**Boast in the Lord**

Based on [Matthew 20:1-16](https://biblia.com/books/esv/Mt20.1-16)

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God’s ways are not our ways. The whole revelation of God throughout history, can be summed up as God doing unexpected things for the world and for his people. And those people who do well in the world, who have built up a good life for themselves, and invested stock in the status quo, lose sight of God, and begin to resent him and his ways. But the poor in spirit, the destitute, those who have no place to lay their head in this world, they are the ones most ready to accept God for who He is, and to boast in the lord.

Today’s Gospel takes up some heavenly topics like monergism, and salvation by grace not works. **Jesus tells a parable about a master of a house who goes out and hires workers to work in his vineyard.** The first workers he agrees to pay a denarius, then, as the day goes on, the third, sixth, ninth and eleventh hours he does the same, only he doesn’t guarantee a denarius, he just agrees to pay them. At the end of the day, he pays them all the same.

According to worldly thinking, one ought to receive equal pay for equal work; and whoever works more should get paid more. And in the kingdom of the world that is as it should be. There have been worldly Governments that reject equal work for equal pay. Instead they preach “from each according to his ability, to each according to his need.” This is called Communism. It makes the government into god, who decides who should work the longest and the most, and who should work the least and receive the same wage.

“**From each according to his ability, to each according to his need**.” Is of the kingdom of heaven. That is how God manages his vineyard. That is how the first Christians in the book of Acts behaved freely, and without Coercion. Jesus’ parable tells us that, in the kingdom of heaven—that is, in God’s reckoning—there is no necessary proportion between human work and divine reward. And this is firstly on account of monergism…the idea that God owes us nothing, and therefore he alone gives us all good things freely.

When he gives equal pay for unequal work, the first workers grumble because they worked longer and harder and thought they deserved more reward. The master of the vineyard, God, says, “**Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. *Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me?***”

This is the point, all things belong to God, the earth and everything in it. This is a first principle of Christianity, and from this it follows that nobody but God has a right to anything. Nobody, but God has a right to anything.

And it’s very simple for a Christian to understand why Communism and Atheism historically go hand in hand. Before a government may presume bring the kingdom of heaven to earth, it must take possession of the earth and everything in it. To do that, there must be no God above them. Then such a government can say “Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me?” So Paul says of Antichrist, **“[He] opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God**.”

I say all this, not to mingle politics with religion. My point is to teach what Jesus teaches here, that God’s ways are not man’s ways. When man tries to make himself like God, things go badly. Communist governments, such as The United Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR), the National Socialist German Worker’s Party (Nazi Party), Chairman Mao and the “People’s Republic of China”, these Governments resulted in the more killing of dissidents and their own citizens than the world had ever known. And they all begin with the creed “God is dead.” Once God is proclaimed to be dead, “the kingdom of heaven suffers violence and the violent take it by force (Matt. 11:12).

God’s ways are not man’s ways. Things go badly, when man tries to make himself like God. In the same way, things go badly **for those who would make God to be like men**. Men are supposed to follow rules of justice and equity. Men are supposed to obey God’s commandments in season and out of season. But God is not a sinful man; and he is above all standards. Only God qualified to rule a communist government. Only God can award equal pay for unequal work; only He can love Jacob and hate Esau, he can make vessels for honourable use and dishonorable use and he is above all criticism. He does not have to justify his actions because this earth and everything in it belongs to him. To put it simply, God is God--not you, not me. He has the right to bestow his grace on whomever he pleases, whenever he pleases, and to whatever extent he pleases. And we see the heart of God in this, he gives his grace equally to all men through faith.

Psalm 46:10 says, “**Be still and know that I am God**.” The God, to whom the heavens and the earth belong sent his only begotten Son from eternity to come down from heaven and live the perfect life for us; to die on the cross for our sins, and to award all who work in his vineyard eternal life. God promises a cross for this life, and a crown for the next. Some will work in God’s vineyard their whole life, suffer many things in his Name. Others will convert when death draws near, and the pangs of their guilt and sin impoverish their spirit to the point of repentance and faith in Jesus. All will have their different crosses to bear in this life; but all will receive exactly the same crown of eternal life.

**8And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.’ 9And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. 10Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. 11And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, 12saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ 13But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? 14Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. 15Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?’*2***

When it is time for the laborers to receive their wages, it became clear that those hired first expected to receive more. Jesus says that the last were paid first, and this was to expose expectations. “**If the last are paid a denarious, our reward must be even greater!**” So they surmise. They really don’t care about the wage, they care about getting more than the others. When they don’t they grumble and blame the master.

This is the same spirit exposed in the parable of the prodigal son. The Older Son begrudges his father for rewarding his prodigal son the same as he who worked harder.

“**We are saved by grace through faith, not by works lest any man should boast**.” Salvation is God’s to give at his good pleasure, and he gives to all equally. Those who believe they deserve more, boast in themselves. Those who believe they’ve gotten more than they deserve, boast in the Lord.