

## **Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ**

### **Parable of the Goodman**

Last time..."Who then can be saved?"

**Matt 19:25-26**

Matt 19:26 is about salvation...but this simple truth is MUCH broader

A testimony to give glory to our Father in heaven

We are fearfully and wonderfully made, marvelous is the Lord's design of these tents

Ps 139:14

Earth, our little home spinning in the immeasurable breadth and depth of God's universe,  
is cursed as a result of man's sin against God

Sicknesses and diseases and death corrupted the Creator's perfect creation by the sin of  
one man

We are his descendents, his "heirs", born dead in sin

But God...

Just as the sin of one man brought condemnation on all, so did the righteousness of one

Man bring the gift of justification of life unto whosoever would believe/agree

Rom 5:18

That man is the Son of God, Jesus Christ the Mediator between God and man who gave  
Himself a ransom for all

1 Tim 2:5-6

And that gift is what Jesus Christ the Son of God spoke of in Matt 19:26

Jesus also said that we will have tribulation in the world but to be of good cheer, for He  
has overcome the world

John 16:33

1 John 4:4

Physical sicknesses and diseases are among the tribulations of this world

But God our Father...

forgives our sin, heals all our diseases, and redeems us from destruction

(Ps 103:1-4)

We don't sit around twiddling our thumbs, we move and the Lord directs our steps

The Lord works supernaturally, and He works naturally supernaturally

(supernaturally in the natural)

We have started our journey of Monica's treatment for cancer – chemotherapy and then radiation

Chemo Treatment #1 was Thursday...an all day event

Our journey...and it is OUR journey...involves very harsh treatment with very disagreeable side effects

God our Healer is the Author of medical science; all disciplines of science bring to light evidence of our Creator

The Lord of all souls guides the work of medical researchers, for the good of mankind and as a witness to the researchers that He is real

We are benefactors of the body of knowledge gathered from those who went before us (medicinal and therapeutic advances have been made in chemotherapy since my father went thru it 24 years ago)

and we contribute to the body of knowledge to benefit those who come after us (we will participate in a study, providing data for researchers)

In the midst of the treatments...

Is 41:10      Fear thou not; for I *am* with thee: be not dismayed; for I *am* thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness

because we are going to need the Lord's strength during the journey!

This trial will bring us closer together...to the Lord and to each other – glorious

And in the midst of the treatments, we are witnesses and ambassadors of Jesus Christ to the nursing staff and the other patients, other lives in which the Lord is working  
2 Cor 1:3-4

So, the first part of the testimony to give glory to our Father in heaven is for what He is doing now and for what He is going to do at every step of the journey

The second part of the testimony to give glory to our Father in heaven is regarding His provision for the financial trial that goes with the medical trial

Our Father's provision for Monica's medical treatment all started when an Egyptian brother sacrificially put 600 EP (\$35) in my hand

Note: When we paid for Monica's cancer surgery, the first payment was \$35 cash and an explanation why  
"You are giving me the chills."

On Tuesday evening of this past week, a few minutes before 5pm, I received a phone call from MD Anderson Patient Financial Services, a woman named Gail. She called to give me the cost estimate for Monica's 6 chemo therapy treatments, payable at the time of service, the first of which would be in 2 days (Thursday)

1<sup>st</sup> (on Thursday morning) = \$28,290  
2<sup>nd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> (spaced 3 weeks) = \$52,000

And these costs were AFTER the 20% Cash discount had been applied

Note: We are members of Samaritan Ministries, a healthcare cost sharing Christian ministry, Body of Christ serving the Body of Christ. We pay up front, other members reimburse us in 2-3 months.

I was expecting to hear a cost estimate of \$15,000 since we were told that Day 1

Needless to say, I was taken aback...astonished out of measure, as were the disciples in Mark 10:26 when they heard Jesus' response to the RYR and His teaching that it is easier for a camel to go thru the eye of a needle than for a rich man trusting in his riches to enter the kingdom of God, prompting them to ask, "Who then can be saved?"

So I asked Gail to go over that again, and asked questions to make sure I was hearing what I heard.  
And I was

Monica's 6 chemo treatments between Thursday and Dec 6  
(not including the 12 antibodies treatments and the 16 radiation treatments) = \$290,000

My ability to think was fractured, my ability to breathe was inhibited.  
All I could manage to say was,  
"We can't do that. I don't know what to do."

We had exhausted all of our cash reserves and maxed our credit cards just to pay for surgery, doctor's appointments, etc etc etc.  
We had one credit card reserved to pay the \$15,000 for treatment to bridge the gap until the Samaritan Ministries members' payments arrived.

After the phone call, I just sat at my desk, mind spinning, trying to make sense of it all. When I was able to gather some thoughts, I called back with some questions. The medical office was closed.  
I called Samaritan Ministries – the office was closed.

