embrace the gospel by faith.
- We all receive the same eternal life, whether you came to Christ just hours before you died or whether you knew Him for 80 years.

**Isn't there inequity?**

No, because we all have the same need and God's generosity will give us the same great blessing.

It is all grace!

The principle is this; ***All eternal reward is by Grace.***

Works, length of service, tasks, duties done, will show up in some measure of eternal blessing.

The epistles talk about rewards. But they are not what distinguishes or determines eternal life.

All eternal reward, in the sense of eternal life, is by Grace.

The length and difficulty of service is not a factor. Sovereign Grace.

- ✓ God's incredible mercy is not to be measured by our understanding of human equity.
- ✓ God graciously gives to all undeserving sinners, the same eternal life.

So instead of exalting yourself and imagining that you are some great people, like the disciples did, who is going to get some great place in the glory to come, humble yourself, be thankful that God, in His magnanimity, has chosen to give us all the same eternal life.

We all receive the same eternal life for which we will spend forever praising and thanking God. Different as we are, as diverse as our background and our paths to the truth have been, we come here, and we share this income.

The epistles deal with rewards for our service in the millennium. But this is not about that. It's not about the character of heavenly service.

This is about the reality of eternal life.

Rewards are discussed later, but they are not based on the time of service, and they are not based on the difficulty of service but on the basis of the motive.

Our Lord had answered Peter how they will be blessed in this life, and they will inherit eternal life.

But be careful you don't get envious of somebody else.

You don't think you deserve more.

Because the last are going to be first, and the first are going to be last, which means all are equal.

Absolute equality. We all receive eternal life.

Tax gatherers and harlots who come in at the end of their life are going to stand with missionaries and martyrs who gave their all.

All believers will be equally given the blessedness of glory.

- We all will live in the Father's house nobody's going to be down the street.
- We all will be part of the bride adorned for the Bridegroom.
- We will all become like Christ.

- We will all live forever in the celestial city.
- We all will manifest the glory of God.

#### **4. Principles.**

##### **i) God initiates salvation sovereignly.**

In the whole parable the landowner came into the marketplace of man and selected those He wanted to come and serve in His kingdom.

*John 15:16, You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.*

God picks who He wants.

##### **ii) God establishes the terms.**

God set the terms, and they agreed, quite unlike the rich young ruler.

They came on His terms. The terms of the gospel have been established.

- ✓ Jesus set them.
- ✓ God set them.

You come on those terms.

**iii) God is continually calling people into his kingdom.**

There was a beginning when He started calling people to work in His kingdom, and there will be an end.

The work is continuous.

The work of redemption goes on and on.

**John 5:17**, *But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working."*

It goes on. He is continually doing, going into the marketplace of humanity and selecting those He wants to come and work.

**iv) God redeems those who are willing.**

The other side of His sovereign choice.

- They were available.
- They were willing.
- They knew they were dependent.
- They knew they had nothing apart from this.
- They were not rich.
- They were not self-sufficient.
- They were not satisfied.
- They were the poor.
- They were meek.
- They were without resources.

They were willing to take whatever the Master would give.

**v) God is compassionate.**

God is particularly compassionate to those who have no resources.

When you think about the fact that there are not many noble and not many mighty, God could have sovereignly done anything He wanted.

God has this unusual compassion for those in deep need.

**Do you think the landowner who owns this place does not know how many people it takes to harvest?**

**Why does he have to keep coming back?**

Surely, he should know the size of the land and he needs so many people working so many hours to pick so many grapes.

**Why does he keep coming back?**

The only answer to that is that he represents God.

He is coming back not because he needs more workers, but because he has such compassion.

**vi) All are workers.**

All who came into the vineyard worked.

There were no Managers, supervisors etc.  
No freeloaders.

There weren't two people working and four supervising.

### **What is the work?**

Evangelism. Harvest.

The only work we do here is harvest.

### **What couldn't we do in heaven?**

- We could praise in heaven,
- We could worship in heaven,
- We could live those holy lives in heaven,
- We could fellowship.
- We all will be perfect.
- We won't have to confront anything.
- We will just enjoy everything.

But the work is evangelism and harvest.

Everybody does it.

Everybody is called to work.

We don't all work as well as we should, but the work is there.

If we are in the kingdom then we are at work.

**vii) God gives all of us more than we deserve.**

God gives all of us more than we deserve.

The people who worked 12 hours didn't deserve a denarius. It was very generous. The rest didn't deserve it either.

Everybody is in the same boat. Nobody deserved it.

The people that worked one hour didn't deserve it, and neither did the people that worked 12. There is no argument here about the generosity of this landowner.

God gives us more than we deserve.

**If you gave the Lord 60 years of service, would you deserve heaven?**

You wouldn't deserve it any more than the man who gave Him 15 minutes of service.

**viii) Right attitude.**

Humility and unworthiness are the only right attitude.

There is no place for envy.

There is no place for jealousy.

It is ludicrous to say, "I hope when I get to heaven, I am going to get more than you."

But that's what the disciples were doing.

No place for that.

No room for us to act the part of the older brother in the story of the prodigal in **Luke 15**.

His brother comes home from a life of sin and repents. The father throws a feast.

**What was the older brother's attitude?**

He was angry and jealous.

**What right did he have to be jealous?**

None.

The father gave to the prodigal the other brother already had. He just gave one feast to the prodigal. The other brother ate like that every day.

There is no place for jealousy and envy.

There is only a place for humility that recognizes our absolute unworthiness.

**ix) Eternal reward is by grace.**

Length of service, difficulty of service has no factor.

Works are irrelevant in the matter of eternal life.

**What about my crowns?**

You will get a crown which is life.

You will get a crown which is righteousness.  
You will get a crown which is incorruptible.

We all get them.

### **What about my rewards?**

When you have got them all then along with 24 elders we are going to throw them at the feet of Jesus in worship.

### **What grace bestowed upon us?**

We should still be down in the marketplace.  
We are unskilled, incompetent, the lowest on the social ladder.  
God, in His mercy, comes into the marketplace and gives us all what we don't deserve.

Someday when we all get the glory, we will all be made like Christ.

We will all inherit eternal life. We all will receive the same wonderful, generous gift.

God's ways are equal.  
God's great grace on display.