

What's In It For Me?

Matthew 20:1-16

Pastor John Miller

Beginning in verse 1 of Matthew 20, it says, "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius..."—or "a penny"—"...a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' So they went. Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise. And 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?' They 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.' 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.'" Remember that statement: They started with the last workers, and then they went to the early workers to give them their pay.

Verse 9: "And when those came who were hired about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius. But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius. And when they had received it, they complained against the landowner..."—notice their attitude of complaining—"...saying, '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.' But he answered one of them and said, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what is yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil...'—or "jealous"—"...because I am good?' So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen" or some translations have "choice."

In the book of Job, we have an interesting setting where Satan is allowed access to God. There is a lot we don't understand about that, but it's clear from the book of Job that it's a possibility; that Satan had access to God and could talk to God. Obviously Satan is accusing believers; he's the "accuser of the brethren." Satan was accusing and attacking the man Job. But God defended Job and He said, "Have you considered Job? He's a righteous man. He hates evil, loves good. He does rightly." Job is basically being bragged on by God.

Then Satan made this interesting statement in Job 1:9: "Satan answered the Lord and said, 'Does Job fear God for nothing?'" Catch that question. Satan asked God, "Does Job serve You for nothing?" I believe that the answer to that question is actually given to us in this parable. The purpose of this parable, known as The Laborers in the Vineyard, is to warn Jesus' followers against having a worldly or commercial spirit.

The question asked of God—"Does Job serve You for nothing?"—is a good question for us. Why are you serving God? Are you serving God because He heals you? Are you serving God because He prospers you? Are you serving God because He gives you a job? Or because

God is going to make you rich? Why are you serving God? Or are you serving God because you love Him? Because He's worthy to be worshipped and worthy to be served? So the question asked there—"Does Job serve God for nothing?"—is a warning that we don't allow a commercial spirit or a spirit of worrying about what we're going to get to overtake us.

Now I want to look at three things about this parable. I want to look at the setting of the parable; what caused the parable to be spoken? What was the setting of this parable, The Laborers in the Vineyard? I want to look at the meaning of the parable; what is the meaning and the message of the parable? Thirdly, the living; what is the application of the parable? How does it apply to our lives?

Let's look, first of all, at the setting of the parable. We have to look back to Matthew 19:27. Actually, the setting goes all the way back to Matthew 19:16. Remember that I've explained that when you look at a parable, in order to understand the meaning of the parable, you have to back up in the context to find out why the parable was given. In order to understand the parable, you need to know what precipitated its giving.

In Matthew 19:16-22, Jesus encountered a rich, young ruler. In that episode, he came to Jesus and asked Him this question: "Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" The guy was rich, young and a ruler; the guy had it together. Jesus answered him, "Sell what you have, give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

Jesus isn't saying that everyone has to sell everything they have to follow Him, but He knew that in this young man's heart was the love for his things. But if he was going to follow Jesus, he would have to have a love for God. So, "Sell everything, follow Me and..."—catch this phrase—"...you'll have riches in heaven." But the young man turned and went sorrowfully away. Why? Because he was very rich; he didn't want to part with his money, with his things.

So in chapter 19, verses 23-26, "Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.' When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, 'Who then can be saved?'" In their minds, if you're rich, you're godly; if you're not rich, you're not godly. They equated the two together, as many mistakenly do today. "But Jesus looked at them and said to them, 'With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.'"

Now I've said all that to get to verse 27: "Then Peter answered and said to Him, 'See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?'" I propose to you that what Peter asked here resulted in Jesus answering by giving the parable of The Laborers in the Vineyard. Jesus detected a commercial spirit in Peter's heart; that Peter was saying, "You know, the rich, young ruler walked away. He didn't want eternal life. He didn't want eternal treasures. We've forsaken everything."

When I read that, I kind of laugh, because Peter's the one who's always speaking up and

because Peter thinks he left everything. Well...fishing nets, a boat, a bunch of smelly fish. "Yeah, sure; you've left everything to follow Jesus." But Peter is rubbing his hands together; "We've left everything. What do we get?" Peter was thinking of only rewards.

