

Are you wondering what it means to be a Christian?

Jesus said, "All that the Father gives me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will never drive away" (John 6:37). Jesus also said, "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day" (John 6:44).

If you are feeling drawn to Christ, it is because God the Father is drawing you; it is not a desire we can or will create within ourselves. This also means that there is no sin too great to be forgiven, and no past too sinful to be overcome. You can trust Christ to receive you because it is God the Father who is drawing you to find true repentance and receive the gift of faith. You can know a new life in Jesus Christ.

We would love to talk and pray with you about this or any other spiritual needs you may have. Please see Pastor Mark or one of our elders after today's service to do so.

Are you interested in Baptism or Church Membership?

Please indicate your interest on the back of your Connection Card and Pastor Mark or one of the elders will be in touch with you this week to set up a time to meet with you.

James 1:1-12

THE PARABLE OF THE WORKERS IN THE VINEYARD Matthew 20:1-16

Main Thought: The parable of the workers in the vineyard reminds us to serve God faithfully and be grateful for His generosity and grace.

1. The narration of the parable.

- 1) The context of the parable: the disciples claim to have left everything to follow Jesus and their expectation of reward. (Mt. 19:27-30)
- 2) A landowner hires laborers to work in his vineyard at various times during the day.
- 3) At the end of the day the landowner pays them all the same wage.
- 4) Those who worked the longest complained.
- 5) The landowner reminds them of his fairness, sovereignty, and right to be generous.

2. The meaning and lessons of the parable.

- 1) God is sovereign.
- 2) God is just.
- 3) God is generous and full of grace.
- 4) We need to serve God faithfully and trust in His sovereignty, justice, and grace.
- 5) In the kingdom of heaven, the first shall be last and the last shall be first.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR GROWTH GROUPS

1. Read Matthew 19:16-30. This is the immediate context in which Jesus spoke the parable of the workers in the vineyard. What events written about here prompt Jesus to tell the parable?

2. Read Matthew 20:1-16.

1) Who are the main characters and what are main elements in this parable?

2) Who do you think they represent?

3) What is main focus of the parable?

4) What is the surprise in the parable?

5) How do the workers react to the surprise? Why?

6) How does the landowner respond? Why?

3. Jesus ends the parable with the statement, "So the last will be first and the first will be last." What do you think he means by that? (See also Mt. 19:28-30; 20:24-28)

4. What is this parable trying to teach us about the kingdom of heaven? What is required of believers now? What can believers expect when the kingdom is fully realized at the 2nd coming of Christ?

5. This parable touches on the concept of rewards for believers when Christ returns. What do the following verses tell us about rewards for believers?

1) Matthew 5:11-12; 6:1-6; 16-18

2) Matthew 25:14-30

3) 1 Corinthians 3:11-15

4) Romans 8:17

5) 1 Peter 1:3-9

6) Psalm 16:11

6. How would you sum up the teaching about rewards in these verses for believers?