



WORKERS IN THE VINEYARD

My dad was a person who displayed no love for his Savior. He would take us to Sunday school and church very willingly, but he wouldn't attend with us. I had tried many times to share with him what Jesus meant to me, but I had a terrible fear of him and the first sign of anger I would run for the hills, so to speak. I prayed on his behalf for years that he would have the peace that passes all understanding that God had blessed us with.

As the years went by, our loving and caring Lord sent a new Pastor to our home church. Dad had a lot of hospitalizations those years and had many visits with him. As time went on, they would go fishing together and became friends.

When dad died in 1972, I was heartbroken because of the fear where he might be spending eternity; I had failed, so I thought, from the evidence. That was until his immediate family had a private service with communion, prior to the funeral. Pastor got into the pulpit and shared with us that he believed our dad/husband was in heaven, because of a contrite confession before he died.

The feeling that ran through me was like someone had removed a couple of ton of guilt from my shoulders. It wasn't to be me the Lord chose to bring the "message of hope" to dad, it was someone else.

"It was then that I fully understood this story that I had heard so many times".

"For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. He agreed to pay them a denarius for the day and sent them into his vineyard. "About nine in the morning he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. He told them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went.

"He went out again about noon and about three in the afternoon and did the same thing. About five in the afternoon he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, 'Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?' " "Because no one has hired us,' they answered. "He said to them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard.'

"When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first.' "The workers who were hired about five in the afternoon came and each received a denarius. So when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius. When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner. 'These who were hired last worked only one hour,' they said, 'and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the work and the heat of the day.'

"But he answered one of them, 'I am not being unfair to you, friend. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius? Take your pay and go. I want to give the one who was hired last the same as I gave you. Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?' "So the last will be first, and the first will be last." Matthew 20: 1-16 NIV

The application here that Jesus was making is to those who are believers and have been working to "bring the Gospel" to others since they were young verses those who become ambassadors as adults, even older adults. They will receive the same reward, life in heaven. As a believer the reward will be eternity in heaven. Fellow reader, *this may be your final time to hear His call, so don't wait until it's too late.*

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