

Understanding Labor Day

Matthew 20:1-16 (NIV)

"For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire men to work in his vineyard. ²He agreed to pay them a denarius for the day and sent them into his vineyard.

³About the third hour he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. ⁴He told them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.'⁵So they went.

"He went out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour and did the same thing. ⁶About the eleventh hour he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, 'Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?'

⁷" 'Because no one has hired us,' they answered."

"He said to them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard.'"

⁸"When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first.'"

⁹"The workers who were hired about the eleventh hour came and each received a denarius. ¹⁰So when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius. ¹¹When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner. ¹²'These men who were hired last worked only one hour,' they said, 'and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the work and the heat of the day.'"

¹³"But he answered one of them, 'Friend, I am not being unfair to you. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius?' ¹⁴'Take your pay and go. I want to give the man who was hired last the same as I gave you. ¹⁵Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?'"

¹⁶"So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

1. THE MISSION OF GOD GIVES US AN EQUAL CALLING

v. 1 *"For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire men to work in his vineyard. He agreed to pay them a denarius for the day and sent them into his vineyard . . ."*

- God is on a mission to redeem the lost and He asks us to join Him.
- God initiates the call to join Him.

Matthew 9:37-38 (NIV)

Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. ³⁸Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

- Regardless of when we join the team, we get to be a part of what God is doing.

2. THE CALL OF GOD GIVES US EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

v. 7 *"He said to them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard.'"*

- The kingdom of God is bigger than our little part, but we must choose to obey.
- Every believer gets to be a part of kingdom activity.
- Even if we join the workforce late in the day, we can have an impact.

3. THE GRACE OF GOD GIVES US EQUAL REWARDS

v 13-16 *"Friend, I am not being unfair to you. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius? Take your pay and go. I want to give the man who was hired last the same as I gave you. Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?"*

- Our reward is not based on what we deserve; it is all by the grace of God.

Ecclesiastes 5:18 (HCSB)

¹⁸Here is what I have seen to be good: it is appropriate to eat, drink, and experience good in all the labor one does under the sun during the few days of his life God has given him, because that is his reward.

- When we get to heaven, we all arrive tied for first place.
- The Sovereignty of God means that I do not make the rules.
- The Grace of God means that I am blessed that I don't get to make the rules.

Labor Day does not come one day out of the year in God's Kingdom. It comes every day when God invites us to join Him in His mission to redeem mankind to Himself.