

WEEK 1: UNCENSORED

The Last Shall Be First

Matthew 20:1-16 (NRSV)

“When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’ When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

1. The First Step

2. One Step Forward, Two Steps Back

3. The Last Step

Radical Teaching: God's ways are certainly not our ways. We would never think to pay people the same wage for less work, to keep inviting more people to the worksite all day long. In God's world, it is all about the invitation. Not necessarily who or when, but that the invitation continues to be extended. "The Last Step" becomes "The First Step" in experiencing the Kingdom of Heaven. What step are you on?