

The Laborers in the Vineyard

Matthew 20:1-16



HOW STORYTELLING AFFECTS THE BRAIN

NEURAL COUPLING

A story synchronizes the listener's brain with the teller's brain.

MIRRORING

Mirror neurons enable listeners to mirror experience

CORTICAL ACTIVITY

Two areas of the brain are activated when processing facts. Stories activate many additional areas such as the motor cortex, sensory cortex and frontal cortex.



DOPAMINE

The brain releases dopamine in response to an emotionally-charged event, resolution of conflict, or even recognition of a pattern, creating a pleasurable response and ease of memory and recall

CORTISOL

The brain releases cortisol when it experiences conflict which increases attention and memory

OXYTOCIN

The brain releases oxytocin in response to characters that increases empathy and connection as well as compassion and trust

Power of Parables

- **Parables are a crucial component to spiritual understanding and growth**
- **Create Relevance**
- **Provide Details**
- **Give Mental Images**
- **Motivate Action**



Application: Parables Are Keys to the Kingdom of God

- **The keys to *open* understanding by God's revelation.**
- **The parables of Jesus are keys to the Kingdom of God, that unlock the knowledge to Life, if we will heed the revealed understanding and warnings of the parables.**



Context: Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard

■ Matthew 19:16-30 (Mark 10 & Luke 18)

- What good thing should I do, that I may obtain eternal life?
- It appears that the young rich man was thinking in terms of righteousness by works.
- Keeping the commandments is not to establish our merit before God, as much as it is an expression of desire to show a true faith in God.
- Eternal life is a gift (Romans 6:23), while our keeping the commandments are our duty to God, who has granted us His grace through His justification.
- “If you wish to be complete (Greek – teleios = goal or end); give up what you have and follow Jesus Christ.
- “But many who are first will be last and the last, first.”

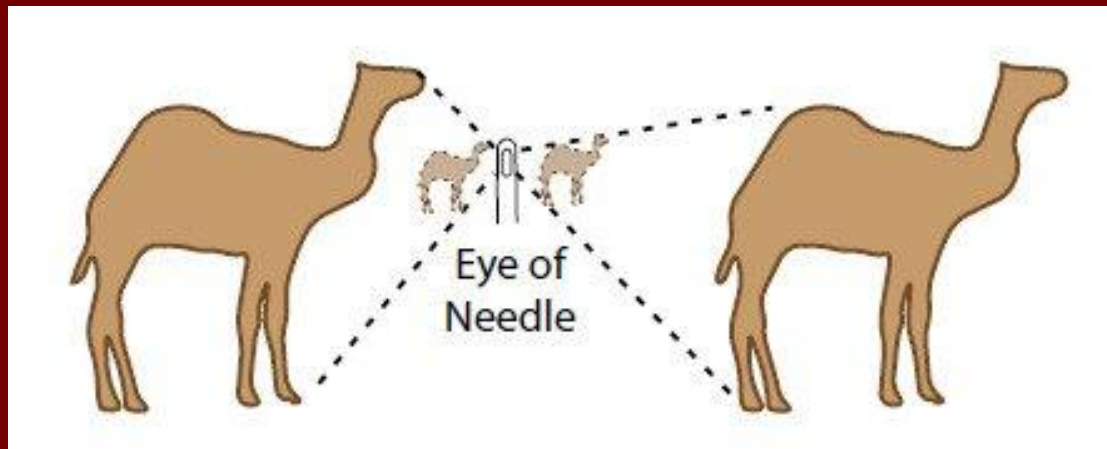
Context: Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard

■ Matthew 19:16-30 (Mark 10 & Luke 18)

- The young rich man's goal was eternal life, but it appears that his wealth and lack of total commitment stood in his way to eternal life.
- To sell or give up all his wealth was a problem that possibly pointed to covetousness.
- It appears that to give up his wealth was the thing that kept him from trusting in Jesus Christ to provide his needs.
- Covetousness is greedy desire to have more. Luke 12:13-15 , "...Take heed and beware of covetousness for a man's life consist not in the abundance of the things which he possess."
- It appears the young rich man had a greater love of his things, than for eternal life.

