

MASTERCLASS #4
Finding Fairness in Life

Word

Scripture Reference

Matthew 20:1-16

Discussion Questions

1. Have you been a recipient of someone's generosity? What is the most generous thing someone has ever done for you?
2. What is fairness? People often think of three ideas when they consider what fairness mean: (a) Sameness - that everyone should get or be treated the same; (b) Deservedness - that you get what you deserve; and (c) Social justice - that those who have more should give a greater percentage than others who have less. Discuss how these definitions of fairness are seen or practiced around you. Have you ever questioned God of being unfair? In what way?
3. Unless you come to terms that life is not fair, you will grow bitter and angry. In the Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard, Jesus teaches us life lessons that will help us find fairness in life. Read Matthew 20:1-16. The landowner hired workers to work in his vineyard, with those workers agreeing upon a certain wage. At different times of the day, the landowner hired more workers, with the last ones being hired towards the end of the work period. At the end of the day, wages were given to all the laborers. Discuss why the first hired laborers became upset and complained about their earnings. In their own sense of fairness, what did these first workers assume they would receive for working the whole day (v. 10-11)? If you were in those workers' shoes, would you feel and react the same way? Why?

4. The landowner represents God the Father in how He operates. From His response we learn life lessons on how God sees fairness:
 - a. **Life Lesson #1: God deals fairly with each person individually. Your response: learn to be content (v. 13).** God doesn't deal with people as a group but as an individual. He deals with each one fairly, but everyone is responsible for his or her action. What did the landowner tell one of the laborers that shows that the landowner is focused on the individual? What does it tell you about how God has created you as a unique human being? Discuss how you could be satisfied with yourself and with what you have until you start comparing yourself with others. How does accepting yourself as how God had made you give you contentment?
 - b. **Life Lesson #2: God deals with each person graciously. Your response: learn to not compare (v. 14).** The owner told the laborer that he wished to give to the last laborer, who only worked for one hour, the same amount of wage he had given the others. It was the landowner's prerogative to do so because of his grace. God deals with you graciously, even if you don't deserve it. Do you deserve every good thing in your life? Share how God has dealt with you graciously. How did Christ's death show you His grace? His graciousness to you cannot be compared with others. How can you learn not to compare?
 - c. **Life Lesson #3: God has the right to give what He desires, and it comes from His good heart for our best. Your response: learn to trust (v. 15).** God owns everything and so He gets to choose how He distributes His things. You cannot demand something to be given to you when it doesn't belong to you. The very fact that no one can take with him anything when he dies shows that everything in our life is just borrowed. Do you have the right to question how God distributes what belongs to Him? How do you feel when God blesses you? And how do you feel when He blesses others? How can you learn to trust God in the way He blesses not only you but others as well? Learn to trust Him because He knows what is best for you.

Walk

When the day to give an account of our life comes, some prominent people may find themselves last or in low position in heaven. Some who are humble and poor now may find their standing quite high (v. 16) simply because of how they responded to the fairness and grace of God. Fairness is not in the result; it is found in the Person when you draw yourself to God. How does comparing down instead of comparing up help you appreciate your life better? Do you understand that God withholds certain things from you for your best? Do you accept that God gives you just enough so that you will continue to trust Him?

Worship & Prayer

Heavenly Father, You are the source of good things. Thank You for how You have created and blessed me. Help me not to define myself based on what I have, but as recipient of Your amazing grace. May I learn to trust You even when You withhold things that I wish for or even work hard for because You are sovereign and all-knowing and You know me even better than I know myself. You know what is best for me. Help me Lord God to always remember that You have given Your own Son to save me and give me eternal life, how much more other things that You think are good for me. Help me to be content, not to compare especially for the wrong reasons and to trust You because You have a good heart that knows what is best for me. In Jesus' name. Amen.