I called my pastor, John

I told him what I was told  
    “Who can do that?  
    That is so far outside of real life.  
    It’s a good thing you did not get a hold of anyone because now we have room  
    for the Lord to work.”  
We prayed and he said, “Don’t worry about it until tomorrow.”  
    (I did not heed that counsel)

I sent out the Prayer Request you all read  
I got several responses shortly thereafter – phone calls and Replys

Monica and I went to dinner with our son Christian and then gathered at  
    Nathan/Brooke’s house with our kids to brainstorm solutions to this problem

My thought was to delay treatment until we got this figured out...  
    Don’t start what you can’t pay for  
I was shouted down by all the kids who were focused on how to pay for  
    Thursday’s treatment and then figuring it out in the 3 weeks before the  
    2<sup>nd</sup> treatment  
They were right

On the way home, Monica erupted into tears  
    “This (the financial weight and stress of treatment) is worse than the cancer.”  
Now I’m mad – “You (hospital, doctors, everybody) are messing with my wife!”

Contrary to John’s counsel, I did not sleep well that night  
    My mind was racing  
    I was praying fervently, both groaning in the Spirit and  
    “sounding like a broken record”

I must have dozed off, but woke up when I fell out of bed...at 2am  
After tossing and turning for another 30 minutes, I got up and went to work  
I composed and sent an email to our case manager at Samaritan Ministries – Israel

Then I went back to bed and fell asleep

On Wed morning, I went to the SLSSA Bible Study  
    Shared and the men prayed

I got home about 9:15am and went right to work...working the problem  
Again, we don’t sit around twiddling our thumbs, we move and the Lord directs our steps

1<sup>st</sup> Call: Israel at Samaritan Ministries

And the situation got worse

Our type of membership has a \$250,000 cap on any single need/event

Quick math: \$63K + \$290K + X = a lot more than \$250

I had the breath sucked out of me again

What do I do?

Israel prayed...ever done that with a rep at your insurance company?

He pointed me in a direction based on work he had done the prior week  
(the Lord was working naturally supernaturally the prior week):

- what Dept at Banner (Billing)
- topic – “Basic Financial Assistance Program”

2<sup>nd</sup> call: Banner Health Billing

“You are not eligible for BFAP because you have insurance.”

“No I don’t. We are members of Samaritan Ministries.

“Yes, you do have insurance.”

“No, I don’t.”

“Ah, yes you do.”

“No I don’t. Not in the eyes of the Fed Gov’t I don’t.

“Yes you do, sir. In the eyes of Banner, you have insurance.

You do not qualify for BFAP.”

(CenturyLink commercial with 2 guys at a grill)

Called Israel at SM; left a voice msg

Then I worked some other avenues at Banner Health looking for the right person to help me solve the problem.

Dead ends and rabbit trails all

Frustration mounting...but a certain calm remained – your prayer was working

“Look, if we don’t get some help, my wife’s treatment plan is going to bankrupt us and I don’t think that is in anyone’s best interest.”

(calmly, not aggressively)

But I was getting nowhere...but I got to the point of,

“OK, Lord. I give up. This is impossible, I can’t do this. I’m being crushed.”

Ps 123:2      Behold, as the eyes of servants *look* unto the hand of their masters,  
*and* as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our  
eyes *wait* upon the LORD our God, until that he have mercy upon  
us

And the Holy Spirit brought to mind...Matt 19:26 and gave me some peace.

Shortly thereafter (of course!), Israel at SM called back.

I told him what Banner Health Billing had said regarding me having insurance

“He’s working on old information.

In late June (when I was in Egypt, when 600 EP were place in my hand)

Banner changed their policy regarding Samaritan Ministries and  
re-classified us as ‘non-insurance’

Call back, you may have to escalate to a supervisor.”

2 months prior to last week, while the Lord was working in Egypt,

He was also working in AZ and IL

I called Banner Health Billing again, got a different rep in the Call Center

Explained again why I was calling (BFAP) for Monica’s chemo treatment

“Oh, that’s not us, that’s MDA.

Banner Health and MDA are different.

We have nothing to do with that.”

“(Wow) OK, who do I speak to at MDA?”

“I don’t know.”

So I begin the “hunt for red October” – the invisible person at MDA who can help me  
with BFAP

“Not me. I’m not sure who does that.”

“Oh, we don’t do that, we don’t have BFAP. We have Grants.”

So I spent about an hour chasing Grants people...more dead ends

Like asking 5 blind people to describe an elephant – it depends on which part they  
are touching

At some point I ended up with being referred to...Gail, the woman that I had spoken  
with the prior evening, whose name I did not catch because my mind was blown

I called her, but she was not available and her voice msg greeting said

“I will return your call within 48 hours.”

