The Parable Of The Laborers In The Vineyard (Mt. 20:1-16)

Where & When:

- Most likely, somewhere in Perea (Mt. 19:1)
  - Jesus has traveled through Galilee; now, He is in Perea on His way to Jerusalem
  - The Jews would go through Perea to avoid Samaria
  - It is well within 3 months of His crucifixion

Occasion Producing The Parable:

- The episode with *The Rich Young Ruler* has concluded (Mt. 19:16-26)
- Following that, Peter compares the disciples with the just-departed young ruler
  - They had done what he refused to do…left everything behind to follow Jesus
  - He inquires about their "reward" (Mt. 19:27)
- Jesus' answer focuses on their reward "…in the regeneration" (Mt. 19:28-30)
- Jesus also needs to correct their misguided ambitions (Mt. 19:27; 20:20-28)

Questions:

1) What same statement appears right *before* and *after* the parable? (19:30; 20:16) What do you suppose this indicates?

2) Briefly summarize the parable.

3) Contrast the pay for the first group (v. 2) with that of the later groups. (vv. 4, 5, 7) What is the difference?

4) What thoughts do you imagine filled the heads of those who were paid first? (vv. 8-9) What is the emphasis? (Titus 3:4-7)

5) At the same time, what thoughts do you suppose filled the heads of those who were hired first when they saw the amounts paid to the workers hired after them? What is the emphasis? (Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 4:1-5)

6) The first workers hired were unhappy toward who? *[Note: it is more than 1!]* (vv. 11-12)

7) Look up "hireling" in a dictionary. Have you ever heard the expression of one having a "hireling spirit?" How does this parable expose such an undesirable disposition?

8) Many believe the parable discusses those who come to the Lord in all stages of life. Do you believe the surrounding context supports that understanding?

9) What is the parable's ***main*** lesson?