

Matthew: What Then Shall We Have?

Discussion Guide for July 4 and 5, 2026

Summary

Peter asks Jesus what the disciples will receive for having given up everything to follow Him, prompting the parable of the workers in the vineyard found in Matthew 19:27–20:16. In it, a landowner hires laborers throughout the day and pays them all the same generous wage regardless of how long they worked. Those hired first grumble, believing they deserve more than those hired last. Through this parable, Jesus warns against sacrificing the wrong things and sacrificing for the wrong reasons, and reveals that the Kingdom is not about earning what we deserve but about receiving what God graciously gives. Salvation cannot be earned by the amount of work we do for the Kingdom — it is a result of God's gracious generosity, received by all who follow Him on the same terms: grace.

Ice Breaker

Think of a time someone was generous to you or to someone else in a way that didn't seem "fair" by normal standards — maybe a gift, an opportunity, or forgiveness that felt bigger than what was earned. How did it make you feel, and how did you see others respond to it?

Key Verses

1. Matthew 19:27–20:16
2. Ephesians 2:8–9

Discussion Questions

1. Peter asks Jesus, "What then shall we have?" after listing what the disciples had given up to follow Him. The sermon named two warnings — don't sacrifice the wrong things, and don't sacrifice for the wrong reason. Where might you be tempted to keep track of what you've "given up" for God, expecting something in return?
2. Hudson Taylor said, "I never made a sacrifice." What do you think he meant by that? Is there an area of your life where following Jesus feels like sacrifice rather than joyful exchange — giving up something you love for something you love even more?
3. The sermon states that the issue in this parable is not justice, it is generosity. Why do you think our natural instinct is to react to this parable with a sense of unfairness rather than gratitude? Have you ever felt that instinct toward someone else's blessing?

4. The opposite of jealousy isn't simply contentment — it's learning to delight in God's goodness to someone else. Who is someone in your life whose blessings you find hard to celebrate? What would it look like this week to actively delight in what God is doing for them?
5. The sermon notes that the parable of the vineyard destroys the idea that salvation can somehow be earned by the amount of work one does for the Kingdom. Have you ever caught yourself measuring your standing with God by your effort, service, or performance rather than by grace? What does that reveal?
6. Jerry Bridges wrote, "To live by grace is to live solely by the merit of Jesus Christ... to base my entire relationship with God, including my acceptance and standing with Him, on my union with Christ." How does this compare to the way you typically evaluate your own relationship with God — by merit, or by union with Christ?

Life Application

This week, pay attention to moments of comparison — times when you measure your own effort, sacrifice, or blessings against someone else's. Instead of grumbling like the workers hired first, practice rejoicing in God's generosity toward others. Ask God to search your heart for anything you're sacrificing for the wrong reason — out of duty or expectation of reward rather than love — and invite Him to reshape that sacrifice into joyful exchange.

Key Takeaways

1. Followers of Jesus give up things they love for things they love even more — true kingdom sacrifice isn't loss, it's exchange for something greater.
2. Followers of Jesus rejoice in God's generosity — even, and especially, when it's extended to others in ways that don't match our sense of what's "fair."
3. The opposite of jealousy is learning to delight in God's goodness to someone else, not merely tolerating it.
4. Salvation cannot be earned by the amount of work done for the Kingdom — it is a result of God's gracious generosity, not human merit.
5. To live by grace means basing our entire relationship with God — our acceptance and standing before Him — solely on our union with Christ, not on our performance.