Because of that, Jesus gives him three answers. Jesus is laying down three laws for Christian service. This is the background of the parable. The first law is: all who follow Christ will share in the victory. If you follow Jesus Christ into the battle, you will share in the victory. Notice Matthew 19:28: "Jesus said to them, 'Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration...'—that's the millennium, the thousand-year reign, the kingdom age—"...when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory..."—it happens at the Second Coming—"...you who have followed Me..."—speaking to the disciples—"...will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

This verse has a very specific application to the twelve Apostles. When Jesus comes back in His Second Coming, He will sit upon the throne of David for a thousand years. Read Revelation 22. Satan is bound for a thousand years and Christ reigns. This is what we call the millennium or the kingdom age of Christ's reign upon the earth. That will then flow into the eternal state. But as God promised David that "Upon your throne, the Messiah will reign forever," that's when it will happen. Christ returns at the end of the tribulation in the Second Coming and establishes his kingdom.

Jesus tells them, "You're reigning with Me. Peter, you want to know what you're going to get? You're going to be sitting on a throne, dude! Like, lighten up, man! We're going to be reigning together during that time."

Now I believe it also has application—not that the text is speaking to us—because the Scripture indicates that we, the church, will also reign with Him for that thousand-year period. You can also find that in Revelation.

The second law of Christian service is in chapter 19, verse 29. It says that all who serve Christ will receive far more than they give up. "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life." So the first law is that we will share in the victory, and the second law of service is that we will receive more than we give up. If you have to give up your family to be a missionary, God will bless you and reward you. If you have to leave loved ones in order to serve the Lord, God will provide and take care of you and watch over you.

Then the third law of service is that when we are rewarded at the end, we will be surprised. At the end of time, when His servants are given their rewards, there will be many surprises. Verse 30 says, "But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

Jesus now gives them the parable as a warning. "You think you're first? You may be last. You may look down upon those who are last, but when I come back to give rewards, they may be first."

Remember that this parable goes back to Peter's question in verse 27: "We have left all and

followed You. Therefore, what shall we have?" Jesus detects something wrong in Peter's question, so He is warning them. He detects that there is something to be concerned about, so Jesus gives this parable as a warning.

I want you to notice the "book ends" of the parable. Take note of the last verse of chapter 19: "Many who are first will be last, and the last first." Then note chapter 20, verse 16: "So the last will be first, and the first last. Many are called, but few chosen." So the parable opens with the statement, "The first will be last, and the last first." It closes with the statement, "The last will be first, and the first last." It's clear that's what the parable wants to convey; it's warning us about a spirit that is competitive or looking at others, that's bargaining with God.

This parable is taken from real life. Chapter 20 tells us that a man owns a big vineyard. He had day laborers, like we have day laborers. Maybe they're hangin' out at Home Depot or Lowe's or on a street corner somewhere. When I was young, I worked for Man Power. It was a temporary employment agency. You'd go in the morning, and they would send you out on jobs. I got some of the most low-down, stinky, dirty, nasty jobs known to mankind. Remember when minimum wage was \$1.65 an hour? Some people say, "No; I'm not that old." Yes, you are. Maybe you just sponged off your folks. But we would go out on day jobs, and some of them were so nasty and so bad that I didn't go back the next day. No thanks.

So the landowner goes into the marketplace at 6:00 a.m. In chapter 20, verse 1, it says, "early in the morning." That would be 6:00 a.m. in Jewish time. In verse 2, he makes an agreement with them for a penny a day. You say, "Well, that's not very much." A penny is a denarius. It was a coin that would be a day's wage. They could buy a day's food with that one denarius. Then in verses 3-4, "He went out about the third hour..."—about 9:00 a.m.—"...and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' So they went."