“I don’t have 48 hours, I really need to speak with you this afternoon...”

In my mind, we are an hour or two from making a Go/No Go decision

My next call may have been to the Doctor, the Medical Oncologist

to delay the 1<sup>st</sup> treatment...but I just “knew: that was not the thing  
to do

But PTL, Gail returned my call in about an hour

“I have some questions.

1. When is payment due for the treatment tomorrow morning?

In the morning, before the treatment.

Any flexibility on that?

No

2. I would like information on the Basic Financial Assistance Program

We do have that but you don't qualify for the BFAP.

Why not?

Because you have insurance

No I don't (here we go again!)

I went straight to “in late June...”

Oh. Let me ask my supervisor about that. Will you hold?

Maybe 10 minutes later,

Sir, you are right.

And you qualify for BFAP if your family income is less than \$125K  
per year

Oh, it most certainly is!

Are you willing to sign an Affidavit to that effect?

Absolutely! Do you want a copy of my 2017 tax return?

No, sir. I believe you.

So, you qualify for BFAP

No one told you about BFAP?

Not a soul at Banner or MDA. Samaritan Ministries told me

Well, let me re-calculate your wife's treatment plan

Tap, tap, tap

1<sup>st</sup>: \$9,000 (from \$28,000!)

2<sup>nd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>: \$18,000 (from \$52,000!)

My quick math Total (estimated): \$105,000 (from \$290,000)

Now, that is still a giant chunk of money but it is radically less than the original!  
I felt the weight of the world lifted

Then, “Can you re-price everything done so far according to BFAP prices?”

“Yes sir, both MDA and Banner Health (hospital)

Now the \$250,000 cap is more manageable

I called Israel of SM, and he was noticeably relieved and excited, praising the Lord!  
And we prayed again, giving thanks and praise to our Father

Before Tuesday, with “our own” resources and with the help of some families here, we  
had managed to stay ahead of the avalanche of medical bills to that point

*Hoodwinked:* “Use the hood, Red, use the hood!”

But after the call on Tuesday evening, I thought we were going to be buried by the  
avalanche

Hearkening back to my Egypt Mission Trip Report on July 1, the Lord will provide for  
Monica’s healthcare and for the Children’s Home in surprising ways,  
using the Body of Christ to help the Body of Christ

He broke the logjam before me this week...in June while I was in Egypt  
He directed my steps to my breaking point on Wed morning, then broke the  
logjam such that He alone got the glory

Then, more families here, moved by the Spirit of God, gave us gifts of time to stay ahead  
of the avalanche a little longer in this shell game between paying for medical  
services and being reimbursed for them

“It’s the Lord’s money”  
Offered with hearts after God’s own heart  
Following Jesus...Matt 19:21

Matt 19:26...to the glory of God!

Never think the Father

- does not hear or see or care – know that He does
- is not working – know that He is

The Father is always way ahead of us,  
working in ways we cannot see...naturally supernaturally  
until He reveals His work to us for His glory

Get out of the driver’s seat of your life, you are not qualified to drive  
Walk by faith and not by sight

Do not slide over to the front passenger’s seat  
The Lord does not need our “navigational skills”

Get in the back seat and enjoy the journey!

The ride in the back seat is always the best, even when it is uncomfortable to sit  
there



Ps 46:1        God *is* our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble  
Ps 46:10       Be still, and know that I *am* God:

Matt 8:23-26 Jesus is in the boat during the storm  
He is not all wiggled out like chicken little  
Have faith, oh we of little faith

Heb 13:5       is REAL!!!!

Ps 124:8       Our help *is* in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

Do you agree? (a VERY important question)

This time...the Parable of the Goodman

We will be in Matt 20  
The lesson from Matt 19 does not stop, but continues to flow

### **Matt 20:1-16**

v1-2    kingdom of heaven...early in the morning:

With Matt 19:16-30 giving us the context since this is a continuation of the same teaching, Jesus teaches a parable about the kingdom of heaven...  
”the kingdom of heaven is like...”

Looking at the end of the parable in v16...the purpose of the parable is to explain Matt 19:30

With a parable, we must be sure to understand

- the context
- the principles (big picture) rather than the particulars (details)

What is the “project”, the householders issue?  
The householder’s harvest

When did he go seeking laborers for the harvest?  
Early in the morning, first thing...6am

What are his terms with those having no employment/not working?  
A day’s wage, a “penny”/denarius

The keyword: **agreed** (v2)

v3-4 third hour...idle...whatsoever is right:

The householder went back to the marketplace,  
the gathering place of “day workers”,  
at 9am and saw other men who were idle –  
unemployed, not working but willing to work

They **agreed** with his terms also – whatever was right/fair/equitable will be given

v5 sixth...ninth:

“Day workers” came throughout the day to the marketplace seeking employment  
in order to live  
The householder returned at noon and at 3pm to gather whosoever would **agree**  
with his terms – what was fair/equitable

The repeated trips to the marketplace to gather those who are willing are because  
his harvest is valuable and “we are burning daylight!”

