

## Small Group Discussion Guide

January 27 & 28, 2018

*Parables: What Jesus Really Thinks*

“Workers in the Vineyard: Five O’clock People”

Talk by Scott Sinner

### Welcome

- Do you see our culture as performance based? Discuss areas where this is prevalent.
- Do you see God as performance based?

### Word

Read Matthew 20:1-16. Recap the story line of this parable.

1. At the end of the day, what was each worker paid?
2. Discuss your feelings about the owner’s payment plan.
  - a. With which group do you most closely relate—the early workers or the late ones?
  - b. Do you think the owner’s payment plan was appropriate? Discuss.
3. If you were to acknowledge your emotional response to this parable, would you be comfortable or uncomfortable? Why?
4. Plot Twist Surprise: This story is **not** about the workers, it is about the owner! The owner in this story illustrates truths about God.
  - a. If God is not performance based, what is the operating system for His Kingdom?
  - b. If we don’t get what we deserve, who paid the price for us?

### Weave

- This week, consider this quote from Phillip Yancey. *“...many Christians who study this parable identify with the employees who put in a full day’s work, rather than the add-ons at the end of the day. We like to think of ourselves as responsible workers, and the employer’s strange behavior baffles us as it did the original hearers. We risk missing the story’s point: that God dispenses gifts, not wages. None of us gets paid according to merit, for none of us comes close to satisfying God’s requirements for a perfect life.”*
- Take some time this week to focus on God. Thank Him that He has called you to relationship, not to the performance-based demands of religion.