I want you to notice there was no contract set. I'll come back to this. The first group asked, "What are you going to pay us for working for the day?" A denarius. They agreed and went to work. The second group that is standing idle about 9:00 a.m.—they were sent out into the vineyard and the landowner said, "Whatever is right I will give you." They went out to work in the vineyard.

Then notice verse 5: "the sixth" hour or noon, and "the ninth hour" or 3:00 p.m. Then in verse 6, there is "the eleventh hour" or 5:00 p.m. In verses 6-7, he "found others standing idle, and said to them, 'Why have you been standing here idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.'" Modern translations omit the rest of the statement, "Whatever is right you will receive." I think rightfully so. Laborers would only work from 6:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.

So it starts with an agreement—"We'll work for a penny." Then it goes to "Whatever is right I'll pay you. Just get out there and get to work. There is only one hour of daylight left." There was no mention of what they would be paid. Then the landowner pays them off.

That's the parable. Now we get to the meaning of the parable. What does the parable mean? First of all, let me tell you what it doesn't mean. The parable doesn't talk about salvation. I know it has been interpreted that way and explained that way, but the reason I went back to chapter 19 is to show you that the parable is not about salvation. Salvation is a gift from God; no one works for their salvation. "By grace you have been saved, through faith, not of works..."—not of yourself—"... lest any man should boast." No one works to go to heaven. You can't work to go to heaven; you're saved by the grace of God. So you're not saved by salvation.

Secondly, some say that it's talking about death-bed conversions. Some people are saved when they're very young, which is true. They get saved in Sunday school or VBS, and then they live for the Lord their whole lives. They serve Jesus and live for Jesus. Then others get saved in mid-life, some get saved a little later in life and then others get saved in "the eleventh hour" on their death bed. All of that is true, but I propose to you that is not what the parable is about. And we don't have the liberty to make the Bible mean what we want it to mean. We can't read into a text what we want it to say.

Many times I hear preachers preaching something from the Bible that is Biblical, but that's not what the text is saying. They'll pick a text, say something about it, but that's not what the text is really about or what it's saying or what it means. The goal of preaching is to get to the meaning of the text, to properly interpret it and to properly apply it to our lives.

The parable is not talking about salvation—that's a free gift—it's not talking about what stage in your life you get saved. Then, thirdly, it's not talking about our rewards for serving God. They all got the same penny; they got the same reward. I believe that when we get to heaven, there will be different rewards. Some people will hear the words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joy of the Lord." They served the Lord with the right motive their whole life, so they'll be given great rewards. Other people, I believe, can have a saved soul but live a wasted life. There are a lot of Christians who have a saved soul but a wasted life. You can spend your life, or you can invest your life in the kingdom of God. You can say, "God, I want to be used by You. I want to be serving. I want to live for You. I want my life to have an impact for eternity."

So you ask, "Then what is the parable about?" I believe that parable is about this: Our motive in serving and sacrificing for Jesus. When Peter said, "Lord, we have left everything to follow You," he meant "What are we going to get?" Jesus detected a wrong attitude in Peter's heart. Jesus wanted to check Peter and say to him, "Think about your motive."

Why are you serving Him? Remember the question in the book of Job: "Does Job serve God for nothing?" Satan was attacking God saying, "You're not worthy to be worshipped or served apart from the gifts you give." I believe because He's God, we should serve Him. I believe that because of His grace, we should serve Him. We serve Him out of love; not because He gives to us but because of who He is. So I believe this parable is a window to examine our attitude and motive in our service toward God. Peter's question revealed a dangerous attitude.

Now we move from the setting to the meaning of the parable. We will look at thirdly, the living of the parable. How does it apply to our lives? How do we put it in shoe leather? The application comes in the form of four warnings. These are covered in chapter 20, verses 8-16.

The first warning is beware of overconfidence. As you are serving the Lord and living your Christian life, beware of overconfidence. Verse 8 says, “So when the evening had come...”—this is 6:00 p.m.—“...the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, ‘Call the laborers and give them their wages...’—and here’s the key—“...beginning with the last to the first.” Remember that Jesus said, “The last shall be first, and the first shall be last”? Well, here it is. So he had all the guys line up at the end of the day. Some guys worked 11 hours, some worked 8 hours, some worked 6 hours, some worked 4 hours and some worked 1 hour, but they’re all going to get paid an equal amount.

