



## The Generous Landowner

(based on Matthew 20:1-16)

Once, a farmer owned a vineyard. One day, the farmer needed to hire some people to help him look after his vines. So he went out to the market very early to find some workers.

When the farmer arrived at the market, he quickly found some people who were looking for work.

“Come with me,” the farmer said. “I will give you one silver coin to work in my fields.”

The workers were glad to find work and went with the farmer right away.

Later that morning, the farmer saw some other workers standing in the market. They were waiting to find jobs too. The farmer hired them to help in his vineyard.

Later in the afternoon, the farmer saw that other workers were waiting in the market, so he invited them to help in his vineyard as well.

Finally, when there were only a few hours left to work, the farmer noticed that there were still people waiting in the market.

“Why are you still standing here?” the farmer asked.

“Because no one has given us any work to do,” they answered.

“Come with me,” the farmer said. “I will give you some work to do.”

Even though it was the end of the day, the people were glad to have a few hours of work. They went to the vineyard right away.

When all the work was finished, the farmer called everyone together. It was time to pay the workers. The farmer gave each worker one silver coin.

The workers who had been hired at the start of the day were very upset.

“It’s not fair!” they complained. “We worked hard all day. These others only worked for a few hours. We should get more money.”

The farmer shook his head. “My friends,” he explained, “I have not cheated you. You agreed to work for one silver coin, and that is what I paid you. It is my money and I want to pay these other workers as much as I paid you. They need the money as much as you do. Now everyone will have enough.”

All the workers looked at the money the farmer had given them. They took their money and went home. The farmer had been very generous.



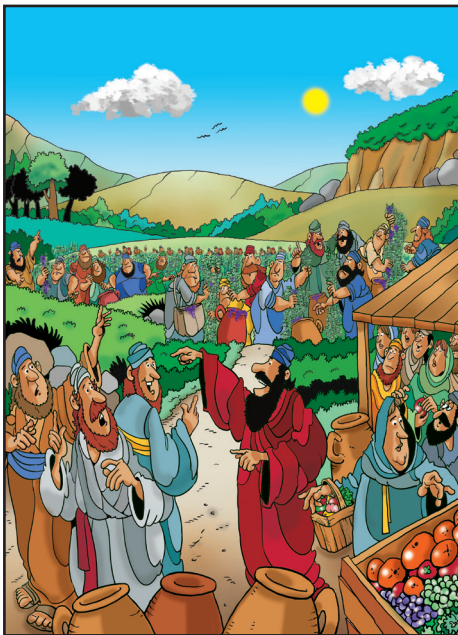
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Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

### Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your family members—imagine and wonder.
- Imagine how it would feel to be the workers in the story, both the workers who were hired late in the day, and the ones hired early in the morning.
- This story is hard to grasp, because it is counter to our experience. The focus of the story is the generosity of God. Wonder why the landowner would be so generous with the workers hired late in the day.



### Responding to God's Grace

- Make some play money, and act out the story. Choose a small chore to do, and let one person start early, and let others start later. Pay everyone the same with the play money. Talk about how it feels to receive money for a day's work and how it feels to receive a generous sum for just a short time of work.
- Invite your family members to make a list of gifts from God. Together, thank God for these gifts.
- Encourage your family members to make a habit of thanking all the people who provide services for us.

### Celebrating in Gratitude

- Every day this week, name one gift from God and express your gratitude in prayer.
- Praise God by singing the Doxology:

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.  
Amen.*