

March 1, 2009  
Week 24

**Is This Really Fair?**  
**The Generous Landowner**  
*Matthew 20:1-16*

Group or Family Study Guide

1. READ Matthew 20:1-16.
2. Why do you think that the *landowner* image is one of Jesus' favorites for representing God.
3. What does this portrayal of God mean for our philosophies and practices of ownership versus stewardship of our lives, resources and "possessions?"
4. Was the landowner fair to the early crew? Why or why not?



10. Some people – even church people – will forever cling to the idea that heaven is something we earn, even though the Bible so clearly indicates otherwise. Why is this idea so sticky and hard to let go of?
  
11. Do you love the “last shall be first” reality of heaven? If so, why so? If not, what does your reticence communicate about your worldview and relative embrace of God’s values?
  
12. Keith has used the phrase “conspiratorial pleasure” more than once in this series. What does he mean?
  
13. Some people have a deeply ingrained “fairness doctrine.” What are the pros and cons of that disposition?
  
14. Are you ever jealous of latecomers, wishing you could have sowed more wild oats and then sneaked in at the last minute? If so, why? If not, why not?

15. Do you regret your life of labor for the lord? Why so? Why not?

For the hardcore group:

***Control** keeps coming up over and over as a fundamental issue in kingdom living. We tilt toward religion that's based on our ability to earn the kingdom's benefits. We begrudge God's right to choose how and to whom his blessings should be showered. We struggle with the nebulous nature of grace and fear that some might make it to heaven who don't **deserve** to be there. We want a religion that we can manage, categorize, define and ... well ...control. What is this about? Why isn't this difficult for some people?*

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