Starting at verse 9, “And when those came who were hired about the eleventh hour...”—at 5:00 p.m.; those were “the last”—“...they each received a denarius. But when the first came...”—those who were hired early in the morning—“...they supposed...”—this is the key—“...that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius.”

Now I can almost see the look on their faces when they’re all lined up at the end of the day. The guys who worked for one hour are at the beginning of the line, and the guys who worked all day were at the end of the line. They start paying the guys who worked for only an hour, giving them a denarius. All of a sudden, the wheels start turning in the heads of the guys toward the end of the line. They say, “Wow! If they only worked one hour and they got a denarius, what are we going to get?! It’s going to be awesome!” As the foreman went down the line paying the guys who worked four hours, six hours, eight hours and eleven hours, the smiles dropped off their faces. They were all paid a denarius. Now they were frowning. They were bummed out by this time. The Scripture actually indicates that they threw their money on the ground in disgust and anger. They actually said to the foreman, “We’ve borne the heat of the day. We worked all day long. These guys worked only one hour, and you’ve paid them equal to us?! That’s not fair!”

Have you ever heard anybody say that God’s not fair? “I’ve been serving Him all my life. Look at all I’ve done! Look at all I’ve sacrificed. Yet God blesses this person. They were all messed up, and they just got saved. I’ve been a good Christian my whole life, but God hasn’t done anything like that for me!” That attitude is pictured in this parable.

So the smile disappeared off their faces. But notice the key in verse 10: “They supposed that they would receive more.” That’s the danger of pride. They presumed they were first, but in reality, they ended up being last.

The question is: What makes you think that God owes you anything? This is one of those sermons that is really in your face. To be honest with you, I wasn’t looking forward to preaching it to you today. You say, “Well, you’re the preacher; you could pick another text.” I think we need this message.

Why are you serving God? Why do you think that God owes you anything? Why do you think that you deserve better? If God gave us what we deserve, we'd be in hell right now. (I just thought I'd encourage you.) You leave the service today and are asked, "What did the preacher say today?"

"He said that I should be in hell right now! I ain't goin' back next Sunday."

If God gave us what we deserve, we'd be in hell. By the way, everything's uphill from there. "I deserve a better husband." "I deserve a better wife." "I deserve better kids. When we got married, I wanted to space them out. Instead, they're just all spaced out." (By the way, I'm just kidding. I love my kids.) My wife says, "Don't make jokes about marriage or children. Sorry; I did it anyway. I love my wife and I love my kids. I get parents saying all the time, "My kids do this" and "My kids do that. They won't listen to me." It's like, "Listen; just be glad you're not in hell right now." Everything's uphill from there.

What makes you suppose you deserve better? I've been a pastor in the ministry for 45-plus years. I know the discouragement and the battles, and I talk to other pastors. I was just talking to a friend on the phone this week who's in the ministry and is discouraged. He feels like he should have a wider influence and a greater church and a new location. I've been there; I understand that.

But what makes us think that God owes us anything? Or that God owes us something because of our faithful service? We have to be careful that we don't assume anything.

A famous Bible teacher of generations past named R. A. Torrey—some of you have read his books—was the president for years of Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. He received a letter one time that said this: "I am in great perplexity, Dr. Torrey. I've been praying for a long time for something I'm confident is according to God's will, but I don't get it. I've been a member of the Presbyterian Church for 30 years. I've tried to be a consistent one, at that. I've been the superintendent of the Sunday schools for 25 years. I've been an elder in the church for 20 years. But God does not answer my prayers. I cannot understand it. Can you give me an explanation?"

