

**Lectionary passages:- Exodus 16 v2-15; Jonah 3 v10-4.11**

**Philippians 1 v21-30 Matthew 20 v1-16**

If you have been keeping up with my notes you will recognise a common theme running through our thoughts over the last few weeks. Judging ourselves and judging others.

Today's passage in Jonah takes place when he is asked by God to preach in Nineveh, Jonah is not keen, as you will remember from Sunday school days. He chooses instead to go in the opposite direction to Nineveh, Tarshish (Spain!). God is displeased and Jonah ends up in the belly of a whale....well eventually he decides to go to Nineveh.

I like the way God calls Jonah as he does us but it is our choice. We really are free to decide to do his will to follow him or not. But Jonah does remind us that to go against God's will is often dangerous....and can only delay the decision we need to make!

Jonah preaches to that sinful city of Nineveh and they repent, turning from their sins and wrong ways. They begin to behave justly and fairly to one another to acknowledge the God of Israel in their lives and God forgives their sin.

**JONAH IS MAD!** He is angry he does not think they deserve to be forgiven, and further, they are not Jews how can God love them like he loves his own people?

1. Jesus picks up this theme in a parable in Matthew 20. The story of workers in the vineyard.
2. A farmer has a crop to harvest so he employs workers, but on the day not enough turn up so he sets to work those who have agreed to work for a days wage and he goes to the market place to hire some more, it would be the job centre these days!
3. It is mid morning and he offers a days wage in exchange for work for the rest of the day ...good deal they all think, so they go to work.
4. Later that day the farmer realises he is still short of workers so he hires more. And again in mid afternoon he hires yet more workers ...
5. The day ends and in those days workers were paid at the end of each day, so they line up only to discover they are all paid the same, a day's wage.
6. How would you feel about that? Especially if you had worked for most of the day in the hot sun? You can imagine the workers are mad and try to form a trade union!

7. The master says, just as God says to Jonah, why are you angry because I have been generous? NO ONE had been cheated, virtually no one had done a full days work and yet all had been paid the same, a day's pay, all had been over paid, some more than others.
8. This parable of Jesus teaches us to refrain from judging others and encourage us to share in the joy of heaven for those who come late to faith, and eternal life, after wasting. Perhaps after many years of abusing their talents and gifts, one can think of Apostle Paul or the thief on the cross who get the same blessing as those who have served much.

*We must see things from God's point of view, be joyful when one sinner repents, finding the grace and mercy of their heavenly Father.*

Being human it is not always like that! May God bless our hearts with his love and mercy?