

MATTHEW TWENTY
SERVICE AND REWARD
Take a ways

Parable About Service (Vss 1-16)
Patience Towards Servants (Vss 17-29)
Pity Toward the Suffering (Vss 30-34)

Do you ever wonder “Why am I here ?”
“What is my purpose ?”

God designed His children to serve
The Parable of the Landowner is about a man who gave people a
purpose in life

But this parable is not about working your way to salvation
It is about reward for service
No matter the stage of life when you entered the King’s Service

Do you think the disciples understood the message about the Cross ?
But by ignoring it they thought it would not happen?
Or perhaps they could not believe
People hated their kind, compassionate teacher that much ?

Why did Jesus teach in parables ?
It was a reveal and conceal tactic
To those truly interested He explained the parables
To the hostile or disinterested, the parables remained a mystery

Isaiah predicted the people of Jesus’ day
Would hear but not understand His teaching (Isa 6:9-10)
The Psalmist predicted parables would come from Messiah’s mouth
(Psalm 78:2)

Jesus truly practiced what He preached

He never missed an opportunity to teach those who were truly
interested
Especially His disciples
Even as they make their way to Jerusalem and the Cross
He is focused on preparing them for life without Him

03-22 Lesson: Matthew Chapter 20

Service, Reward, and Humility

Date Time: 2026-03-22 10:29:57

Location: First Baptist Tallassee

Instructor: Sid Edwards

Summary

This lesson provides an in-depth analysis of Matthew chapter 20, focusing on the themes of service, reward, patience, and pity. The speaker begins with the Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard to address Peter's question about rewards for the disciples. The parable illustrates God's generosity and that rewards are based on service and attitude, not duration. The lecture then transitions to Jesus's foretelling of His crucifixion and resurrection, highlighting the disciples' lack of understanding. This is followed by the request from the mother of James and John for her sons to have places of honor, which Jesus uses to teach that true greatness in His kingdom comes from servitude, not authority. The chapter concludes with Jesus healing two blind men near Jericho, an act that demonstrates His compassion and the men's genuine faith, contrasting with the spiritual blindness of the disciples.

Knowledge Points

1. Parable of the Laborers (Service and Reward)

• Context of the Parable

- The parable is Jesus's response to Peter's question at the end of Matthew 19: "What about us? We gave up everything... What are we going to get out of it?"
- It follows the story of the rich young ruler, who could not part with his riches to follow Jesus.

• The Story of the Parable (Matthew 20:1-16)

- A landowner hires laborers for his vineyard at various times throughout the day: early morning (around 6 a.m.), the third hour (9 a.m.), the sixth hour (noon), the ninth hour (3 p.m.), and the eleventh hour (5 p.m.).
The first group agrees to a wage of one denarius for the day, which was a common but low wage, roughly equivalent to about \$40 for the day.
Subsequent groups are hired with the promise of "whatever is right" and go to work without negotiating a specific wage.
- At the end of the day, the owner instructs his foreman to pay the laborers, starting with the last hired and moving to the first.
- All laborers, regardless of the hours worked, receive one denarius.

• The Complaint and the Landowner's Response

- The laborers hired first grumble, feeling it is unfair that those who worked only one hour receive the same pay as those who endured the "burden of the day's work and the scorching heat."
- The landowner responds that he did them no wrong, as they received the wage they had agreed upon. He asserts his right to be generous with his own money and asks if their eye is "envious because I am generous." ○ The parable concludes with the principle: "the last shall be first, and the first last."

● Interpretation and Meaning of the Parable

- The parable is **not** about salvation or eternal life, which cannot be earned. It is **not** about a uniform reward for service in heaven; Scripture indicates rewards will differ based on specific service.
- The parable is about promises, attitudes, and service. The landowner is generous and true to his word, while the early laborers display a wrong attitude of complaint and envy.
- It illustrates that God calls people at different stages of life, and reward is based on service given and the heart's attitude. The thief on the cross is cited as an example of someone saved at the last minute who receives the full benefits of heaven.