Dr. Torrey wrote back to that person and said, "The problem is you're praying in your name, not in Jesus' name." That's so true. "I do this," "I do that." "God, you owe it to me. I'm a good Christian. I've been following You my whole life. I deserve this. You owe it to me." But the truth is that God owes us nothing. Be careful; God owes us nothing when we say that God will be our debtor. It's so true.

The second warning I see in this parable is in verses 11-12. We need to beware of looking at others when we serve the Lord. "And when they had received it, they complained..."—those who had borne the heat of the day. They worked hard the whole day and got their denarius. They murmured "...against the landowner, saying, '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.'" If I'd

have been the Lord, I would have said, "Poor babies!" He does end up saying, "I am doing you no wrong. Take what is yours and go your way."

When you look at others instead of keeping your eyes fixed on Jesus in your service, you lose your joy. You forget about why you're serving. You look at others and say, "Well, I wanted to do that. Why didn't He ask me to do that? Why can't I have that ministry? Why can't I live in that town?"

For the first 39 years of my ministry, I was a pastor in San Bernardino. I was the founding pastor of Calvary Chapel church in San Bernardino for 39 years. After years of being there, I admit I prayed, "Please, Lord, call me to Hawaii or Tahiti or San Diego or Fiji or somewhere." Then He called me to Menifee, and here I am. He moved me about 30 minutes away. "Lord, please. I've served You so faithfully all these years that I deserve Calvary Chapel Honolulu. In the name of Jesus!"

God doesn't owe you anything. And then you look at other people and other things and other ministries. So we murmur and we complain.

The workers were basically saying, verse 12, "God, You're not fair! We worked all day, and you made them equal to us! That's not fair!" A lot of people accuse God of not being fair.

Then in verse 15, they were jealous. "Is your eye evil because I am good?" They weren't upset because they got the denarius; they were upset because God was good to someone else. The danger of watching other people is that we can crash.

Years ago I was on the freeway, and there was a drunk driver in front of me. He was swerving all over the place. I remember that I got so focused on watching the drunk driver that I almost went off the road! I thought, I'd better watch the road!

Sometimes in Christian service, we can go off the road by watching other people. "What about him, Lord? What about them? What's going to happen? Why don't You do that for me?" We get our eyes off the Lord, we get our eyes on people and then we experience self-pity. Get your eyes off other servants and fix your eyes on Jesus Christ. John Oxenham put it in a poem:

"Is your place a small place?

Tend it with care!

He set you there.

Is your place a large place?

Guard it with care!

He set you there.

"What e're your place, it is

Not yours alone, but His

That set you there."

So wherever God has placed you, that's His place where you are to be faithful in serving Him. God is more concerned with the servant than He is with the service. Beware of a competitive spirit. God is making you, and God is working in you.

Here's the third warning in verse 13: Beware of making bargains with God. "He answered one of them and said, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with Me for a denarius?'" He's saying, "You made an agreement that you would work for a penny."

I don't know if you noticed it, but there are two groups of workers in the parable. The first group of workers in verse 2 agreed to work for a penny a day. They had a bargain and an agreement. The second group of workers is in verses 4 and 7. In verse 4, they worked for "whatever is right I will give you." I love that. Then in verse 7, it's simply, "Go into the vineyard."

So there is a progression here. First there is an agreement made: "We'll work for a penny." They went. Secondly, "I'll pay you whatever is right." Can you imagine getting a job and you ask, "How much am I going to get paid?"

"Whatever is right." We get lawyers to draw up contracts, and it's all written out what I'm going to get paid.

Or, can you imagine? "I want a job."

"Okay; get to work. Go to work for me." He didn't say what he was going to pay that worker. The landowner could have said, "I didn't tell you I'd pay you anything. I just said to go out into the vineyard."

So there is a progression: There is an agreement, there is "Go and I'll pay you what is fair" and there is "Just go and work in my vineyard."