John 9:4      **I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day:  
the night cometh, when no man can work**

v6-7 eleventh hour...others...whatsoever is right:

The need of the harvest and the urgency to gather day workers went right up to  
the 11<sup>th</sup> hour, 5pm

The householder asks a very important question of the 11<sup>th</sup> hour day workers:  
Why have you not worked all day?

Note: the householder’s desire – full employment, all a part of his harvest

A: Because no one hired us...this is our first opportunity to work

The 11<sup>th</sup> hour workers in the parable respond to this, their first opportunity to be  
employed

They **agreed** to the householder’s terms and the householder hired them also

Their answer to the question and response to the call are very important

They have not previously heard the call of the householder and  
chosen to be sluggards instead

This, at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour, is the very first time they have heard the  
gathering call of the householder

This discredits the thought/interpretation of a person hearing the Gospel  
but waiting until he is dying to surrender to Jesus as Lord of his  
life

“I believe Jesus died for my sins but I’m going to live my life my way,  
indulging my flesh, until I’m dying.  
Then I will ‘come to Jesus’.  
I’ve got things I want to do before accepting Jesus!  
I’m going to ‘have fun’ and then ‘slide into home plate’ before getting  
tagged out by God!”

Beware: “gaming the system” of salvation to please your flesh is foolish –  
The biggest gamble against impossible odds...  
no man knows the day of his death

To play with one’s eternity is absurdly foolish

v8 even...give them their hire...last unto the first:  
At even, 6pm, the end of the work day after which time no man can work,  
the householder/lord of the vineyard tells his steward to call the workers  
who agreed to his terms and faithfully worked until the end of the day

It is time to “give them whatsoever is right”

Sequence: from the last to the first  
The parable is definitely linked to Matt 19:30

v9-12 every man a penny:  
Whether hired at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour or the 1<sup>st</sup> hour, every man “received” a penny;  
they were given a penny and they received a penny  
All workers were made equal by the good man  
  
Perhaps thinking their penny was tied to their works/labor, the 11<sup>th</sup> hour workers  
were surprised that “whatsoever is right” meant a full days’ wage!  
  
With similar thinking, the 1<sup>st</sup> hour workers assumed they would get more...  
and grumbled when they were given what they had **agreed** to  
  
Not fair!  
We have been treated just like the “Johnny come lately”s by the...  
good man

Ch 19:17a

Ch 19:25-26

v13-15 Friend, I do you no wrong:

The 1<sup>st</sup> hour workers did not think the goodman, the householder, was fair to them

The goodman corrects them – he was fair, his did give them what they **agreed** to

The goodman is sovereign over all that is his

The goodman was not unfair/unjust in doing as he willed with that which is his

Are you covetous and greedy, do you trust in your work, or in riches, or in me?

Matt 6:21, 23-24

I am good

Ch 19:16-17a

Ps 119:36, 68, 127, 162, 166

Our “good” will lead to justice, His good leads to grace

v16 last...first...first last:

Tied directly to Ch 19:30

for...causation, the reason the last shall be first and the first shall be last

Rom 11:25-26a

For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved.

many are called...invited into the kingdom of heaven (v1)

1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>...all hours

Hence the phrase, “the God of the 11<sup>th</sup> hour”

(This week in our life, He was the God of the 11<sup>th</sup> hour)

God is the God of first hour

God is the God of last hour

God is God forever, from eternity past to future

but...contrary to, adverse to, the terms of the invitation

few chosen...few **agree** (v2) to the goodman’s terms

Ps 119:173-174

John 6:29

Matt 7:13-14

John 1:12-13

Keyword: **agreed**

Link: **chosen**

The issue of Matt 19:16 – Matt 20:16 is salvation...the Lord's harvest

The penny is NOT a wage/salary earned

If it were, the goodman is not a good man, but is an unjust lord of the vineyard

The penny is eternal life, whatsoever is right that is given to those who agree

We are not saved by our works, no amount of work is sufficient to pay for our sins

Ch 19:25-26

Salvation is not tied to "length of service";

There are no grades/shades of eternal life based on our "hours worked"

Salvation is the gift of God, a good, Sovereign, and generous God, based on His work and His faithfulness

Rom 10:13    whosoever seeks salvation by God and only on God's terms

Ps 116:13, 17

1 Cor 2:2

Gal 2:20-21

Do not misunderstand the parable; the flesh is not spiritually discerned

Do not misinterpret the parable; understand the principle

Do not "game" God's system of salvation; a foolish gamble with no return vs taking the Sure thing with immeasurable riches in heaven