

Trust!

Scripture used: [Matthew 20:1-16 \(NIV\)](#)

OVERVIEW

This week Pastor Tilden wrapped up our “Dream Crazy Big!” series. He reminded us that the core message of all these sermons is both simple and powerful: God wants to redeem the world through the generous, loving behavior of Jesus followers. That is what it means for us to be the shining light for others. Our deeds, not our words, serve as undeniable proof of a God who knows and loves each of us. But living such an inspiring life is easier said than done. Every follower of Jesus will be tempted to despair many times during his or her life. Whether it’s a tragedy like the Paradise fires or a personal crisis of health or family, we will all face doubts. When we are tempted to despair, we need to bring that feeling to God. Those are the moments when we need perspective. Pastor Tilden walked us through Jesus’ parable of the workers in the vineyard, which perfectly captures this need for perspective. We tend to feel like the workers who labored a full day while receiving the same pay as those who only showed up in the afternoon. But the reality is that all of us are the late afternoon workers. None of us earned the salvation that God offers us. And that is the one promise in the world on which we can count!

KEY POINTS

- 1) **God wants to redeem the world through acts of uncommon generosity and service.** Jesus followers are expected to act like Him, and self-less service is the one thing that defines Jesus legacy! That is what the Gospel says in [Mark 10:45 \(NIV\)](#): “the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.” The most Christ-like thing we can do in this world is deny ourselves and serve others with love and generosity.
- 2) **As we live with uncommon generosity and service in a broken world, our faith will be challenged.** Both service and generosity require us to sacrifice. That sacrifice is based on a deep trust that God is who He says He is, and that His promises will be fulfilled. Even more than that, we want God to be fair to us. Jesus tells this parable specifically to address this need for fairness. He gets us to identify with the early workers, and to question the fairness of the landowner who compensates everyone equally.
- 3) **God is unfair to us; His unfairness works out in our favor!** Most of us imagine fairness as a scale that balances the good on one side, and the bad on the other side. The broken world seems to pile up so many things on the bad side of the scale: sickness; fear; broken relationships; and pain. Consider the disciples who would be tortured and even killed for their faith. Jesus told them clearly in [John 16:33 \(NIV\)](#) that he has overcome the world, which meant they would all have peace.
 - a. **God breaks the scale of fairness.** There is literally nothing that can outweigh God’s unconditional love and overwhelming grace. No matter what the world throws at us, it is nothing when compared to the majesty and grace of God!
- 4) **We must use fairness as a motivation to share the Good News.** Once we understand how much God has done for us, Jesus’ parable becomes clear. While we may feel like the early workers who had to work all day for the same wage as newcomers, that is a lie. Each of us is a late arrival, an “eleventh hour worker” who benefits from a generous landowner who has been “unfair” to us in our favor! We can use this perspective as Jesus followers. We should fight to extend God’s blessings to others and to be sensitive to injustice and oppression that others face. This is how we represent the redemptive justice of God!

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Pastor Tilden challenged us to think about how we live and what that says about our trust in God. What stuck with you about Jesus’ parable of the workers? Which group - the resentful early workers or the grateful late workers - do you identify with?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Fairness is a difficult topic. Most of us like to weigh the pluses and minuses of life on an imaginary scale. But we ignore a critical fact when we do this. The biggest plus of all is Jesus’ sacrifice so that we could be washed clean of our sins and reconciled to full relationship with God. Literally nothing bad in the world can outweigh this! Why do you think it’s so easy to overlook the incredible blessing we’ve received from the Lord?
- 3) **DO** - Ask God to reveal the crazy big dream that He has in store for you, and believe you will be a blessing to this world. Claim for yourself the faith that will always trust in God, and the love that will fill up your heart. Then declare “I will live and love like Jesus!”