

Greetings:

The study that Pastor Pat brings on Sunday mornings is a reflection of the study for that week. It represents a lot of research. Not all of what he has prepared is communicated. In an attempt to continue the learning process, he is making available his study notes to the congregation.

These notes are edited, but not “book” ready. To the critical eye, mistakes can possibly be found. Therefore, he asks that you take the material with humility, teach-ability, and charity.

Enjoy and if you should have any questions or corrections, please do not hesitate to email him at [pastorpat@waukeshabile.org](mailto:pastorpat@waukeshabile.org).

**Date:** April 28, 2019

**Sermon Title:** The Great Reversal - Unfair or Generous?"

Sermon Series: Matthew

Text: Matthew 20:1-16

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Date: April 29, 2019  
Title: The Great Reversal –Unfair or Generous?"  
Text: Matthew 20:1-16

### **Theme:**

The intent of the text isn't showing God as unfair, but rather as extremely generous. He broadly bestows His mercy and grace to those who do not deserve anything. Throughout Matthew's Gospel there is a tension between the wise and the understanding and the infant (Matt. 11:25-27). The one reflects an attitude of entrenched entitlement and the other being banned bastards. This story is leveling the playing field. **The gospel isn't about God being FAIR. The gospel is about God being GENEROUS.** The recipients are noted as undeserving and ungrateful; whereas God is seen as inviting and good. This is the gospel and this is why we need to go and tell everyone this good news.

When the goodness of God makes us mad (Jonah 4:3)!

- Jonah 4:1 ¶ But it greatly displeased Jonah and he became angry. 2 He prayed to the LORD and said, "Please LORD, was not this what I said while I was still in my own country? Therefore in order to forestall this I fled to Tarshish, for I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, and one who relents concerning calamity. 3 "Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for death is better to me than life." 4 The LORD said, "Do you have good reason to be angry?"

### **MATT. 19:25ff**

- FIRST QUESTION - "Who then can be saved?"
  - FIRST ANSWER - "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."
- SECOND QUESTION - "What then will we have?"
  - SECOND ANSWER - "You will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life."

### **WHO THEN . . .**

- If the rich and powerful cannot be saved. . . Who then can be saved?

### **WHAT THEN . . .**

- If I have denied myself, taken up my cross, and followed you . . . What then will you give me?
- The response given to each question, isn't what we are expecting, imagine, anticipating, and may we say "wanting." To us, in our economy, it doesn't seem fair. But is this the point?

### **THE SHOCK**

- The very ones we thought would get in last or at all, are equally included in the welcome.
- None of this makes any "human" sense.
- This entire parable is counter-intuitive.

The King's Claim Rejected (19-25)				
19	20	21	22	23
		PASSION WEEK		
vv. 1-12 Marriage vv. 13-15 Children vv. 16-30 RYR	vv. 1-16 HIRED WORKERS vv. 17-19 4 <sup>th</sup> reference to death [16:21; 17:12, 22, 23] vv. 20-29 SEATS OF POWER vv. 30-34 The Blind Healed	vv. 1-11 PALM SUNDAY vv. 12-16 Money Changers vv. 17-22 Fig Tree vv. 23-46 AN ISSUE OF AUTHORITY	vv. 1-14 THE SON'S MARRIAGE vv. 15-46 Confronting the Pharisees [This entire chap. Speaks to the same idea]	WOE Scribes and Pharisees [There has been increasing hostility with RE; now He unleashes the HOUNDS]

### TRUSTED IN THEMSELVES

<sup>9</sup> And He also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt: <sup>10</sup> "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. <sup>11</sup> The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: 'God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. <sup>12</sup> 'I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.' <sup>13</sup> But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!' <sup>14</sup> I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."

### THE ISSUE

- I do not think the tension is within the Jewish community, but between the Jews and the Gentiles or the Pharisees and the Tax Collectors.
- I do not think it is speaking of you and me, but us and THEM [whomever the "them" are].

### OUTLINE

- I. The HIRING (VV. 1-7)
  - The Owner (v. 1)
  - The Worker (vv. 2-9 [6AM, 9AM, NOON, 3PM, 5PM])
- II. The PAYMENT (vv. 8-16)

### APPLICATION

- I. This Is Who You Are
  - You are undeserving
  - You are ungrateful
- II. This Is Who God Is
  - God is inviting [He invited everyone to come]
  - God is good [He gave equally to everyone who came]

## **IT'S INTENT**

- The intent of the text isn't showing God as unfair, but rather as lavishly generous.
- He widely dispenses His mercy and grace to those who do not deserve anything.
- Throughout Matthew's Gospel there is a tension between those who receive Jesus as King and those who reject Jesus as King. There is an attitude of spiritual entitlement versus illegal drafting. This story is leveling the playing field.

## **THE RESPONSE**

- <sup>10</sup> Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. <sup>11</sup> And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, <sup>12</sup> saying, '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.'
- <sup>24</sup> And hearing this, the ten became indignant with the two brothers.
- <sup>31</sup> The crowd sternly told them to be quiet, but they cried out all the more, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!"

## **2 PROBLEMS**

- We think we are better than we are. Thus, we think we are better than others.
- We think we deserve more than we get. Thus, we think we deserve more than others.

## **IS IT FAIR?**

- Is it fair for the Son of Man to die (vv. 17-19)?
- Is it fair for James and John to sit at His right and left hands (vv. 20-28)
- Is it fair for two blind people to regain their sight (vv. 29-34)

## **IT ISN'T FAIR!**

- The gospel isn't about God being FAIR.
- The gospel is about God being GENEROUS.

## **WHAT @ ME?**

- You and I never get past this point. There is never a point in time when this is any less true. You do not outgrow your status as TAX COLLECTOR and somehow become a PHARISEE. They are both the same.
- You and I think we are better than x, y, and z. But there was never a point in time when we deserved God's mercy and grace or can in any way earn or merit God's mercy and grace.
- This assault against our senses is insidious. It is a dark thing like a cancer within us that only God can cure.
- In God's economy, Capitalism and Christianity are not synonyms.
- Christianity is not a democracy. Christianity is a Theocracy and GOD alone sits on that throne wielding absolute power to do as He wants with what is His and when He does it, it is always right.
- In God's economy, you and I do not DESERVE anything we have.
- In God's economy, you and I should thank Him that we do not get what we have earned.
- We are, however, DESIGNED to know and experience the joy God has within Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and this joy is only known and experienced in His presence.

- In God's economy only GRACE AND MERCY reign and because of this, God withholds from us what we deserve and have earned and gives to us what we do not deserve and cannot earn.

### **NOW WHAT?**

- "COME AND SEE" just how glorious the gospel is.
- "GO AND TELL" everyone who is ostracized, stigmatized, and marginalized that JESUS SAVES.
- You and I come as we are, but we will never be what we were.
- He takes our filthy rags and gives us His righteous robe.
- We have no boast but JESUS.