

“The Last Shall Be First”

Six sermons developed by Bob Young

SERMON 1

Rich Young Ruler [Luke 18 and parallels; esp. Matthew 19]

Introduction

- A man with much advantage, asks a good question, correctly identifies Jesus
 - Wants to justify himself?
 - Selective obedience, pride? Or honest inquiry?
 - Was in a sense spiritually immature.
 - To be mature, give up what makes you #1 in this life, be willing to be last
 - Seek treasure in heaven more than treasure on earth.
- 1- Sorrowful, was rich; was first (rich/young/ruler), could not stand idea of being last?
- 2- Was self-dependent more than God-dependent
- Riches are a great problem for kingdom involvement; because they point to self-sufficiency and self-reliance
 - The spiritual kingdom is not defined in our secular, worldly terms
- 3- Can anyone be saved? Who can be saved?
- The last, those who are willing to become like God.
 - God is powerful, but he is powerful because of his nature.
 - The power he exercised in Christ was in becoming weak; being last.
 - Our spiritual power is becoming like God, sacrificing and serving.

SERMON 2

Kingdom Values

Mt 19:30; 20:16, Parable of vineyard workers, + preceding paragraph

What Does One Get for Kingdom Work?

Matthew 20:1-16, story of the landowner who hires men to work in his vineyard.

Text answers Peter’s question of 19:27, which immediately follows story of rich young ruler.

Jesus addresses a series of “human questions” about work and reward, the kingdom is different

- What can I do to guarantee what I will get?
- What will I get for my labor? (19:27)
- Why don’t I get more? (20:11)
- What is fair? (20:12)
- In view of our greater sacrifice, will you give us more than the rest? (20:21-22)

People want to know what they are going to get for participating in the kingdom.

Jesus answers several questions in the text, revealing the spiritual nature of the kingdom

- What must I do to inherit eternal life?
- We have left all—what will there be for us (19:28-30)? Jesus’ response: while they have left everything, they have left nothing. One cannot out-give God. There will be future abundance and even position (19:30).
- What about fairness—why don’t we get more? The landowner did what he promised. God is generous to all, regardless of our performance, ability or inability to perform.

- What will we get? Will we get more? Jesus asks, “Do you want what I am going to get?” Their affirmative response belies their misunderstanding. Jesus is challenging their basic values. He came to serve and to give his life (20:26-28).

In summary, Jesus makes the following points that demonstrate that a differing set of values governs kingdom work.

- God calls many diverse people to work (20:3-6)
- God pays “whatever is right” (20:4)
- He is generous but not “fair” according to worldly standards (20:13-15)
- He gives “a hundred times as much” (19:29)
- He gives “his life as a ransom for many” (20:28)

SERMON 3

Kingdom Importance: Who will be the most important? [Text/Reading: Matthew 20]

Context: Passion predictions

Mark 9:35, second passion prediction

Mark 10:31, third passion prediction

Lessons

Mark 10:31-45

Conclusion

Luke 22

SERMON 4

Kingdom Questions: Who will be saved? Will few be saved? [Luke 13:22-30]

24, it takes effort, it is not automatic, some who seek to enter cannot or will not

25, some will not enter because it is too late

25-27, some will not enter because they are not recognized by the master

It is not enough to simply be present

Actions must correspond, some who appear good are workers of evil

28-29, Jews (patriarchs/prophets) are in the kingdom, people (Gentiles) from all parts

30, you are glorying in being first, but the last will enter before you; and you will be last and excluded

SERMON 5

Kingdom Principles

A spiritual principle: Lose in order to gain, die in order to live

Matthew 16:24ff; Luke 14:25ff; John 12:24ff

Textual study of these three distinct passages

Three questions to help us apply the principle

-1- How much do you want to be like Jesus?

Examine the priorities of your life, do you want a good life or to be a good person?

-2- Are you deciding well in this life?

Keep the end/goal in mind: save soul/to be a disciple/bear fruit

-3- Do you believe the kingdom is worth it?

Jesus claims first place

SERMON 6

Philippians

Phil 2:5-11, Jesus' goal

Phil. 3:7-14, Paul's goal

My goal

- 1, My life, enabled by and centered in the gospel
- 2, My attitude, focused on service not self
- 3, My purpose
- 4, My thoughts and reliance on God