

The title for today's message is: ***God gives us what is right in His sight.***

Jesus said: ***The first will be last, and the last will be first***

Grace and peace to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Today is another day that you and I are able to rejoice in the love and the grace that God has placed upon each one of us.

Actually to be honest, every day is a day to rejoice. Yet for many Christians today we don't actually feel like rejoicing each and every day.

That's right! maybe its not everyday we feel like God has placed His grace and love upon us. Why?

Well, the Lord tells us why here in our text. He tells us that our thoughts are not always His thoughts, nor are our plans, always His plans.

And sometimes with our small thinking, and our small planning, we try to limit God's great infinite kindness, and mercy.

God said in Isaiah chapter 55: ***“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,’ declares the LORD. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts’.”***

Now as for these two verses in Isaiah chapter 55, they are the same as what the Lord is saying in our Gospel lesson today.

Yet, there seems to be a divine contradiction here, and its that contradiction that were going to examine this morning.

Now what was it Jesus said at the end of our text? He said: **"So the last will be first, and the first will be last."**

Look, God gives all believers in Him, that which is right in His sight. Which is the theme for today's message.

God gives to you and me, not the worst, which no doubt we deserve. Rather He gives us the best, which we certainly don't deserve.

As many time's before, Jesus describes the kingdom of heaven with a parable. He said, **"For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner, who went out early in the morning to hire men to work in his vineyard."**

And so it was, the men gathered in the market place, waiting for a landowner to come along and hire them for the day. The same as today.

Now according to our text were told that the landowner entered into a contract with the workers he hired.

He offered them one denarius for a day's work, which they agreed to. After all, that was the going rate for one days work at the time.

Even soldiers were paid one denarius a day. Now in today's economy, that's about one penny more or less. Certainly not much by today's standards.

Were also told that the landowner goes out into his vineyard to check on the work being done, when he realizes he needs more workers.

So again he goes to the market place where there were more men waiting to be hired, by the third hour, around 9:00 a.m. he hires a few more workers.

Offering to pay them what was right, they agreed. And again around the sixth hour, which would be around 12 noon, he hires even more workers.

Now about the ninth hour, about 3:00 p.m. the landowner saw that he needed even more workers to finish out the days work.

So again he goes to the market place and hires more workers from the men who were still waiting around to be hired.

Now the landowner thought he finally had enough workers to finish the work in his vineyard for that day. But he was wrong.

That's right, he again goes out at the eleventh hour, about 5 p.m. and hires even more workers.

Even though nothing is mentioned of payment, except with the first group of workers hired. The landowner keeps his promise to be fair to all workers.

Now at the end of the work day around 6:00 p.m., the landowner told his foreman to pay all the workers.

The foreman now calls in the workers, and pays them their wages. The foreman begins paying those workers who were hired last, first.

Why the last hired first? Well the workers hired last were certain to be closer to the front of the vineyard, so they would be the first to be paid and leave.

What's interesting is the foreman paid this group a whole denarius, which surprised them to the point that they were overjoyed, and began rejoicing.

After all they were only expecting to receive about 1/12th of what they received, and would have been happy with that.

But the owner did not pay them what they had expected. Even though 1/12th of a denarius would have been right by the standards of that time.

But what about today. In today's society what do people think they deserve? It seems today people think they deserve the most and the best, right?

Yet the truth is we don't deserve anything at all. If anything we deserve only the worst.

Look, we sin every day against God who loves us so much. We sin with our actions, our words and with our thoughts.

Even though, God gives all believers what is right in His sight. He doesn't condemn us to eternal punishment because of our sins.

Instead God gives us salvation by way of His Son, the cross and His resurrection, giving us His grace, by which we are forgiven.

And the Lord has done this for us here today. But sadly, because of our sinful nature, we don't go out of our way to find God's salvation.

And even in our new life, our new nature, we sometimes put behind us the things of God, in order to do the things that our sinful nature likes to do.

My friends, we can rejoice today and every day, that God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts and his plans are greater than our plans.

Again we are saved only by God's grace, therefore we cannot boast of anything we have done to gain our own salvation.

We can, in a sense, boast that God gives to us what is right in His sight. Not what we deserve, nor the worst, but only the best.

Just who are the players in today's parable, the landowner, why that's God Himself. The workers, who are you and me.

And our pay, its what is right in God's sight, no matter when your called, early or late we all will receive eternal life in heaven.

God is going to treat all people who answer His call with mercy, kindness, love and generosity.

And yes, its this act of mercy, kindness, love and generosity that cause many to say: “That’s not fair”. Just as the workers who were hired first said.

Look, many Christians who realize that they won’t receive more, for all their hard work and sacrifices throughout the years will be angry with God.

Look, our gracious God uses this teaching again and again to remind us of the power of His grace to save each one of us.

In Paul’s letter to the believers at Corinth, he reminded them of how God uses His ways, and His plans to carry out what He wants done.

And these things of God are the things that cause us to rejoice every day of our lives, even in the midst of trial and tribulation.

We can rejoice even in the midst of sadness and sickness when we look at what God gives us. He gives us what is right in His sight.

We rejoice today because the Lord Himself gives us what is right in His sight: the best--eternity, and forgiveness. We’d be like those workers wouldn’t we?

We could easily grumble and complain because of our sinful nature. But God’s grace is abundant, whether we are new believers, or old believers.

Whether we think we sin a little or a lot, God still desires to forgive us. The price of forgiveness is still the same:

The blood of His Son, Jesus Christ, on the cross. God gives us what is right in His sight. – Not the worst – only the best!

Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy spirit be with us forever. Amen.