Context: Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard

- **“It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God.”**
 - **Something that is almost or altogether impossible**
 - **The disciples seem to believe that the rich are blessed by God for their obedience.**
 - **If it is almost impossible for the blessed person to enter the Kingdom of God, then who could enter the Kingdom of God?**



Parable Of The Laborers in the Vineyard

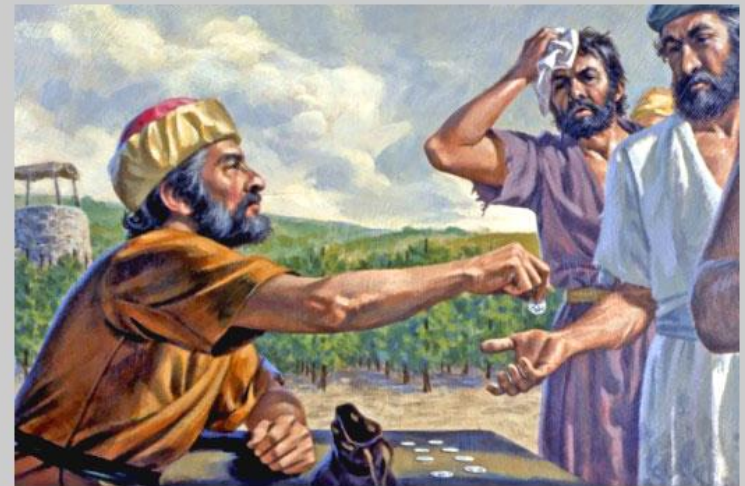
- **Matthew 20:1-16** A Lesson in “Many who are first will be last, and the last first”.
 - Equal wages for unequal work
 - **Denarius / Penny** – “containing ten” / Roman silver coin that equated to a day’s wages.
 - Laborers enter the vineyard at possibly 6AM, 9AM, 12PM, 3PM and 5PM
 - **At evening (6PM), the laborers had to be paid for the day’s wages (Leviticus 19:13 / Deuteronomy 24:14-15).**



Parable Of The Laborers in the Vineyard

■ Matthew 20:1-16

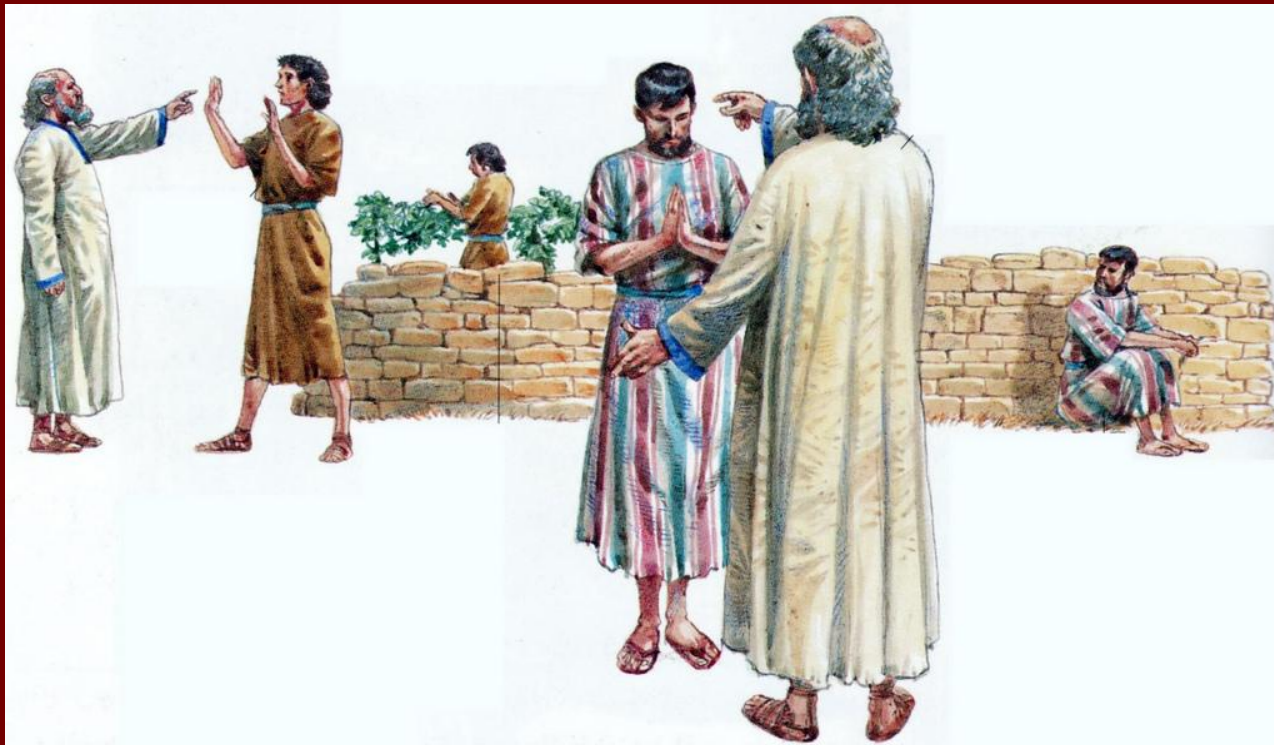
- The “Unfairness” of Grace
- Verse 12, “These last men have worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us, who have borne the burden and the scorching heat of the day.”
- God liberally gives the gifts of forgiveness, reconciliation, peace and joy, regardless of their background and no matter how late in life they come, will all be accepted by Him.
- Grace can seem unfair, because it gives undeserving people more than they actually deserve.



