



39: **The Humble Servant** (Mt 19:27-20:28)

Rather than being prideful and puffed up, followers of Jesus are to follow His example of being the Humble Servant. We are to be grateful for God's grace and extend that grace to others, being more concerned about honoring Jesus & treating others with value than being focused on the trophies we receive.

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teachingnotes

Is It Worth It?

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

Peter and the other apostles didn't leave their families or homes for long. In fact, Peter's house was in the town of Capernaum, the place Jesus and his disciples made their home base while ministering around Galilee. Paul writes:

1 Corinthians 9:5 (NIV) Don't we have the right to take a believing wife along with us, as do the other apostles and the Lord's brothers and Cephas [Peter]?

They sacrificed a lot to follow Jesus. Peter & the others left their jobs - no longer working as fishermen or a tax collector. They also left their homes and families for periods of time to travel with Jesus beyond their homes. Ultimately, they gave their lives to follow Jesus (several were killed & ALL were severely persecuted).

Eternal Reward

Matthew 19:28-29 (NIV) Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, **when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne**, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields **for my sake** will **receive a hundred times as much** and **will inherit eternal life**."

At the renewal of all things, when the earth is renewed and **Jesus** finally takes His **throne** as king of all kings on the earth, the 12 apostles will rule with him - **judging the twelve tribes of Israel**. What an incredible honor & responsibility. The 12 apostles of Jesus (*minus Judas* - adding Matthias - Acts 1:23-26) will rule over the people of Israel!

Following Jesus *IS* costly.

- Some have left their houses & families to share the Gospel in other nations for long periods of time.
- Others have left their relatives because their families forced them to decide between Jesus or them - and they chose Jesus.
- Others left the financial security of what their **fields** produce in order to plant and harvest spiritual fruit that would never spoil. These folks chose **treasure in heaven** (Mt 19:21) over treasure on earth.
- While those people might have lost much on this side of eternity, they **will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life**.

Mark & Luke both note that Jesus mentioned **a hundred times as much** being "in this present age" (Mk 10:29-30 & Lk 18:29-30) AND the life to come.

God has put spiritual fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters in your lives, even if your blood relatives have pushed you away. And those who give & go to minister to others often find that THEY have been the ones most ministered to!

While we *can & should* look forward to the future blessings, our focus shouldn't be on the Worker's WAGES but on the Master's MERCY. It's not about how much we've EARNED but **how much we've been GIVEN!**

The Humble Servant appreciates & extends the Master's Mercy to Others.

A Surprise Ending

Matthew 19:30- 20:16 (NIV) But many who are first will be last, and **many who are last will be first**.

For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. He agreed to pay them **a denarius for the day** and sent them into his vineyard.

About nine in the morning he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. He told them, "You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will **pay you whatever is right**." So they went.

He went out again about noon and about three in the afternoon and did the same thing. About five in the afternoon he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, "Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?" "Because no one has hired us," they answered. He said to them, "You also go and work in my vineyard."

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." The workers who were hired about five in the afternoon came and each **received a denarius**. So when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius. When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner. "These 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."

But he answered one of them, "I am not being unfair to you, friend. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius? Take your pay and go. I want to give the one who was hired last the same as I gave you. Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because **I am generous**?" So **the last will be first**, and the first will be last.

A **denarius** was a day's wage. For some of the later workers, no particular wage is agreed upon. The landowner simply says he will **pay** them **whatever is right**.

While we can & should look forward to the future blessings, our focus shouldn't be on the Worker's WAGES but on *the Master's MERCY*. It's not about how much we've EARNED but **how much we've been GIVEN!** In turn...

The Humble Servant appreciates & extends the Master's Mercy to Others.

We should be GRATEFUL that our King is so generous...to US and OTHERS!

✗ If we wanted what was fair, then we would be judged guilty for our sins.

✓ But if we recognize that we don't deserve God's grace, then we should be grateful when others receive His grace too - even when we have walked with Jesus for years and then turn to Him later in life.

2 Reasons Why Waiting to follow Jesus is Unwise

1. You don't know when 1) you are going to die or 2) Jesus is going to return. *Don't delay*.
2. You will miss out on God's Presence and peace and deep relationships with Christian brothers & sisters, that you could have know much sooner.

Turning Toward Jerusalem to Sacrifice Himself

Matthew 20:17-19 (NIV) Now Jesus was going up to Jerusalem. On the way, he took the Twelve aside and said to them, "We are going up to **Jerusalem**, and the **Son of Man** will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will **condemn him to death** and will hand Him over to the Gentiles to be **mocked** and **flogged** and **crucified**. **On the third day He will be raised to life!**"

What a humbling moment that must have been, as Jesus foretold of His coming torture and death, that included Jewish leaders (chief priests & teachers of the law) and pagan **Gentiles**. And still, the disciples really didn't understand what Jesus was talking about (Lk 18:34).

🌟 **John MacArthur** "They were still thinking **lion**, but He was thinking **Lamb**. They were thinking **kingdom**, but He was thinking **sacrifice**. They were thinking **glory**, but He was thinking **suffering and death**."¹

'Humble Servants' Jockey for Position?

