

Advent Parables

Workers in the Vineyard

TALK IT OVER

Key Scripture

8 And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.' 9 And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. 10 Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. 11 And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, 12 saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' 13 But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? 14 Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. 15 Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?' 16 So the last will be first, and the first last." – Matthew 20:8-16 (ESV)

29 but he answered his father, 'Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. 30 But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!' 31 And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. 32 It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.'" – Luke 15:27-32 (ESV)

"39 One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" 40 But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? 41 And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." 42 And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." 43 And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise." - Luke 23:39-43 (ESV)

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Start Talking: Find a conversation starter for your group. (15 Min)

- How many times this week have you said or thought, "That's not fair."
- How or what would you do to make it more fair if you could?

Head: Start Thinking. Ask a question to get your group thinking. (10 Min)

- Read Matthew 20:1-16. Do you agree or disagree that what Jesus did isn't fair?
- Read Matthew 20:1-16. Why does the landowner have the right to do what he wants with his money? How is this sort of fairness different from what we are used to?
- Read Matthew 20:1-16. How does this parable tell us about the redemptive story of the coming of Christ? What does this tell us about the Kingdom of God?

Heart: Start Sharing. Choose a question to create openness. (10 Min)

- Matthew 20 isn't the only time Jesus showed unfair grace. Read Luke 15:11-32 and 23:39-43. God's gift of Jesus and Salvation is given to anyone who will receive it no matter how much they have done or how long they have believed. Is this hard to accept?
- What gifts has God given you? What has He given You that is more than You deserve?
- How can gratefulness help you when times are hard? When the Christmas season might not feel the same this year?

Hands: Start Doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week. (10 Min)

- Watch the intro video at adventconspiracy.org
- Download or buy an advent calendar to help your household stay focused on the big gift we're celebrating this season.
- How can you be generous this Advent season to someone who doesn't deserve it? Make a plan to do it.

Start Praying. Be bold and pray with power. (15 Min)

- For suggestions on structuring prayer time, see the *Group Prayer Ideas* page in this packet.

Trios: Split into same-gender groups of three. (15 Min)

1. What's a passage of scripture that has impacted you this week? Read it to the group and explain why.
2. Is there anything God is leading you to repent of?
3. How's your weekly 3-2-1 challenge going? (*3 Conversations with New People, Learn 2 Names, Make 1 Meaningful Connection*)
4. Who is one non-believer that you need to reach out to this week?
5. What's something you'd like someone else to check in with you about this week?
6. Pray for one another.