

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

Pure Leadership  
Pastor Stephen Hayes  
Sunday Nov 11, 2018

**Main Idea** – Part of being a leader is recognizing each of us stands in a long line of people; many came before us and many more will follow after. Leaders can learn from the Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard to give honor to those who came before and not stand in judgment of those who follow.

### Parables

- Jesus often used parables when he taught.
- Parables are stories – likely fictional stories - that are believable and have hidden meanings.
- Every detail in Jesus' parables is significant; unlike stories you and I might tell.
- Jesus used parables to teach about the Kingdom of God.
- Every parable had an overall theme, or message. However, every parable also had sub-themes operating underneath the basic story.
- One can learn something new each time one of Jesus' parables is read. The Holy Spirit continues to teach us something new about these stories.

### The parable of the workers in the vineyard

- **Matthew 19:30-20:16 – But many who are first will be last, and the last first. For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' So they went. Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, 'Why have you been standing here idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive.' So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, 'Call the laborers and give them their wages, beginning with the last to the first.' And when those came who were hired about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius. But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius. And when they had received it, they complained**

**against the landowner, saying, 'These last men have worked only one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.' But he answered one of them and said, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what is yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man the same as you. Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?' So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen.**

- The landowner made sure the first workers observed the last workers' payment.
- The landowner paid each worker what was fair. The time of day that each worker was called to work did not influence the reward, or payment.

### **God's sense of time**

- Humans perceive time as having a beginning and an ending. That is because our experience with life on earth had observable beginnings (at birth) and will have an observable ending (at death).
- To God, there is no beginning and ending. He is eternal; He always was and always will be.
- Because God has always been present in time, His rewards are based on the ongoing, never-ending, passing of time.
- Therefore, to God, our current place in time is not likely more important to Him than our forefather's place in time.
- One cannot move backward in time. One can only move forward in time.

### **Generation to generation**

- Each of us - regardless of when we appear in time - has the same kind of reward for our work as other workers in the Kingdom.
- Each succeeding generation takes over from where the previous generation left off. Each succeeding generation prepares the work of the Kingdom for the generation to come.

### **Approach your work in the Kingdom with hunger and humility**

1. Be hungry – the more time one spends with Jesus the more the Holy Spirit expands one's desires and faith. Jesus' followers had a lot of confidence after having spent time with Him.

**Luke 9: 51-56 – Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. But they did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem. And when His disciples, James and John saw this, they**

said, “Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?” But He turned and rebuked them, and said, “You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives but to save them.” And they went to another village.

2. Be humble – as you begin to grow in your faith God will regularly prune you so that you continue to grow in the right direction for His purposes. You are not a wild vine branch growing in just any direction. You are growing in the direction God has determined for you.

**John 15: 1-3 – I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away, and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.**

**Jeremiah 18: 1-10** is an Old Testament example of how God shapes and forms us for His purposes.

- Jealousy, and judging others, will hold one back in the Kingdom of God. God resists the proud. **James 4:6 – But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”**

### God’s Kingdom never ends

- The last workers in the vineyard parable were the ones with the most influence on what the next group of laborers would face.
- Give honor to those who came before you in the Kingdom’s work, and do your best to prepare the vineyard for the next group of workers. **John 4: 34-38 – Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and then comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this the saying is true: ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored, and you have entered into their labors.**
- It’s good to have desire and hunger for your work, but let the Holy Spirit guide you. Resist doing things on your own initiative.
- As God leads us, He feeds us. God will give you all you deserve, need, and desire along the path of life and in the Kingdom’s work.
- We are each one member in an eternal chain of workers in God’s Kingdom. The chain began long before we were born into the world, and will continue after us until Jesus returns.
-

## Reflective Questions for Pure Leadership

1. Pastor Stephen said that every one of Jesus' parables has many lessons to teach. The lesson he identified for this sermon was that each worker in the vineyard parable was one member in a chain of workers that went through time. What does that revelation show you about your own place in your church's work?
2. Can you explain what the Bible verses in this lesson teach about the balance between hunger and humility?
3. How do you honor those who came before you in your local church's history?
4. What are some things you can do this week to prepare a good environment for the next generation of workers in God's Kingdom?