● The Purpose of Jesus's Parables

- Parables are common, easy-to-understand stories about familiar topics (like agriculture) with an earthly story and a heavenly meaning.
- They reveal truth to those sincerely seeking Jesus and conceal it from casual, uninterested observers.

2. Patience and Humility

● Jesus Foretells His Death (The Final Journey to Jerusalem)

As Jesus and the twelve disciples travel to Jerusalem for Passover, Jesus takes them aside. This is described as His final trip to Jerusalem.

For the third time, He details His coming fate: He will be handed over to the chief priests and scribes, condemned, and delivered to the Gentiles to be mocked, flogged, and crucified, and will be raised on the third day. ○ The disciples remain unprepared and cannot grasp or believe that this will happen to the man they have been following.

● The Request of James and John's Mother

- The mother of Zebedee's sons (James and John), identified as Salome, asks Jesus to grant her sons the seats at His right and left hand in His kingdom.
- This request follows Jesus's earlier promise in Matthew 19 that the disciples will "sit on thrones" and rule with Him.

- Jesus responds directly to the sons, implying they put their mother up to it. He asks if they are able to “drink the cup” that He is about to drink. ○ The “cup” represents the hatred, rejection, and persecution leading to His crucifixion, as well as the suffering they will face in their own ministries.
- He confirms they will drink this cup of suffering but states that assigning the seats of honor is not His to give, but has already been determined by the Father.

● **The Disciples’ Indignation and Jesus’s Teaching on Servanthood**

- The other ten disciples become indignant with James and John, not out of principle, but because they selfishly wanted those positions for themselves and didn’t think to ask first.
- Jesus uses this conflict to teach a lesson on true greatness. He contrasts the domineering authority of Gentile rulers with the standard in God’s kingdom.
- He states: “whoever wants to become prominent among you shall be your servant, and whoever desires to be first among you shall be your slave.” ○ He presents Himself, the “Son of Man,” as the ultimate example: He “did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.” ○ God’s standards for greatness differ from the world’s; He often chooses the unlikely (Isaac over Ishmael, Jacob over Esau, David over his brothers) to accomplish His purposes.

3. Pity and Healing

● **The Two Blind Men near Jericho**

As Jesus leaves Jericho, two blind men sitting by the roadside hear that He is passing by.

They cry out, “Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David.” This title indicates their genuine faith that Jesus is the Messiah.

- The crowd tries to silence them, but they cry out even louder. One of the men is identified in Mark as Bartimaeus.

• Jesus's Compassionate Response

- Jesus stops, calls them over, and asks, "What do you want me to do for you?" He does this so they can confess their need and faith publicly for the crowd to hear.
- They ask for their sight to be opened.
- The scripture says Jesus is "moved with compassion," a term implying deep emotion and empathy.
- Jesus touches their eyes, and they immediately regain their sight. The touch is not necessary for the healing but is an act of compassion for men who are societal outcasts.

• The Result of the Healing

- After being healed, the men follow Jesus, both physically on the journey to Jerusalem and spiritually as new believers.
- They move from the "darkness of sin" to walking alongside the "light of the world."

4. Upcoming Study Plans •

Sermon Schedule

- March 29, 2026: The lecture will cover Matthew chapter 22.
- April 5, 2026 (Easter Sunday): The lecture will jump ahead to Matthew chapter 28 to study the resurrection.
- April 12, 2026: The study will return to Matthew chapter 24.
- April 19, 2026: The study will cover Matthew chapter 26.
- The speaker notes the unusual, non-chronological order of "resurrecting" Jesus before "crucifying" Him in the study series, attributing the plan to Trey.

Assignments

- [] 1. Review the teaching schedule provided on the prayer sheet.
- [] 2. Prepare for the next session on March 29, 2026, by studying Matthew chapter 22.

- [] 3. Note the special schedule for Easter Sunday (April 5, 2026), which will cover Matthew chapter 28.