



Essentials Of Divine Service

“... And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?” (Matthew 20:6).

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“For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. 2 And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. 3 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, 4 And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. 5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. 6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? 7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive. 8 So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. 9 And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. 10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. 11 And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, 12 Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. 13 But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? 14 Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. 15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? 16 So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen” (Matthew 20:1-16).

God has kingdom service for all, and rewards His servants who responds positively to His call unto service. In this parable representing God's kingdom, we learn the following:

1) The householder went out early in the morn-

“So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen” (Matthew 20:16)

ing to hire labourers into his vineyard. “Punctuality is the soul of business” is not only a wise saying but a sound principle for business success.

- 2) He agreed with the labourers their wages for the entire day - another sound Business principle that eliminate grounds for dispute.
- 3) At the third hour (9 am) and sixth hour (12 noon) he went out and hired more labourers for the work. This were evidences of effective supervision, correct assessment of progress and evaluation of efforts required to complete the work. Note that he did not unjustly blame the earlier workers for being slow but took the correct step to hire more labourers.
- 4) At the eleventh hour (5 pm) he went out again and found others standing idle, and asked them “Why stand ye all day idle?” (vs 6). This is a pertinent question for all today who are not actively involved in God's work. He then hired them for the remaining hour of service.
- 5) At the end of the day he call the servants and paid them “beginning from the last unto the first” (vs 8). Some were surprised to find that those who laboured for only one hour received the same wage as those that laboured for twelve, and murmured against the householder, while ignoring the fact that they all received what they had pre-agreed with him prior to the commencement of the work.
- 6) The householder's response “Is thine eye evil, because I am good?” (vs 15) highlights the danger of jealousy.
- 7) The conclusion in verse 16 calls for perseverance, steadfastness and carefulness to be among the chosen.