

If the world could have been saved by bookkeeping, it would have been saved by Moses not Jesus...

The only way to solve the problem of evil is for God to do what he in fact did: to take it out of the world by taking it into himself – down into the forgettery of Jesus dead human mind – and to close the books on it forever.

Robert Farrar Capon

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight.

James, brother of Jesus

THE WORKERS IN THE VINEYARD

Wednesday, June 1, 2011

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. He agreed to pay them a denarius-for the day and sent them into his vineyard.

About nine in the morning he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. He told them, ‘You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. He went out again about noon and about three in the afternoon and did the same thing. About five in the afternoon he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, ‘Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?’

“‘Because no one has hired us,’ they answered.

“He said to them, ‘You also go and work in my vineyard.’ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first.’

“The workers who were hired about five in the afternoon came and each received a denarius. So when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius. When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner.

‘These who were hired last worked only one hour,’ they said, ‘and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the work and the heat of the day.’ “But he answered one of them, ‘I am not being unfair to you, friend. Didn’t you agree to work for a denarius? Take your pay and go. I want to give the one who was hired last the same as I gave you. Don’t I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?’

“So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

Matthew 20 v 1-16

SIGNS OF THE KINGDOM

1. Salvation and Deliverance
2. Righteousness and Justice
3. Peace
4. Joy
5. God's Presence
6. Healing
7. Return from Exile

KINGDOM OF GOD

KINGDOM OF THE WORLD

HOW DO WE HANDLE IT IF GOD
SEEMS UNFAIR?

trouble with sheer grace

trouble with frustrated plans

middle class in spirit

It means to see that you are deeply in debt before God, and you have no ability to even begin to redeem yourself. God's free generosity to you, at infinite cost to him, was the only thing that saved you. What if, however, you aren't poor in spirit? That would mean you don't believe you are so sinful, morally bankrupt, and lost that only free grace can possibly save you. You may find the classic Christian doctrines about humanity's deep sin and lostness to be too harsh. On the contrary, you believe that God owes you some things – he ought to answer your prayers and to bless you for the many good things you've done.

Even though the Bible doesn't use the term, by inference we can say that you are "middle-class in spirit." You feel that you've earned a certain standing with God through your hard work. You also may believe that the success and the resources you have are primarily due to your own industry and energy.

Tim Keller

ENVY

EVALUATING YOUR LIFE BASED
ON WHAT OTHERS HAVE

"you made them equal to us"

CAN WE STAND THE KINDNESS
OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

If the world could have been saved by bookkeeping, it would have been saved by Moses not Jesus. The law was just fine. And God gave it a good thousand years or so to see if anyone could pass a test like that. But when nobody did – when it became perfectly clear that there was “no one who was righteous, not even one” that “both Jews and Gentiles alike were all under the power of sin” – God gave up on salvation by the books. He cancelled everybody’s records in the death of Jesus and rewarded us all, equally and fully, with a new creation in the resurrection of the dead.

The only way to solve the problem of evil is for God to do what he in fact did: to take it out of the world by taking it into himself – down into the forgettery of Jesus dead human mind – and to close the books on it forever. That way the Kingdom of Heaven is for everybody; hell is reserved only for the idiots who insist on keeping nonexistent records in their heads.

Robert Farrar Capon