

DISCIPLE 1.0: Expectations on the Journey

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Text: Matthew 20

Introduction

“Satire attacks the world. Parable subverts the world.” (John Dominic Crossan)

“The threat of the parable is that it subverts the myths that sustain our world.” (Bernard Scott)

LIVE THE STORY

The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community. The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- What does it mean to say that parable “subverts the myths that sustain our world”? And why might parable do so effectively?
- What are some hints in the text that the parable of Matthew 20:1-16 is part two of Jesus’ answer to Peter’s question in 19:27?
- What might we see in the parable that tells us it is not really about generosity but about expectations and envy?
- What are some of the ways people might develop false expectations, even becoming envious, after Christ’s promises of reward (19:28-29)?
- How does the next scene (19:17-28) serve to adjust our expectations?
- Paul bids us “follow me as I follow Christ” (1 Cor. 11:1). How do 1 Cor. 4:9, 2 Cor. 2:14; 4:12 demonstrate this?
- How does Jesus way of being king transform our view of what it means to be created in God’s image in order to have dominion?
- What might we learn by comparing Matt. 9:27-31 with 20:29-34? Why is Jesus now willing to do this healing publicly?
- What does this last scene teach us about prayer and our great need? Can you find prayers in Paul’s letters that build on this idea that we need eyes to see?

I. What did we agree to? (20:1-16)

A. The last will be first and the first, last.

B. “We have left everything to follow you Jesus, what do we get?”

Martin Franzmann: “This reward is the gift of God’s grace and ... this grace is sovereign, incalculable, and unclaimable.”

- i. The reward we receive doesn’t work according to our expectations.
- ii. The landowner is not particularly generous with those who showed up early.
- iii. He wanted those hired first to see what those hired last received!
 - a) He knew it would create false expectations!
 - b) The parable aims at *exposing the myth that what we have done entitles us to power just like things work in earthly kingdoms!*

C. How might people do this today?

Jesus' promise about what we will inherit comes with an inherent temptation to turn God's gracious reward into a false expectation of what we deserve.

II. What is our job description? (20:17-28)

A. Jesus tells the disciples about his impending death (4th time).

i. *Constantly remember where we are going!*

ii. Carrying a cross is how disciples work in the vineyard.

iii. James and John try to negotiate benefits to themselves.

B. The other 10 are indignant with them. Why?

i. Jesus is the one who has borne the burden of the day and its heat. He is the one who has served more than any of us.

ii. Jesus' new kind of kingship calls all who follow him to understand authority and rule in an entirely new way.

a) 2 Corinthians 4:12

b) 1 Corinthians 4:9

c) 2 Corinthians 2:14

C. Jesus new kind of Kingship demonstrates what it meant to be made in God's image and have dominion over creation.

i. Psalm 8:4-6

ii. Hebrews 2:9

iii. John 18:36

III. What do we need? (20:29-34)

A. Jesus must be revealed as this new *kind* of King.

i. Matthew 9:27-28

ii. The church must make this kind of kingship known.

iii. If Jesus is known to be like a worldly king, He is not known at all.

B. The world will not operate according to this understanding of things.

C. What we need is not earthly power but eyes to see!

i. Two groups of two approach Jesus.

ii. Disciples do not need seats of power, we need eyes to see.

iii. NT Wright describes what it means to "Come and die," as following "the pattern of Jesus's messianic life – not pleasing himself, but acting in obedience to God's vocation and thus giving himself for the rescuing of the world" (After You Believe, 128).