



The Struggle is Real! *The Equity of God Pt.2, July 10, 2022*

Holy Text: 20:1-16

- Last week, we looked at the *Parable of the Vineyard*, where a householder hired groups of laborers to work in his vineyard.
- The householder agreed to a sum with the initial group (v.2), then promised to “give what was right” to the others. (vv.4-7).
- As it turned out, the householder paid them all the same. (vv.8-9) The first group murmured at this! They felt they deserved more! (vv.10-12) The householder defended his decision:

Matthew 20:13-15 (NLT) *“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?’*

- This promoted a discussion of God’s equity:
 1. The householder did not treat them *equally*; but he treated them *equitably*. This is what God mercifully does and why many reject Him today.
 2. Our current world is consumed with the idea of equality. But its idea is a false one: either “equivalent or parity of outcome for all” or “what we feel we deserve at any given moment.”
 3. These are not only unbiblical concepts, they are sinful concepts. They fly in the face of the sovereignty of God and the depravity of man.
 4. **Equity in Scripture can be defined as “justice or rightness.” It is God’s equitable or divinely fair distribution of justice, gifts, and treatment. Critically, it is tied to His sovereignty and wisdom.**
- We also admitted that we, like the first group, would likely have been upset as well!

Us too!

We too are susceptible to questioning the Heavenly Householder! Why do we think God is sometimes unfair?

Because our will clashes with His will. We want our own way! Scripture however, paints another, much more beautiful picture...

- **Psalms 25:4-5 (KJV)** *Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. 5 Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.*
- **Psalms 40:8 (KJV)** *I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.*
- **Psalms 143:10 (KJV)** *Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.*
- **Matthew 6:10 (KJV)** *Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.*
- **Matthew 26:42 (KJV)** *He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.*

- **Matthew 26:39 (KJV)** *And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.*
- **John 4:34 (KJV)** *Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.*
- **Romans 12:2 (KJV)** *And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*
- **Colossians 1:9-10 (KJV)** *For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; 10 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;*
- **1 Peter 4:1-2 (KJV)** *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; 2 That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.*
- **1 John 2:17 (KJV)** *And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*

Despite these truths, we often still struggle...

The Struggle is Real: Why we Struggle with God's Equity

1. Because we lose sight of the immensity and greatness of God's gift to us in Christ! (Ungratefulness)
 - **Ephesians 2:4-7 (KJV)** *But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*
 - In Christ, we have been given eternal life! (1 John 2:25) When we forget the incredible, merciful, grace-filled, love of God in Christ (1 John 3:1) in saving sinners like us, we struggle!
2. Because we lose our fear of God. (Irreverence)
 - **Isaiah 66:1-2 (KJV)** *Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? 2 For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.*
 - If we could but tremble again, thoughts of "unfair" would disappear!
3. Because we are influenced by Satan's ultimate lie. (Spiritual Warfare)
 - We can sometimes question God's fairness because of the devil. He says to us, like he said to Eve, "Yea, hath God said....?" (Gen 3:1b)
 - Satan works to get us to doubt God!
 - Remember, Jesus said, "He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." (John 8:44)

4. Because we assimilated cultural thinking. (World)
 - **Matthew 13:22 (KJV)** *He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.*
 - Beware of “the care of this world!” This is a pressure most of us face! The world system is opposed to Christ. Its mentality is hostile...
 - “...know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.” (Jam 4:4)
 - **1 John 2:16 (KJV)** *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”*

5. Because we allow our feelings to lead us. (Flesh)
 - We’ve been hammering on “feelings idolatry.” Our goal is not to anger or harm, but to set you free! Our feelings (flesh), if not brought under God’s authority, can be a great bondage! Remember, “*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*” (Jer 17:9)
 - **Proverbs 14:12 (KJV)** *There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*
 - **Galatians 5:16-17 (KJV)** *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*

6. Because we listen to ungodly advice. (Counselors)
 - **1 Corinthians 15:33 (KJV)** *Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.*
 - **Proverbs 13:20 (KJV)** *He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.*
 - This is a much bigger deal than we like to think. Listen to those who will encourage you to love and obey God and His Word!

7. Because we have unresolved anger or hurt. (Brokenness)
 - Sometimes, “God is unfair” masks something deeper. God’s commands look or “feel” like something that hurt us in the past. Beloved...
 - **Ephesians 4:26 (KJV)** *Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:*
 - Remember our LORD’s words...
 - **Luke 4:18-19 (KJV)** *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, 19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.*

8. Because we sometimes view God’s Word as limiting. (Pride)
 - Instead of seeing God’s Word as *liberations*, we can sometimes see it as *limitations*, resulting in *accusations* of “God, this is not fair!” We fear *loss*.
 - This is pride! Beloved, God’s Word is good and always sets His children free!
 - **James 1:25 (KJV)** *But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.*
 - **Psalms 107:20 (KJV)** *He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.*

9. Because we often live our lives differently than God's standard... (Ignorance or Rebellion)
- ...so scriptural knowledge brings about painful choices.
 - This can become a source of frustration and fear. I call it the LOB: Life Obedience Gap.
 - Instead of embracing God's Word, this gap can cause us to give in and acquiesce to business as usual.
 - Let us keep pressing and keep being continually sanctified! Be strong!
 - **Joshua 1:7 (KJV)** *Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.*

So now what? How do we press through and overcome this struggle? Summarizing from last week:

1. Let us Learn to Trust God!
 - **Proverbs 3:5-7 (KJV)** *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. 6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. 7 Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.*
 - Corporate worship and the spiritual disciplines (prayer, study, meditation, fasting, praise etc.) are a great help here.
 - Also, this trust grows with time and testimony. Keep going!
2. Let us Cultivate Delight in the LORD!
 - **Psalms 119:47-48 (KJV)** *And I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved. 48 My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes.*
 - Again, see the above! Your delight will match your discipline!
3. Let us Happily Obey Him!
 - **Deuteronomy 10:12-13 (KJV)** *And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, 13 To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?*
 - **1 John 5:3 (KJV)** *For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.*
 - Instead of complaining, concede! Accept! Submit! Yield! As the church, let us joyfully be subject to Christ! (Eph 5:24, 32)

Our Prayer:

LORD Jesus, we trust Thee! Our hope is in Thee! You are the Householder; You are never unfair to Your servants. You are gracious with Your rewards and promises! Make us continually content and joyful to work in Thy vineyard!

Amen!