

Further Study – November 22, 2020

Read: Matthew 19:13-20:16

If you heard the sermon this week, was there any part of the message or scripture passage that was particularly important or meaningful to you? If so, what?

Understanding Questions:

- What is the first question the rich young man asks Jesus? What does Jesus say when the man asks what else he must do?
- Jesus says it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God. The disciples then ask, “Then who can be saved?” How does Jesus respond?
- How does the landowner distribute wages in Jesus’ parable of the laborers in the vineyard? How long did the first laborers work? How long did the last laborers work? Why were the first laborers angry and how does the landowner respond?

Application Questions:

- What do you think it means that Jesus says of children: “The kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these”? What kind of character does this imply and what lesson does this hold for adults?
- How attached are you to your riches or possessions? What non-material possessions do you cling to? How do you respond to Jesus’ words in 19:16-26? What is most challenging about what he says?
- What will a world where the last are first and the first are last actually look like? Describe it.

Additional Notes:

- Jesus says in 19:26 that all things are possible for God. See also Genesis 18.14, Mark 14.36, Luke 1.37.
- On leaving family and possessions, see Matthew 8.20-22; 10.21-23, 37; 12.46-50
- The “daily wage”, a denarius, was about enough to feed a large peasant family for one day.
- Matthew 20:4 -- The landowner tells the laborers he will pay them whatever is right or *just*. No exact amount was explicitly stated. God’s mercy and justice conflicts with our notions of fairness.
- Matthew 20:15 – Some of the laborers are “envious” or, literally in Greek, have an “evil-eye,” a powerful and evil-causing look often associated with envy and resentment. This is contrasted with the good and kind landowner.