

IS GOD UNFAIR?

QUESTION: Have you felt that God is unfair?

There's **two ways** we can view God as unfair:

- 1). When GOOD things happen to a bad person.
- 2). When BAD things happen to a good person.

Parable of the Vineyard Workers

Matthew 20:1 (NLT) *"For the Kingdom of Heaven is like the landowner who went out early one morning to hire workers for his vineyard. ² He agreed to pay the normal daily wage and sent them out to work. ³ At nine o'clock in the morning he was passing through the marketplace and saw some people standing around doing nothing. ⁴ So he hired them, telling them he would pay them whatever was right at the end of the day. ⁵ So they went to work in the vineyard. At noon and again at three o'clock he did the same thing. ⁶ At five o'clock that afternoon he was in town again and saw some more people standing around. He asked them, 'Why haven't you been working today?' ⁷ They replied, 'Because no one hired us.'*

"The landowner told them, 'Then go out and join the others in my vineyard.'

⁸ That evening he told the foreman to call the workers in and pay them, beginning with the last workers first. ⁹ When those hired at five o'clock were paid, each received a full day's wage.

¹⁰ When those hired first came to get their pay, they assumed they would receive more. But they, too, were paid a day's wage. ¹¹ When they received their pay, they protested to the owner,

¹² 'Those people worked only one hour, and yet you've paid them just as much as you paid us who worked all day in the scorching heat.' ¹³ He answered one of them, 'Friend, I haven't been unfair! Didn't you agree to work all day for the usual wage? ¹⁴ Take your money and go. I

wanted to pay this last worker the same as you. ¹⁵ Is it against the law for me to do what I want with my money? Should you be jealous because I am kind to others?'

Romans 9:14 (NIV) *What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! ¹⁵ For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." ¹⁶ It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God's mercy.*

When we COMPARE, grace will not seem FAIR.

Pride creeps in...

Matthew 20:16 (NLT) *“So those who are last now will be first then, and those who are first will be last.”*

Jesus Again Predicts His Death

Matthew 20:17 (NLT) *As Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside privately and told them what was going to happen to him. ¹⁸ “Listen,” he said, “we’re going up to Jerusalem, where the Son of Man will be betrayed to the leading priests and the teachers of religious law. They will sentence him to die. ¹⁹ Then they will hand him over to the Romans to be mocked, flogged with a whip, and crucified. But on the third day he will be raised from the dead.”*

James/John argue about who’s the greatest. (vs. 20-28)

Matthew 20:26 (NLT) *But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever wants to be first among you must become your slave. ²⁸ For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.”*

Jesus Heals Two Blind Men

Matthew 20:29 (NLT) *As Jesus and the disciples left the town of Jericho, a large crowd followed behind. ³⁰ Two blind men were sitting beside the road. When they heard that Jesus was coming that way, they began shouting, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!” ³¹ “Be quiet!” the crowd yelled at them. But they only shouted louder, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!” ³² When Jesus heard them, he stopped and called, “What do you want me to do for you?” ³³ “Lord,” they said, “we want to see!” ³⁴ Jesus felt sorry for them and touched their eyes. Instantly they could see! Then they followed him.*

My Next Step

- What area of your life are you struggling with God’s fairness?
- How can you turn to grace instead?