

apptoteach.org

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

Matthew 20:1-16
Lesson #18
Unjust wages
01/26/2020

THE PARABLES OF JESUS

Unjust wages Matt. 20:1-16

1


Expectations

play an important role shaping
our peace & joy in following Christ.

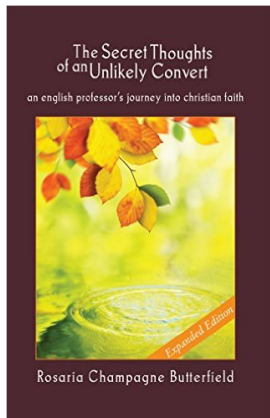
Matthew 6:22
 “The lamp of the body is the eye; if therefore your eye
is clear, your whole body will be full of light.”

Matthew 19
 “27 Then Peter answered and said to Him,
“Behold, we have left everything and followed You;
what then will there be for us?”

Underestimated sacrifices.




2



Dr. Rosaria Champagne Butterfield
(former postmodern, feminist, lesbian,
English professor)

“The Scripture clearly
asks disciples of Jesus to
lose their old life in
order to find their new
life. I had to ask what
have I given up to know
him and myself?”



3


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 “27 Then Peter answered and said to Him,
“Behold, we have left everything and followed You;
what then will there be for us?”

Underestimated sacrifices.
Misunderstood promises.




4

“28 And Jesus said to them, “Truly I say to you, that you
who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of
Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon
twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 And
everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father
or mother or children or farms for My name’s sake, shall
receive **many times as much**, and shall inherit eternal life.

**This sounds great - 100 fold return,
political power, and eternal life at the end.**

**How did the
disciples actually
experience this?**



5

Mark 10:30

“30 but that he shall receive a **hundred times as much now in the present age**, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with **persecutions**; and in the age to come, eternal life.”

“37 And they said to Him, “Grant that we may sit in Your glory, one on Your right, and one on Your left.” 38 But Jesus said to them, “**You do not know what you are asking for**. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized? 39 And they said to Him, “We are able.” And Jesus said to them,

“The cup that I drink you shall drink; and you shall be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized.”



6

The parable starts after:

Matt. 19:30 **But many who are first will be last; and the last, first.”**

“1 For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. 2 And when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. 3 And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the market place; 4 and to those he said, ‘You too go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.’ And so they went. 5 Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did the same thing. 6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing; and he said to them, ‘Why have you been standing here idle all day long?’ 7 They said to him, ‘Because no one hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You too go into the vineyard.’ 8 And when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last group to the first.’”

“9 And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each one received a denarius. 10 And when those hired first came, they thought that they would receive more; and they also received each one a denarius. 11 And when they received it, they grumbled at the landowner, 12 saying, ‘These last men have worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the scorching heat of the day.’ 13 But he answered and said to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? 14 Take what is yours and go your way, but I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. 15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with what is my own? Or is your eye envious because I am generous?’”

The parable ends with:

Matt. 20:16 **Thus the last shall be first, and the first last.”**



This may give us some idea of what the parable is all about?

7

Matthew 13:52

“Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a head of a household, who brings forth out of his treasure **things new and old**.”

Biblical teaching often uses
contrasts
to emphasize a point.

“Natural man”
vs. “Spiritual man”
Ephesians 4:20-24

Secular State
vs. Body of Christ
Mark 12:17

Old Covenant
vs. New Covenant
John 1:17

World’s kingdoms
vs. God’s kingdom
Matthew 20:1-16

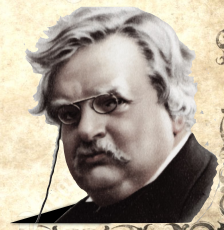


8

“Religion is the thing that makes the ordinary man feel extraordinary; . . .

. . . and the extraordinary man feel ordinary.”

