

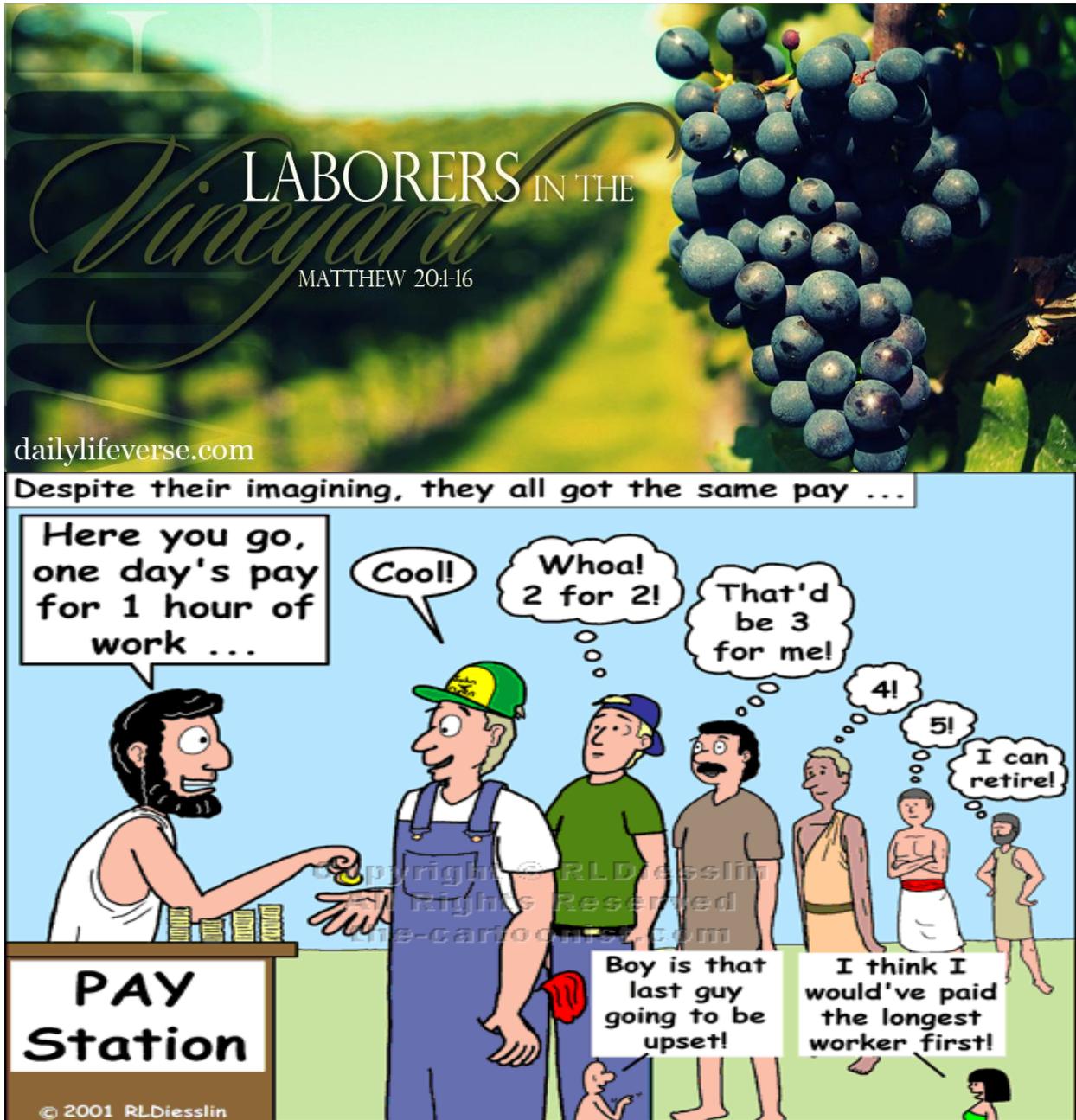
SERMON FOR SEPTEMBER 21, 2014

The First Chinese Church of Christ in Hawai'i UCC

Scripture: Matthew 20:1-16

Message: "God Provides for Our Deepest Needs!"

Kekapa P.K. Lee



GATHERING IN THE WORD OF GOD

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

Matthew 20:1-16 (The VOICE Bible)

20 **Jesus:** The kingdom of heaven is like a wealthy landowner who got up early in the morning and went out, first thing, to hire workers to tend his vineyard. ² He agreed to pay them a day's wage for the day's work. The workers headed to the vineyard *while the landowner headed home to deal with some paperwork.* ³ About three hours later, he went back to the marketplace. He saw *some unemployed* men standing around with nothing to do.

Landowner: ⁴ *Do you need some work? Go over to my vineyard and join the crew there. I'll pay you well.*

So off they went *to join the crew at the vineyard.* ⁵ About three hours later, and then three hours after that, *the landowner went back to the market and saw another crew of men and hired them, too, sending them off to his vineyard and promising to pay them well.* ⁶ Then finally late in the afternoon, *at the cusp of night,* the landowner walked again through *the marketplace,* and he saw other *workers* still standing around.

Landowner: Why have you been standing here all day, doing nothing?

Workers: ⁷ Because no one has hired us.

Landowner: Well, you should go over to my vineyard *and work.*

And off the workers went. ⁸ When quitting time arrived, the landowner called to his foreman.

Landowner: Pay the workers their day's wages, beginning with the workers I hired most recently and ending with the workers who have been here all day.

⁹ So the workers who had been hired just a short while before came to the foreman, and he paid them each a day's wage. ¹⁰ *Then other workers who had arrived during the day were paid, each of them a day's wage.* Finally, the workers who'd been toiling since early morning came thinking they'd be paid more, but the foreman paid each of them a day's wage. ¹¹ As they received their pay, this last group of workers began to protest.

First Workers: ¹² *We've been here since the crack of dawn! And you're paying us the exact same wage you paid the crew that just showed up. We deserve more than they do. We've been slogging in the heat of the sun all day—these others haven't worked nearly as long as we have!*

¹³ *The landowner heard these protests.*

Landowner (to a worker): Friend, no one has been wronged here today. *This isn't about what you deserve.* You agreed to work for a day's wage, did you not? ¹⁴ So take your money and go home. *I can give my money to whomever I please, and it pleases me to pay everyone the same amount of money.* ¹⁵ Do you think I don't have the right to dispose of my money as I wish? Or does my generosity somehow prick at you?

¹⁶ *And that is your picture:* The last will be first and the first will be last.

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DOING THE WORD OF GOD

So what is God's Word for us this morning?

**1.ONE: GOD'S GENEROSITY DOES NOT FOLLOW
OUR HUMAN REASONING.**

2.TWO: GOD'S GENEROSITY IS UNLIMITED.

**3.THREE: IN GOD'S GENEROSITY, GOD'S JUSTICE
IS EXPERIENCED AND SEEN. SO DO LIKEWISE!**

SENDING IN THE WORD OF GOD