F.B. Meyers said, "In the parable, Jesus rebukes a bargaining spirit." I love that. In Romans 12:1, after eleven chapters of doctrine, Paul says, "I beg you by the mercies of God, present your bodies..."—or "your whole being"; body, soul, spirit—"...a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." Notice in that there are no stipulations and no terms. "I beg you, because of God's mercies, that you give your whole life to God." When you become a Christian, the Bible says that "You're not your own; you're bought with a price. You need to glorify God in your body, which belongs to Him."

I believe that as a Christian, my time is God's, my profession is God's, my life belongs to God, everything I have belongs to God—everything belongs to God. We need to have that mentality

of “Lord, I just give You my life. I’ll go where You want me to go. I’ll be what You want me to be. I’ll do what You want me to do. I’ll say what You want me to say.” But then we tag on the end, “Just don’t make it Barstow, in Jesus’ Name.” I’ve gotta’ pick on someplace; I pick on Barstow. Rather say, “Okay, Lord, I’ll go where You want me to go. I’ll do what You want me to do. I’ll be what You want me to be.”

If God sends you to some obscure corner of the globe to just talk to a small group of people, will you be happy? Will you be satisfied? Are you willing to be what God has called you to be? Are you willing to do what God has called you to do? Are you willing to go where God has called you to go? Or do you have a bargaining spirit? Do you have a commercial spirit? “Lord, what do I get? What’s in it for me? How’s this going to work out for me?” So beware of bargaining with God.

Fourthly and lastly, verses 14-16, beware of forgetting God’s sovereign grace. Yes; I said “sovereign grace.” God is sovereign. He’s also gracious. Verse 13 says, “But he answered one of them and said, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what is yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things?’” Notice that: “It’s mine and I can do whatever I want with it.” “Or is your eye evil because I am good?” So the last will be first, and the first last.”

Notice three things: God is fair, verse 13; God is sovereign, verse 15—“It’s mine and I can do whatever I want with it”; and God is good, verse 15. So the landowner is telling the worker that he’s fair, sovereign and good. “I’ve done nothing wrong. You bargained with me for a denarius, and that’s what I’ve given you. Take what is yours and go your way.” God gives us more than we deserve.

It’s taken me years to really come to this state of trusting in God’s sovereign grace; that whatever I do, wherever I go, whatever happens to me, I’m in God’s hands. Everything is God’s sovereign grace. I want to love Him and serve Him and be faithful, but whatever God does with me, I’m in His hands. Wherever God sends me, whatever happens to me, I’m in the hands of God.

So we need to rest humbly in His grace, we need to serve Him faithfully in love, we need to trust to Him the rewards that He will give in His time and in His way for His glory.

Notice the closing statement I’ve already pointed out in verse 16: “For many are called, but few chosen.” In some of the modern translations, that statement is omitted. I believe it should be in the text. And I believe a better way to translate that is, “Many are called, but few are choice.” D.L. Moody loved the concept that “Many are called, but few are choice.” There are people who are saved, but they’re lives are a waste; they’re not choice servants. I want to be not only called, but I want to be choice.

It reminds me of the story of the missionaries who went to Africa to serve there their whole

lives. They raised their kids in Africa, served the Lord in Africa their whole lifetimes. This older missionary couple was coming back from Africa after a lifetime of service. When their ship landed in New York, they were going to have to get a bus to head to their Midwest home. But it happened that President Truman was on the same ship. He had been in Africa on a hunting expedition. There were a lot of people waiting to see the President on his arrival. There was a ticker-tape parade, a lot of fanfare, applause, a band. They were there to welcome the President.

But this older couple was all by themselves; no one there to meet them. They went to a cheap hotel that night. They were going to get a bus the next day to head home to the Midwest. The husband was discouraged and turned to his wife at the hotel that night and said, "It's not right; we come home from a lifetime of service in Africa, and there's no one here to greet us, no parade, no welcoming committee. The President goes to Africa, kills a few animals and everybody celebrates his return." The wise missionary wife looked at her husband and said, "But honey, we're not home yet."

That's the eternal perspective we need to keep. We're not home yet. God will reward us, but we have to trust Him.