

Matthew 20 - Sermon Notes - October 3, 2021

PERSONAL AMBITION

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1. THE FIRST WILL BE LAST

(1-2) A STORY ABOUT A LANDOWNER HIRING DAY LABORERS

- this story is given to answer Peter's question in [19.27](#)

- it's almost like Peter is saying, "Look at all we have given up to follow You. What's in this deal for us."
- a question that we ask more often than not

- the agreement was for a denarius for the day, and it was agreed upon by both the landowner and the laborers

- a denarius was a typical day's wage for a Roman soldier

(3-7) THE LANDOWNER CONTINUES TO HIRE LABORERS THROUGHOUT THE DAY

- The other workers hired through the day were not promised a specific wage, only whatever is right. He promised to pay all the later workers fairly.

(8-10) EVERYONE GETS PAID

- these were day laborers, so they were paid at the end of the day

- those who had only worked 1 hour received a full day's day

- and so the pay goes - each person gets a full day's wage, including those who had worked the full 12 hours

(11-16) COMPLAINING ABOUT THE PAY

- the guys who had been hired first complained about what they were getting, even though that is what they had agreed to work for ([20.2](#))

- remember, this story is in response to Peter's question, "What's in this for us?"
- the laborers did what we do so often when we think that God is not being fair - they complained!
 - we do the same thing when we see the blessing of God on other people when we have been serving the Lord for years

- Jesus told another story that illustrates the same principle - the story of the prodigal son in [Luke 15.11-32](#)
- lessons from this story
- God's way of rewarding is different than the way we look at rewards
 - the goodness and grace of God
 - there were probably going to be a lot of surprises when we get to heaven
 - don't look at what God is doing in someone else's life or ministry because it tends to cause us to be jealous and envious
 - God will deal with you generously
 - it's never too late to get started

2. HEADING TOWARD JERUSALEM

(17-19) JESUS AGAIN PREDICTS HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION

- heading toward Jerusalem, Jesus begins to tell His disciples what will happen when they get there
- Jesus spoke both of His death and His resurrection
- what does this teach us about the reward of heaven
- before the crown there is a cross - the way of death and suffering
 - we should never talk about the cross without the resurrection
 - Warren Wiersbe says, "You do not pray for a throne; you pay for it."

3. THE WAY TO GREATNESS

(20-21) ASKING FOR A SPECIAL PLACE

- the mother of James and John came worshiping because she wanted something
- too often that is we worship so that we can get something
- beware of asking things from things from the Father for selfish reasons

(22-23) DO YOU REALLY KNOW WHAT YOU ARE ASKING FOR?

- Jesus asked if they really understood what they were asking for
- the cup and the baptism speak of suffering
- they responded by saying that they were able
- these were the very ones that were sleeping in the hour of Jesus' agony in the Garden of Gethsemane
- Jesus said that they would indeed drink of His cup and be baptised with His baptism

(24-28) JESUS TALKS ABOUT TRUE GREATNESS

- the other guys heard about it and were very upset
- Jesus simply responds by saying, "don't seek after power and position"
- that's the way people in the world operate

- Jeremiah said it well in [Jeremiah 45.5](#) - "And do you seek great things for yourself? Do not seek them;"
- here is the great principle of laying down our lives for the sake of others
- the way of Jesus is the way of serving
 - love is always measured by it's willingness to give
 - we need to move from the area of asking and demanding to the place of serving and giving
- David Guzik - Real ministry is done for the benefit of those ministered to, not for the benefit of the minister. Many people are in the ministry for what they can receive (either materially or emotionally) from their people instead of for what they can give.
- Jon Courson =If you want to be great, don't seek prominence. Seek service. Don't say, "Who's praying for me? Who cares about me?" Instead ask, "Who can I serve?"

4. BLIND MEN HEALED

([29-31](#)) TWO MEN CRY OUT FOR MERCY

([32-34](#)) JESUS ASKS TWO BLIND MEN WHAT THEY WANTED

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