G.K. Chesterton



9

Matthew 20:1-16

The parable of the unjust wages

“1 For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. 2 And when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. 3 And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the market place; 4 and to those he said, ‘You too go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.’ And so they went. 5 Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did the same thing. 6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing; and he said to them, ‘Why have you been standing here idle all day long?’ 7 They said to him, ‘Because no one hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You too go into the vineyard.’”

10

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11

Two levels of insight

1. **God's grace is not based on human merit.**

(This is an illustration that points to another insight.)

2. **Kingdom values and priorities are often at odds with the world's.**



This is a truth with deeper and wider implications and applications.

12

God's holy Kingdom
does not ignore
man's sense
of justice
**but
rather
challenges
man's values
and priorities.**

13

"If there is one thing worse than the modern weakening of major morals, it is the strengthening of minor morals."

G.K. Chesterton

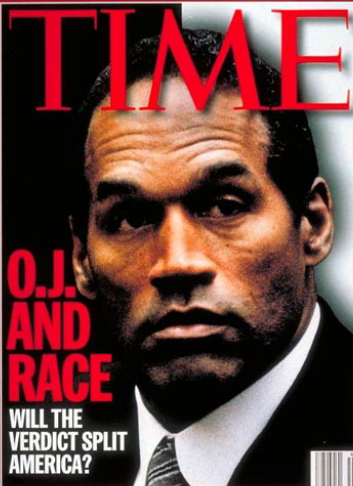


14

"Major on majors
and minor on minors."

Grace / Law
1st commandment / 2nd
The Cross / Crow
Empathy / Justice

15



Most white people had strong feelings about the unfair verdict in the O.J. Simpson trial.

**Could it be that
God is more
concerned about
white empathy
than justice?**

16

Luke 15:11-32 - The Prodigal and his brother.

Luke 15

"28 But he became angry, and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began entreating him. 29 But he answered and said to his father, 'Look! **For so many years I have been serving you, and I have never neglected a command of yours; and yet you have never given me a kid, that I might be merry with my friends;** 30 but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with harlots, you killed the fattened calf for him.'"

Note that the older brother was concerned:

1. Not when the Prodigal rebelled.
2. Not when the Prodigal repented.
3. **But only when the Father was gracious.**

17

“The main thing between you and God is not so much your sins; it’s your damnable good works.”

John H. Gerstner



18

Luke 10:38-42 - Mary and Martha.

Luke 10

“38 Now as they were traveling along, He entered a certain village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, who moreover was listening to the Lord’s word, seated at His feet. 40 But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him, and said, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me.” 41 But the Lord answered and said to her,



“Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; 42 **but only a few things are necessary, really only one, for Mary has chosen the good part,** and it will not be taken away from her.”

19

Three different definitions of Christianity



It’s about orthodox doctrine.

Romans 4 Believing



It’s about personal piety.

1 John 3



It’s about social justice.

James 2 Behaving

• See apptoteach.org / Hard Questions - #20-21, 31-32

20

Matthew 22:36-40

The foremost commandment

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” And He said to him, “*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.*” This is the great and foremost commandment.”

The second commandment

“The second is like it, ‘*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*’ On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”

21

Ephesians 2:8-10

Forgiven

“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast.”

Forgiving

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

22

Slavery - Social justice - Submission - Suffering

1 Peter 2

“18 Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable. 19 For this *finds* favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly. 20 For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer *for it* you patiently endure it, this *finds* favor with God.

Christ Is Our Example

21 For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, 22 who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; 23 and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting *Himself* to Him who judges righteously;”

23

We are tempted to trust God to help us succeed while living in the “distant land” (i.e. the Prodigal Son).

1 John 2:16

“For all that is in the world,
the lust of the flesh
and the lust of the eyes
and the boastful pride of life,
is not from the Father, but is from the world.”

- 1. The lust of the flesh - bodily appetites.**
- 2. The lust of the eye - social image.**
- 3. The pride of life - cultural dominion.**

24

Matthew 4

The lust of the flesh.

