

The Promise of the landowner (Outline)

Matthew 20. 1-16

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I think you know very well about the parable of the vineyard in Matthew 20. I hope especially that we'll all together think about the values of the kingdom we are longing for, from the parable of the vineyard in which it is told that all the workers received the same wages, although they were hired at a different time of a day. Have we really deserved to get our rewards, because we we have worked from early morning ? Or are we lucky people who received the one day wage, though we worked only from 17:00.

Outline

Introduction: What kind of place is the kingdom of God we are longing for to come ? It is a place where God has ruled and it can be a place where God has come and where he 'll come. Jesus told the rules of the world of God, by using a parable. One key is to recognize the difference between the values of the kingdom of God and those of our world. In this chapter it is told that there is a different law in the kingdom of God from this world over the workers' employment, as it is often mentioned . in the Bible that the vineyard represents the world of God and the way it should be.

This story is a concrete parable to tell us that the last will be first and the first will be last, to the expectations for the reward of a rich young man and Peter who saw the conversation , in the story told before. In the values of the people even grace can be a means to boast themselves. This part is an interesting parable that the values of "give and take " which is a common sense in this world, and the labor and the reward (It is called the base of the life in this world.) are different from the ones in the kingdom of God.

1st Body

The kingdom of God is a place to go by the invitation of God. You can only go to mens' birthday party only if you are invited, no matter how close you think your relationships are. In the kingdom of God it is the same. In this story the landowner himself went out and hired workers early in the morning, at 9, 12, 15 and 17 o'clock. The workers hired early in the morning agreed to get payed a denarius and the others hired later got payed also the same denarius "the significant amount ". They were not payed by their working hours or efficiency but they were hired by the sovereign invitation of the vineyard's landowner. We were also saved by the one-sided invitation of the Lord and we could become a member of a church, a branch of the kingdom of God. If you receive such an invitation as a matter of course, it is a right. However, if you think that you are invited (hired), although you can hardly work, it will be excessive blessing. Didn't we receive such blessing, which seems unfair to some people ? It is done only by the sovereign invitation of God.

2nd Body The kingdom of God is a place where gracious God rewards.

In this chapter there were some workers who received the same one denarius with great gratitude and pleasure, and others who accepted with complaints. From the perspective of the principles of peoples' comparison and competition, the attitude of the workers who have worked from early morning is understandable. But the kingdom of God is a place where merciful God rewards. This reward can be gratitude or dissatisfaction, depending on how you put yourself and how you see yourself. From the words of the Lord, the kingdom of God is a place where God is the Lord, not the ranks or the power of men. God's mercy determines the reward. The workers who have worked from early morning should have been grateful for 1 denarius, because they have worked long for the landowner and they received the promised 1 denarius.

In the kingdom of God you have personal relationship with the Lord and it is not the world where people compare each other. On which values do we live ? Hopefully as people in the Kingdom of God we would like to be the 99 sheep that joyfully welcome the one lost sheep and also the older brother who is glad about his younger brother who was lost and is found.

Conclusion

God is the Lord who saves one who does not deserve to be saved with mercy. (referring to the story from the sermon of Spurgeon : Only the prisoners who believed that they would never be forgiven were released.) We want to receive God with gratitude and joy as not the people who have worked from early morning and deserved the reward as a matter of course but people who received the one day reward although we were hired only late at 17:00 and have hardly worked.