

October 25, 2026

The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard

Matthew 19:16; 29-30, 20:1-16 | Pastor Scott Debrecen

Icebreaker – Looking Back

- Have you ever had a job, project, or team where you had to wait anxiously to be selected or hired? What was that experience like, and how did it feel when your name was finally called?

Questions on Eternal Life/Salvation

- In Matthew 19:16, the young man asks Jesus, "What good thing must I do to get eternal life?" Why do you think it is so common for people to fall into the trap of believing salvation is tied to our own merits or good deeds?

- The sermon highlights several biblical accounts of grace—such as the criminal on the cross (Luke 23:43), the Samaritan woman at the well, and the disabled man at the Pool of Bethesda. How do these examples demonstrate that salvation is purely the gift of God's grace (Ephesians 2:8–9) rather than a reward for human effort?

- Pastor Scott made a distinction between mercy ("not getting the punishment you do deserve") and grace ("getting good things you do not deserve"). How does understanding this distinction deepen our gratitude for eternal life in Christ Jesus (Romans 6:23)?

Digging into Matthew 20:1-16

- In the Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard (Matthew 20:1–16), workers hired at the eleventh hour received the exact same denarius as those who worked all day. Why did the early workers grumble, and what does their reaction reveal about human ideas of fairness versus Kingdom grace?

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- Pastor Scott shared personal stories about tearing down a grain elevator, working early-morning temp jobs, and playing C-team hockey. How do these real-life illustrations help illuminate the parable's core truth that "the last will be first, and the first will be last"?

- In Matthew 20:15, the landowner asks, "Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?" How does this statement challenge the way we view God's sovereign generosity toward others?

- The sermon expresses deep gratitude for long-standing church members ("A-teamers") who encourage younger generations rather than insisting church be all about them. How can mature believers foster a church culture where grace overruns comparison and entitlement?

Making it Personal

- Pastor Scott emphasized: "There is nothing you can do to make God love you more, and nothing you can do to make God love you less." Is there an area in your life where you struggle with feeling like you have to "get your life in order" before drawing near to God?

- Isaiah 55:6–7 and 2 Corinthians 6:2 remind us that "now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation." In light of scripture pointing to "now," where do you stand in your faith—do you have peace knowing you are saved? If not, would you allow your group members to pray with you, “now”? If so, would you ever be willing to share a bit of your testimony?

Closing Prayer

"Heavenly Father, thank You for Your overwhelming and unmerited grace that meets us right where we are. We acknowledge that we could never earn or deserve salvation—it is purely Your free gift to us through Jesus Christ. Forgive us for the times we compare ourselves to others, grumble about fairness, or rely on our own good works. Help us to rest in Your unconditional love and to extend that same grace, generosity, and encouragement to everyone around us. May our lives reflect Your Kingdom this week. In Jesus' name, Amen."

