

9. WORKERS IN THE VINEYARD

Before Jesus told the parable of the workers in the vineyard, he spoke to the rich young ruler. Knowing what Jesus said to the rich man, and how the rich man answered, will help us understand why Jesus told this parable.

The rich ruler asked Jesus what he had to do to “have eternal life” (Matt. 19:16). First Jesus told him to obey the commandments. The ruler said he had done so since his childhood.

But Jesus knows everything about everyone, and He could see what was in the rich man’s heart. He loved his money too much. He loved the things his money could buy. Jesus told the rich ruler to sell all he had, give the money to the poor, and follow Him (v. 21). Read Matt. 19:22.

Jesus told his disciples that it is very hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom. God must come first (Matt. 6:33). It is harder to put God first when we have a lot of money and nice things.



Peter said to Jesus, “Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?” (Matt. 19:27). Jesus said they would be rewarded, but He did not want Peter to get a big head. Read what Jesus said in Matt. 19:30.

6. Even though they had worked during the "heat of the day," they said, and the last ones only worked one hour, "thou hast made them $\frac{\quad}{14} \frac{\quad}{11} \frac{\quad}{\quad}$ unto us" (v. 12).
7. The owner answerer, "Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou $\frac{\quad}{17} \frac{\quad}{15} \frac{\quad}{2}$ with me for a penny?" (v. 13).
8. Jesus said, "So the last shall $\frac{\quad}{7} \frac{\quad}{\quad} \frac{\quad}{\quad} \frac{\quad}{13}$ and the first last" (v. 16).

Read the verse you have completed at the top of page two. Then read Matt. 20:28. Jesus came to serve. Talk about some of the ways Jesus served. What can you do to serve God? Here are a few ideas:



Flowers for the sick.



Study.

Help those in need.



Provide food for a Christian children's home.



Help clean the:

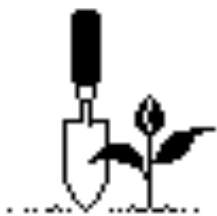


FOR NEXT WEEK - Memorize: "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only" (James 1:22). **Read:** Matt. 21:28-32. **Bonus:** Eph. 3.

Match the items in the left column with the correct answers in the right column. What does each thing represent in the parable of the workers in the vineyard in Matthew 20?

- | | | |
|-------|----------------------|-----------------|
| _____ | 1. The kingdom | A. God |
| _____ | 2. Workers | B. A short time |
| _____ | 3. The landowner | C. Heaven |
| _____ | 4. Work in vineyard | D. The church |
| _____ | 5. The eleventh hour | E. Christians |
| _____ | 6. Wages | F. Serve God |

Can you think of ways Christians can use these items to serve God? Color them.



Computers are being used more and more in today's world. This lesson was prepared on a Macintosh computer. Color this computer and write "God is love," on the screen:



NOTE TO THE CUSTOMER: The teachers' instructions are printed below so you can see how to use ordinary things around the house to illustrate your lessons. My students particularly enjoyed this lesson.

Lesson 9: The Vineyard

OBJECTIVES:

Older students will learn much from reading the lesson and learning about the background. All should learn what each part of the parable represents. Help students see the importance of serving God with a humble attitude.

Let older students read the **written text** before learning about the story. You may use the visual aid to tell the story, or let students learn by working the activity provided. Be prepared to tell the story to younger students, as it is not part of the written text.

With this lesson I used a **unique type of visual aid**. For the people who went to work in the vineyard, I used "little people" toys. (You could also cut out pictures of men from a catalog.) A different looking toy person represented the owner of the vineyard. (Save the people you use for this lesson to illustrate Lesson 11, also.)

Paper plates made good **clocks**. When Jesus told this parable, time was counted from six in the morning. Thus the third hour was nine in the morning. I had a preschooler tell me that the first group of men worked six hours, after the second group worked three hours. She said, "Three plus three is six." The clocks helped her understand, as well as using the men and moving them to the vineyard (a wash cloth). Let the students take turns moving the workers to the vineyard.

After all of the men have been moved, and you define how long they worked, have the master pay each man one shiny penny, starting with the ones who began working at the eleventh hour. Talk about how the ones who worked all day thought they should get more, but they had agreed to work for only a penny. Explain that a penny in the Bible was worth a lot more than our penny is worth today. Your students will understand the concept better as you place a penny by each little person.

The Flash-A-Card visual aid will teach children what people looked like in Bible times. Even if you use the picture, I recommend the individual people to provide a clearer picture of the length of time involved.

Each week when you are teaching the lessons, try to think of different ways to illustrate. Children have good imaginations. They don't need an elaborately drawn vineyard. They understood the lesson just as well with the use of a wash cloth.

ANSWERS:

Grades 3 & 4: "And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." 1. vineyard; 2. third; 3. ninth; 4. right; 5. more; 6. equal; 7. agree; 8. be first.

Grades 1 & 2: 1 - D; 2 - E; 3 - A; 4 - F; 5 - B; 6 - C.