Parable Of The Laborers in the Vineyard

■ Matthew 21:28-32

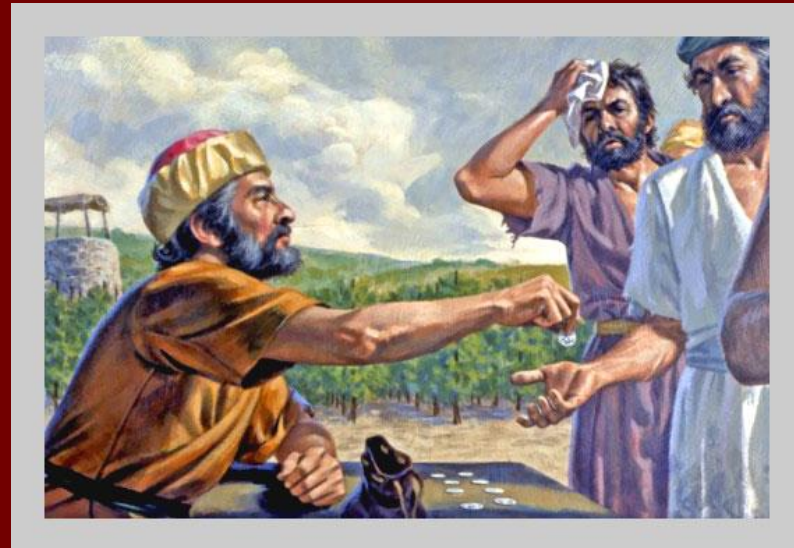
- Parable of the Two Sons
- Appearances can be deceiving, as religious leaders were offended by Jesus Christ reaching out to outcasts of society.



Parable Of The Laborers in the Vineyard

■ Matthew 20:1-16

- The parable appears to point to an “Attitude” problem of those who entered the vineyard, first.
- Verse 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?”
- Envious – “Evil” / Generous – “Good”
- Vine’s Expository Dictionary states that the association of *ponos* (labor) it expresses especially the “active form of evil”.



Application: Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard

■ Titus 2:11-12

- “For the grace of God has appeared bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires to live sensibly, righteously and godly, in the present evil age..”

- God gives grace to whom He pleases (Romans 9:15). The grace given to us should train us to deny ungodliness in our thoughts and actions.

■ Romans 12:15

- “Rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep.”
- The grace of God should transform our way of thinking and our attitude.
- We should rejoice of the success of others.

Application: Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard

■ Philippians 2:19-21

- “But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition. For I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare. For they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus.”

- A person who does not put the interest of Christ, first will not look to the interests of others. He will not identify with others when they rejoice.

■ II John 8 – Amplified Bible Translation

- “Watch yourselves, so that you do not lose what we have accomplished together, but that you may receive a full and perfect reward (when He grants rewards to faithful believers).”

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