

Mission True 2021 - An EpiPen® for Ingratitude

Matthew 20:1-16

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I. Of Allergies and EpiPens

II. The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard

¹For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴and said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' So they went. ⁵Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise. ⁶And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, 'Why have you been standing here idle all day?' ⁷They said to him, 'Because no one hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive.' ⁸"So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, 'Call the laborers and give them *their* wages, beginning with the last to the first.' ⁹And when those came who *were hired* about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius. ¹⁰But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius. ¹¹And when they had received *it*, they complained against the landowner, ¹²saying, 'These last *men* have worked *only* one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.' ¹³But he answered one of them and said, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? ¹⁴Take *what* is yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man *the same* as to you. ¹⁵Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?' ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen." (Matthew 20:1-16)

A. The Owner's Generosity (1-11)

B. The Workers' Ingratitude (12)

C. The Owner's Response (13-15 cf. Dt 15:7-11; 28:54,56; Pr 28:22)

The image of an *evil* _____ is used several times in the OT to convey the idea of selfishness or miserliness. For instance, God commanded (Dt 15:7-9):

⁷"If there is among you a poor man of your brethren..., you shall not harden your heart nor shut your hand from your poor brother, ⁸but you shall open your hand wide to him and willingly lend him sufficient for his need, whatever he needs. ⁹Beware lest there be a wicked thought in your heart... and your eye be evil against your poor brother and you give him nothing, and he cry out to the LORD against you, and it become sin among you.

The problem with the workers who complained *was a* _____ *issue*: selfishness and ingratitude.

D. Jesus' Explanation (cf. Dt 7:6-8; 9:4-6; Gen 12:3; 18:17-18; 22:18; 26:4)

Jesus concludes by warning those who were *called* to work in God's vineyard against self-righteousness. They believed they deserved more than the owner was giving them. This mentality betrayed a deep misunderstanding of God's grace and their calling:

⁴"Do not think in your heart, after the LORD your God has cast [the Canaanites] out before you, saying, 'Because of my righteousness the LORD has brought me in to possess this land'; but it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD is driving them out from before you. ⁵It is not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart that you go in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD your God drives them out from before you, and that He may fulfill the word which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. ⁶Therefore understand that the LORD your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you are a stiff-necked people. (Dt 9:4-6)

III. Diagnosing Ingratitude

A. The Heart of Ingratitude (Mt 6:22-23; 1 Cor 4:6-7)

Jesus' parable highlights that *the heart of ingratitude is an inability to see the ways God has already blessed us*. The workers who complained had evil _____ . Jesus explains:

²² *"The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. ²³ But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!"* (Mt 6:22-23)

A man with *a good* _____ can see the good that God has done in his own life and in the world. Consequently, *a good* _____ fills the whole person with light, with gratitude. A man with *an evil* _____, on the other hand, cannot see the good that God has given. Ingratitude, therefore, results from a failure to _____ God's myriad gifts.

B. The Source of Ingratitude (cf. Col 2:7)

All the good we have is a result of God's grace and kindness (Jas 1:17). Hence, if we have *a good* _____, then we will overflow with gratitude. So Paul writes to the Colossians.

⁶*As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, ⁷rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.*

Paul urges us to *overflow with thanksgiving*. His language invites us to picture a jar filled to the brim with thankfulness – strike the glass and what comes out? Thanksgiving, praise, gratitude. Why? Because the jar is full of it!

So here's what we have to understand: *the source of our ingratitude is not in our circumstances but in our* _____. Our circumstances simply reveal, expose our _____. So if thankfulness fills our _____, then our circumstances will result in thankfulness and praise to God. Our Lord Jesus was consistently thankful to God because He was a man of character and virtue, because thankfulness permeated His heart. So when He got bumped, thankfulness came out.

C. Examples of Ingratitude

Marriages

Parents & Children

Christian Singles & Kids

IV. Conclusion

