

LESSON 23: MATTHEW 20
MARCH 4, 2009

OVERVIEW

- . The parable of the workers in the vineyard – Matthew 20:1-16
- . Teaching concerning the Baptism of the Cross – Matthew 20:17-28
- . Jesus' restoring the blind men in Jericho – Matthew 20:29-34

THE PARABLE OF THE WORKERS IN THE VINEYARD – MATTHEW 20:1-16

- . The landowner in this parable refers to God – Matthew 20:1
- . The vineyard represents the Kingdom of God that is here on Earth, now – Matthew 20:1-2, Acts 2:42-47
- . The denarius represents a future reward, heaven – Matthew 20:2
 - . The denarius is not paid up front, rather at the end of the day
- . The landowner goes out and gathers workers throughout the day – Matthew 20:3-7
 - . The landowner offers work, doesn't demand it
 - . Every worker is offered the same work conditions, just different time frame
- . At the end of the day, the landowner gathers his workers and pays them all equally Matthew 20:8-16
 - . Everyone is given the same reward, regardless of the hours of service
 - . Our eternal reward is not based on our resume of works, rather the desire of our heart
 - . The condition of our heart will be evidenced by the fruit of our Labor
 - . God is just, never changing – Matthew 20:13
- . Those that recognize and tap in to the gift that God offers us freely, through His Son, enjoy the benefits of a fuller life, today, while still living in this world

TEACHING CONCERNING THE BAPTISM OF THE CROSS – MATTHEW 20:17-28

- . Jesus warns the disciples, once again, of the Cross – Matthew 20:17-19
 - . The Lord never mentions the Cross without the accompanying promise of the

Resurrection

- . Many Christians dwell upon the Cross with an attitude of martyrdom
- . Jesus wants us to see the joy in the cross and resurrection
 - Hebrews 12:2
 - . There can be no resurrection without the cross
- . The request of the mother of James and John – Matthew 20:20-21
 - . The disciples are still looking for selfish gain
 - . The disciples will continue to define God's kingdom in a worldly context up to the day of Pentecost – Luke 22:20-21
 - . When the Lord needs fellowship and support, his disciples are wrestling for the best seats
 - . Although Matthew refers only to the mother of Zebedee asking for this favor, other gospels show James and John involved in the plea – Mark 10:35-45
 - . It's easy for us to focus on and deplore their selfish ambition
 - . Let's not forget their faith in Jesus as Messiah
- . Jesus' response – Matthew 20:22-23
 - . "You don't know what you're asking!" "Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?"
 - . The cup is the cup of God's wrath because of human sin – Isaiah 51:17
Ezekiel 23:31-31
 - . The cup represents the Cross itself
 - . Jesus knows in time, both James and John will pick up the cross – Matthew 20:23
 - . James would be the first of the eleven remaining disciples at Pentecost, to die for his Lord by an act of beheading – Acts 12:2
 - . John would suffer over a long period of time, including exile at Patmos
 - . God has given Christ dominion over humanity, but only God is sovereign over the heavenly realm – Matthew 20:23, John 5:27-30, I Corinthians 15:24-28
- . Jesus' teaching concerning true spiritual supremacy – Matthew 20:24-28
 - . Jesus points out that those "of the world" love exercising authority over others
 - . In God's kingdom, it's just the opposite
 - . To be great in God's eyes, one must have a greater desire to serve, than to be served

JESUS' RESTORING TWO BLIND MEN OF JERICHO – MATTHEW 20:29-34

- . Matthew mentions two blind men, while Mark and Luke only mention one and refers to him by name, Bartimaeus – Mark 10:46-52, Luke 18:35-43
 - . These men couldn't see Jesus, but they knew who He was and believed in Him
 - . They referred to him as "Lord, Son of David", thereby proclaiming Him Messiah

- . Jesus knew their condition but wanted them to be specific in their request – Matthew 20:32
 - . Jesus wants us to bring our specific requests to Him
 - . The greater our desire to get to the heart of our needs, the greater the wisdom He will provide to truly understand our condition

NEXT LESSON: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2009 – MATTHEW 21