Matthew 20:20-21 (NIV) Then **the mother of Zebedee's sons** came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down, asked a favor of Him. "What is it you want?" he asked. She said, "Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left **in your kingdom**."

James & John's mother (likely **Salome**, one of the women who helped care for Jesus and his disciples on their journeys - Mk 15:40-41) was at the crucifixion & tomb, **with Jesus' mother Mary**...possibly even **her sister** (Mt 27:56, Jn 19:25, Mk 16:1). James & John were evidently right there, sending Momma to ask Jesus this question. When Jesus' kingdom was fulfilled, these men wanted a place of authority, even above all the other apostles. Did they not get the point of *the last shall be first?*

¹ John F. MacArthur Jr., Matthew, vol. 3, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1985), 223.

Drink From My Cup?

Matthew 20:22-23 (NIV) "You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said to them. "Can you drink **the cup I am going to drink**?" "We can," they answered. Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink from my cup, but to sit at My right or left is not for Me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by My Father."

When Jesus asks about the **cup** He is about to **drink**, they feel confident that they can drink from it too. Maybe they were thinking not only of the struggle of the fight, but the glory of the victory. But Jesus was about to drink from **the cup** of suffering, the same **cup** who would ask the Father to remove when He was praying in Gethsemane (Mt 26:39-42).

You will indeed drink from my cup. In fact, **James** was the 1st of the apostles to be killed for his faith in Jesus - beheaded by King Herod - likely in Jerusalem (**Acts 12:2**). And **John** faced tremendous persecution into old age. Again, it is unlikely that they were thinking about persecution and death, as they really didn't understand what was about to happen in Jerusalem.

Humble Servants: Last to First

Matthew 20:24-28 (NIV) When the ten heard about this, they were indignant with the two brothers. Jesus called them together and said, "You know that **the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them**, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

In the Roman world filled with paganism, idolatry, & sin, *the one who SERVES NO ONE is the greatest* - served by others. **Caesar** was NOT a servant, he is the one who was served. He and other rulers under him could demand those under them to do whatever they wanted. But disciples of Jesus are to follow the lead of **The Humble Servant** - Jesus, who came to **serve, to give his life as a ransom for many**.

🔍 The Greek term for **ransom** would cause the 1st century audience to think of the price paid to give a slave his freedom. **The KING became a servant**, to set slaves free, so that they would freely serve to set other slaves free.

✓ We have been bought at a PRICE! (1 Cor 6:20), and **we need to be...Humble servants who appreciate & extend the Master's Mercy to Others**.

❓ **Have YOU experienced the Master's Mercy?** Do you KNOW that you KNOW that you're forgiven?

❓ **Are YOU extending the Master's Mercy to others?** Treat people with value, the same kind of value YOU want to be treated with. Then tell them WHY!

"You are valuable, made in the image of God. I'm a follower of Jesus, and I'd love to tell you of how generous He has been to forgive my sins, and how you can know Him too!"

heretoserveyou

Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

* Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Christy** (850-673-9764), **Caleb** (864-315-8015), **Gary** (850-673-2507), **Betty** (850-973-3266), or another follower of Jesus soon!

* Or call our **deacons & wives: Alan & Christy Androski** (850-464-1428), **Steve & Debbie Bass** (850-673-7952), **Noel & Patricia Barnes** (813-767-2881), **Tim & Joni Hughey** (850-464-1156), **Rob & Rebecca Leatherberry** (229-232-1087), or **Mark & Dot Mancil** (850-253-5405).

discussionquestions

Take some time to discuss these questions with your family, friends, or group.

1. **Read Matthew 19:27-29.** Name some of the sacrifices followers of Jesus have made in the past & continue to make in the present, along with benefits in this life & the life to come. What are some blessings you experience on this side of eternity?
2. **Read Matthew 19:30-20:16.** What's the point Jesus is making with this story? While there are different rewards/responsibilities in eternity (e.g. 12 apostles judging 12 tribes of Israel), how does appreciating the gift of eternal life help us focus on the Master's Mercy, and keep us from competing for the worker's wages?
3. While some people wait to trust Jesus just before death and *are* given eternal life (e.g. criminal on cross), what is the danger of waiting too long vs. the blessings of following Jesus for a long time?
4. **Read Matthew 20:17-28.** As we now make the turn toward Jerusalem in the Gospel of Matthew, what does Jesus know He's walking into? Why is Jesus willing to go through this kind of torturous death?
5. **Read Philippians 2:1-8.** What are WE to learn and apply from the example of **The Humble Servant**?
6. **Today's BIG TRUTH: The Humble Servant Appreciates & Extends the Master's Mercy to Others.** Do you *KNOW* that you *KNOW* that you're *forgiven*? Who are *YOU* extending the Master's Mercy to OR who do you need to share Jesus with?
7. Share any 'aha' moments in today's study - what you learned or how you were challenged. What's God want *YOU* to do with what we studied today?
8. Share prayer needs and pray for one another.