



Go for God!

“What Is The Kingdom of Heaven Like?”

Matthew Chapter 20

> The Kingdom of Heaven:

#1 - (v1-16) Provides Equality!

#2 - (v17-19) Predicts the Future!

#3 - (v20-28) Produces Greatness!

#4 - (v29-34) Praises God!

> #1 - (v1-16) Provides Equality!

- This is commonly called the “*Parable of the laborers.*” Remember, a “parable” is an earthly saying with a heavenly meaning. This parable displays God’s equality for all mankind in regards to salvation and rewards.

- This “*equal opportunity*” is available to the whole world, in **John 3:16 - *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.***

- **Salvation** is summed up in “*equal opportunity*” whether you’re a thief on the cross being saved at your last breath (Luke 23:39—43) or a precious child coming to Christ at a young age (Mt. 19:14).

- Let’s take a quick look into the heart of conversion and transformation of the thief on the cross in Luke 13:39-43 - *Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, “If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us.” But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, “Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong.” Then he said to Jesus, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.” And Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.”*

- C.I. Scofield writes in his commentary writes, “When the two criminals were hanged beside the Lord, the one was no better than the other. Mark says, “*Even those who were crucified with Him reviled Him*” (Mark 15:32). It is only the grace of God in the cross of Christ that can instantly transform a sinner’s belligerence into an attitude of saving faith and confession.

This repentant thief began to see:

(1) *the justice of his own punishment (v41);*

(2) *the sinless character of Christ (v41);*

(3) *the Deity of Christ (v42);*

(4) *a living Christ beyond the grave (v42); and*

(5) *a kingdom beyond the cross, with Jesus as its coming King (v42).*

- Even the **Founding Fathers** of these **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA** understood this equality when they wrote in the *Declaration of Independence*, “*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.*”

- Let’s make sure that we have QUALITY in our EQUALITY, turn to Colossians 3:5-17.

- This parable also displays His reward for our faithfulness. J.V. Mcgee sums it up well when he writes, "It is not the amount of time which you serve nor the prominence or importance of your position which determines your reward. Rather, you will be rewarded for your faithfulness to the task which God has given you to perform, regardless of how small or how short or how insignificant it appears."

> **HOW TO SUCCEED IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE!**

1. Rely upon the Holy Spirit.
2. Confess Jesus as Lord.
3. Pray without ceasing.
4. Search the Scriptures daily.
5. Attend public worship regularly.
6. Give liberally without grudging.
7. Give attention to missions.
8. Forget self—live for others.
9. Witness to someone daily.
10. Keep growing in grace.
11. Memorize one verse daily.
12. Carry your Bible or Testament with you always.

- What's our task? Matthew 28:19-20 - Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen.

> **#2 - (v17-19) Predicts the Future!**

- This prediction of Christ's death and resurrection is not only foretold by Jesus, but also by the Old Testament Prophets. Listen to Isaiah, Isaiah 53:1-6 - Who has believed our report?

And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

*² For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant,
And as a root out of dry ground.*

He has no form or comeliness;

And when we see Him,

There is no beauty that we should desire Him.

*³ He is despised and rejected by men,
A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.*

And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him;

He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

⁴ Surely He has borne our griefs

And carried our sorrows;

Yet we esteemed Him stricken,

Smitten by God, and afflicted.

⁵ But He was wounded for our transgressions,

He was bruised for our iniquities;

The chastisement for our peace was upon Him,

And by His stripes we are healed.

*⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray;
We have turned, every one, to his own way;
And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.*

In Psalm 22:16-18 - *For dogs have surrounded Me; the congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots.*

- For types of the resurrection we look to *Abraham willing to sacrifice his son Isaac* (Genesis Ch. 22); we also look to the *life of Jonah*.

Psalm 16:10-11 - *For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*

Once again Isaiah writes in Isaiah 26:19 *Your dead shall live; together with my dead body they shall arise. Awake and sing, you who dwell in dust; for your dew is like the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.*

> #3 - (v20-28) *Produces Greatness!*

(v22-23) To drink the cup of the Lord is to drink of His death, to be *baptized with His baptism is to endure suffering*. Let's understand Zebedee's sons, *James and John*, they must have contributed a spirited and headstrong element to Jesus' band of followers, because Jesus nicknamed them "*Sons of Thunder*" (Mark 3:17).

On one occasion (Luke 9:51-56), when a Samaritan village refused to accept Jesus, the two asked Jesus to call down fire in revenge, as the prophet Elijah once had done (2 Kings 1:10,12). James, John, and Peter were those whom Jesus took along privately on three special occasions.

The three accompanied Him when He healed the daughter of Jairus (Mark 5:37; Luke 8:51); they witnessed His transfiguration (Matt 17:1; Mark 9:2; Luke 9:28); and they were also with Him in His agony in Gethsemane (Matt 26:37; Mark 14:33).

James was killed by Herod Agrippa I, the grandson of Herod the Great, sometime between A.D. 42-44. He was the first of the twelve apostles to be put to death and the only one whose martyrdom is mentioned in the New Testament (Acts 12:2).

John became the subject of an active and varied church tradition. Tertullian (about A.D. 160-220) said that John ended up in Rome, where he was "plunged, unhurt, into boiling oil." The dominant tradition, however, was that the apostle John moved to Ephesus in Asia Minor, and that from there he was banished to the Island of Patmos (during Domitian's reign, A.D. 81-96). Tradition also held that he returned later to Ephesus, where he died sometime after Trajan became emperor in A.D. 98.

John, the beloved, gave us his Gospel account of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, plus *1st, 2nd, 3rd John*; and the *Revelation of Jesus Christ*.

(v24-28) If you want to be great in God's Kingdom then be the "*servant of all!*" This is the example of Jesus; let's *love Him, learn of His ways, and live for His glory!*

- Warren Wiersbe writes, “We cannot acknowledge Jesus as our King unless we love Him supremely, obey Him unreservedly, and glorify Him completely. But if we do these things, we will share in His life and joy, and one day reign with Him!”

> **#4 - (v29-34) Praises God!**

- **Have you cried out to God for His mercy?** The passage says that they “*cried out*” to the Lord, the “Son of David,” the Greek word for “*cried*” is *krazo*, this crying out is like a woman during childbirth. Jesus had compassion for them, healed them, and they followed Him.

- **This is the way of SALVATION:**

*God saves us by His mercy,
heals us from our sinful state,
opens our eyes to see His glorious Kingdom,
as we love to follow our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!*

In Luke 18:43 we are given a final tidbit - *and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.*

Dear Christians, let’s PRAISE OUR GOD FOREVER, AND EVER, AMEN!