“2 And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. 3 And the tempter came and said to Him, ‘If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.’ 4 But He answered and said, ‘It is written, *‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.’*”

Is it God’s will to give us peace and happiness through temporal / material health and wealth?

1 Corinthians 4

“10 We are fools for Christ’s sake, but you are prudent in Christ; we are weak, but you are strong; you are distinguished, but we are without honor. 11 To this present hour we are both hungry and thirsty, and are poorly clothed, and are roughly treated, and are homeless; 12 and we toil, working with our own hands; when we are reviled, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure; 13 when we are slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become as the scum of the world, the dregs of all things, even until now.”

25

Matthew 4

The lust of the eye.

“5 Then the devil took Him into the holy city; and he had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 and said to Him, ‘If You are the Son of God throw Yourself down; for it is written, *‘He will give His angels charge concerning You’*; and *‘On their hands they will bear You up, Lest You strike Your foot against a stone.’* 7 Jesus said to him, “On the other hand, it is written, *‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’*”

Is it God’s will to honor our faith through controlling circumstances?

2 Corinthians 12

“8 Concerning this I entreated the Lord three times that it might depart from me. 9 And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. 10 Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ’s sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.”

26

Matthew 4

The pride of life.

“8 Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory; 9 and he said to Him, “All these things will I give You, if You fall down and worship me.” 10 Then Jesus said to him, “Begone, Satan! For it is written, *‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.’*”

Is it God’s will to bring in His kingdom through political / economic power?

Mark 12:17

““Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.””

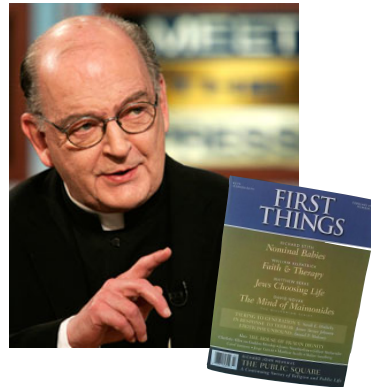
1 Peter 2:13

“Submit yourselves for the lord’s sake to every human institution,”

27

**Trusting God
is a virtue
but only if
it is for the right
things at the
right time.**

28



Richard John
Neuhaus

“Idolatry is trying to bring in God’s Kingdom before its time and without its King.”

It is popular with both liberal and conservative Christians.

29

Christ died to
save our souls
**not our plans
or our ego
in this life.**

30



EWTN
GLOBAL CATHOLIC NETWORK

As a gifted and powerful woman, how do you respond to those who say that women are not free to be ordained in the Catholic Church?

“Power in the Kingdom of God is love. I don’t need a position or a title to exercise that power.”

Agnes Mary Donovan PhD
Superior General, Sisters of Life



31

The greater gift

“A monk in his travels once found a precious stone and kept it. One day he met a traveler, and when the monk opened his bag to share his provisions with him, the traveler saw the jewel and asked the monk to give it to him. The monk did so readily. The traveler departed overjoyed with the unexpected gift of the precious stone that was enough to give him wealth and security for the rest of his life.

However, a few days later he came back in search of the monk, found him, gave him back the stone, and entreated him, ‘Now give me something much more precious than this stone, valuable as it is.

Give me that which enabled you to give it to me.”

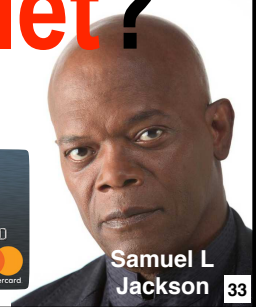


Anthony De Mello
Indian Jesuit priest

32

The kingdoms of this world ask:

**What’s in
your **wallet?****



Samuel L.
Jackson

33

The kingdom of God asks:

**What’s in
your **heart?****



34

Questions for a personal heart exam.

- ✓ Are my expectations in life “kingdom” sensitive?
- ✓ How often am I a gracious loser in worldly matters?
- ✓ How often am I a gracious, compassionate neighbor?
- ✓ What am I giving up to hold on to Christ?

35