

NOT WHAT YOU EXPECT

(THE PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD WORKERS)



Matthew 20:1–16

Romans 2:11

For God does not show favoritism.

Romans 2:11

BIBLICAL PASSAGE

MEMORY VERSE

Josh had recently moved into a new community of affluence. But Josh didn't come from an affluent family. His parents drove used cars, had fixed incomes, and grappled to make ends meet, plus scraped to put something back into savings. Josh had a car to drive, but it wasn't like the sleek cars that other students in his high school drove.

In spite of all the material shortages, Josh didn't seem to care. He could have carried a chip on his shoulder, thinking that he was always on the short end of the deal. But what he had surpassed anything he could have possibly received, monetarily. Josh had the grace of God—a relationship with Jesus Christ that had

transformed his life. To him, this was all that mattered in life. He might not have had all the physical signs of wealth, but people still took note of something he had, for which they had a longing.

Read Matthew 20:1–16. Jesus told a parable about what seemed to be disproportionate wages. Perhaps the people who heard the parable failed to understand that God's grace is not disproportionate. It may seem in our worldly way of thinking that some have more than others and have worked harder and longer to deserve more. But in reality, when we have God's grace, we have everything we need in full. You can take that to the bank.

FAMILY DEVOTION TIME

Connect . . .

First, parents come to the family devotion time with a bag of candy. Then, the parents say: **Because we love you guys so much, we're going to share something special with you.** (Pull out the bag of candy.) **But because some of you have not been with us in this family as long as others, we're giving you three pieces of candy, and the older children one piece.** (Note the reaction of your older children. If you wish, you may also come up with arbitrary rewards for household tasks done.)

Explore . . .

First, family members share in reading Matthew 20:1–16. Then, the family discusses: **What is your reaction to the way the owner of the vineyard handled the payment of his workers? How would you compare this to the way God gives out His grace to people today? Does it matter if some have known God's grace for most of their lives, while others receive His gift of salvation at the end of their lives? Why or why not?**

Transform . . .

A family member reads: **God's grace is not something we can earn, and it is not something that can be contained. God gives it freely and fully to anyone who will receive it. What will you do today to express your gratitude to God for this great gift that will never end?**

Pray that your family will know and understand how limitless God's love and grace is. Pray that they will be carriers of this grace, extending it to others.