

One Body Initiative: Week Ten – Workers in the Vineyard

November 16, 2020

Scripture: [Matthew 20: 1-16](#)

“The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out at dawn to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with them for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard.

Going out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and he said to them, ‘You too go into my vineyard, and I will give you what is just.’ So they went off. And he went out again around noon, and around three o’clock, and did likewise. Going out about five o’clock, he found others standing around, and said to them, ‘Why do you stand here idle all day?’ They answered, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You too go into my vineyard.’

When it was evening the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Summon the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and ending with the first.’ When those who had started about five o’clock came, each received the usual daily wage. So, when the first came, they thought that they would receive more, but each of them also got the usual wage. And on receiving it they grumbled against the landowner, saying, ‘These last ones worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us, who bore the day’s burden and the heat.’

He said to one of them in reply, ‘My friend, I am not cheating you. Did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what is yours and go. What if I wish to give this last one the same as you? Or am I not free to do as I wish with my own money? Are you envious because I am generous?’

Thus, the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

Notes from Video:

Fairness – dealing with actions, processes, and consequences that are morally right, honorable and equitable

Equity - creation of opportunities, networks, resources and supports for historically underrepresented populations. The aim to achieve equity is to have an absence of disparities that are systematically associated with social advantage or disadvantages.

Justice - the principle that people receive that which they deserve

Dimensions of Diversity:

- Internal: gender, age, physical ability, ethnicity, and race
- External: geographic location, income, educational background, work experience, appearance, parental status, accent, etc

Social Dignity – harmony, reciprocity and relationship in a two-way process which cannot exist in isolation.

[International Labour Organization](#): notes that dignity is a fundamental human right and states that “all human beings irrespective of race, creed, or sex have the right to

pursue both their material well-being and their spiritual development in condition of freedom and dignity of economic security and equal opportunity.”

Elements to Integrate: Creativity, Patience, Value People

Consider Microsoft’s efforts in Inclusive Design: microsoft.com/design/inclusive/

Islam promotes respect, kindness, and loyalty. These elements create an environment where everyone can enjoy their rights and also where everyone can execute their task perfectly. Moreover, equity is essential to establish a tolerant group spirit at workplace in the Islamic economy.

Commentary:

From [*Laudato Si*](#): *On Care for our Common Home* by Pope Francis (§ 127-128):

Work should be the setting for this rich personal growth, where many aspects of life enter into play: creativity, planning for the future, developing our talents, living out our values, relating to others, giving glory to God. It follows that, in the reality of today's global society, it is essential that "we continue to prioritize the goal of access to steady employment for everyone," no matter the limited interests of business and dubious economic reasoning. We were created with a vocation to work. The goal should not be that technological progress increasingly replace human work, for this would be detrimental to humanity. Work is a necessity, part of the meaning of life on this earth, a path to growth, human development and personal fulfillment. Helping the poor financially must always be a provisional solution in the face of pressing needs. The broader objective should always be to allow them a dignified life through work.

Questions for Reflection:

- In your work experiences, what have you noticed as practices that support the dignity of the workers? What practices have you witnessed that do not serve the dignity of those working?
- Fairness, Equity and Justice: how might you integrate these elements into how you judge your actions? As well as how you judge the actions of organizations?
- How would you like to see the University of Portland grow in fairness, equity and justice? How might you be a part of helping that to happen?
- How might you integrate this vision of the good of the worker into your work experience? Into your consumer habits?