



*The #1 catalyst for spiritual growth is reading and reflecting on the Bible.  
Use these questions for personal study or as part of a community group experience.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

**05/15/2016**

This week's parable directly addresses our desire for justice and fairness. God by his nature is just, but it benefits man to pursue God's generosity rather than his justice.

## **REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

Read Matthew 20:1-16.

1. Consider the context. What stories precede and follow this text in Matthew 19:16-30 and 20:20-28?
2. What themes in the broader context stand out as similar to the parable in Matthew 20:1-16? Are there differences of emphasis or purpose?
3. Place yourself within this parable. Would you respond similarly to those who worked all day? How would your response be different if you were the one hired late in the day? Why?
4. Why do the workers respond the way they do in 20:12? What's at the heart of their complaint?
5. Here, the landlord is a metaphor for God. What impact would the attitude of the all-day workers have on their relationship with God?

6. The principle appears to be one of payment according to need rather than merit. How might this challenge the attitude of Jesus' disciples?
  
7. The landlord's response in verses 13-16 may not be the best business practice but how does this relate to God and the Kingdom of Heaven?
  
8. Instead of focusing on the response of the all-day worker, what does the action of the landlord communicate to those who worked only a partial day? What might this communicate about God's character?
  
9. Read Psalm 103:6-13. Those hired later in the day did not get what they deserved, but were given much more. How does this Psalm relate to the parable in Matthew 20?
  
10. This Psalm mentions both justice and mercy. How did Sunday's message address these two aspects of God's character?
  
11. How does relying on God's grace and mercy affect our relationship with God and others? What about relying on merit?
  
12. Are there experiences, sacrifices, good deeds, contributions, etc. that have become a source of entitlement in your relationship with God?

## **MOVING FORWARD**

Paul, a righteous and blameless Pharisee, committed his life to Jesus. In his letter to the church in Ephesus he reminds his audience that he is no better than they are because of the grace and gospel of Jesus. This week, reflect upon Ephesians 2:8-9 and pray that God would reveal the power of Jesus' grace.