

# Matthew 20:1-16. the Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

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*The sermon teaches that true happiness comes from serving the Lord and experiencing his pardoning mercy, rather than living in sin and repenting at the last moment.*

**Scripture:** 1 Samuel 12:24, Matthew 20:16, Matthew 22:14, Matthew 25:21, Luke 18:9

**Topics:** "Humility And Pride", "Gods Kingdom"

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## Description

Favell Lee Mortimer delves into the parables shared by Jesus, emphasizing the profound truth that the last shall be first and the first last, revealing that many are called but few chosen. The parables illustrate that self-righteousness and pride can lead to disappointment and exclusion from God's kingdom, while true repentance and humility are valued by God above outward appearances of righteousness. The contrast between the attitudes of the self-righteous and the humble servants of God is highlighted, showing that those who serve the Lord with gratitude and humility are truly blessed, regardless of when they began their journey with Him.

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## Transcript

Our Savior himself tells us what is the meaning of this parable. This is the explanation he gave--"The last shall be first, and the first last; for many are called, but few chosen." Those who are first in their own eyes, will be last in the great day of reckoning; and those who are last in their own eyes, will then be first. This seems to be the meaning of the parable. We have no reason to believe that all will have an equal reward in the last day--the parable of the talents seems to prove that there will be different degrees of glory in the world to come.

In the parable of the laborers in the vineyard, there is a representation of the feelings of self-righteous Pharisees toward penitent publicans. They were enraged at the idea of open sinners partaking with them of heavenly bliss. Self-righteous people, who have led a correct life, imagine that they are better than those who turn to God late in life. They think they deserve great reward for their self-denial. How much will they be astonished at the decisions of the last day! Then they will see open sinners, who have repented, admitted into God's presence, and they themselves thrust out! Little do they think that even a murderer, who truly repents in his last hour, is loved of God, while professors of religion, who have never repented, are hateful in his sight! Such impenitent people will not be received into heaven. But they will have the

torment of beholding those whom they despised, welcomed by saints and angels, arrayed in white robes, and adorned with golden crowns. How much more exasperated will they be at this sight than the envious laborers were at the sight of the wages given to those who had worked but one hour! When they see penitent sinners received and rewarded, they will expect to be still more favored and still more honored. But they will be bitterly disappointed. They will then find that there is no mansion prepared for them in the celestial city.

The Lord's true servants are not like the murmuring laborers. If called early to work in his vineyard, they rejoice the more. They are not proud of having spent their youth in the service of God, but thankful for the great mercy shown to them. They pity those who were groaning under the bondage of Satan, while they were rejoicing in the liberty of Christ. How different from theirs was the spirit of those laborers who said, they had borne the burden and heat of the day! Those who do not love God, find his commandments grievous; but those who have experienced his pardoning mercy, call his yoke easy and his burden light. Do we think those the happiest who spend their lives in sin, and who, like the dying thief, are pardoned in their expiring moments? Or do we esteem those happiest who serve the Lord, like Joseph, from their youth, or like Samuel, from early childhood?

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