

Katie



The Sunday  
School Lady



## MATTHEW 20 WORKERS IN THE VINEYARD

**Scripture:** Matthew 20:1-16

**Open:** Greet, Praises, Requests, Pray

**Supplies:** Ballons and packing  
tape

**Age:** Elementary

### Game:

To simulate the “unfairness” of the parable, the kids will be the workers gathering balloons (“grapes”). One volunteer for each team will be wrapped in tape with the sticky side out. The balloons will be scattered around the floor. When you say “go,” the kids must gather as many balloons as they can and stick them to their teammate (the teammate with the tape cannot move from their place). Explain that the winner will get a prize (do not say that the one who gets the most will get a prize, just say the winners and allow them to assume that means those that gather the most).

After time or balloons run out (whichever way you choose to do it), gather the kids and ask them who won. They will likely count the balloons and say the ones with the most won. Then proceed to give everyone a small prize (candy or something, but most kids in our church don't eat candy so I'm trying to figure out the best small and cheap prize). When they complain and say, “But they didn't win!” Explain that the winners were anyone that was involved in the harvest.

**Read:** Matthew 20:1-16

### Ask:

How did the workers who started first feel? (Jealous, felt cheated)

Pretend you were told to clean your house from the time you woke up. If it was totally clean by lunch, your parents would take you somewhere special. Now pretend that you wake up at 6 am and immediately get to work. But your brother or sisters sleep in. Eventually, they wake up one by one and start working. But the last kid woke up at 11 am and only cleaned for an hour. You would have cleaned for 6 hours and the last sibling only cleaned for 1. Would you feel like it was unfair if they got the same special reward as you?

How would you feel if you were the first worker in the vineyard?

How would you feel if you were the last worker in the vineyard?

What was the Master's response? (That they received what he promised them and they agreed on)

**Continued:**

Was the Master being unfair? (he really wasn't, but it would have felt that way to those who worked the longest)

How does this relate to following Jesus? (Allow for answers, but make sure they eventually come to the conclusion that anyone who works in the harvest fields for Jesus is rewarded. It doesn't matter if their work is great, long, and hard, or short. Jesus rewards those who follow him, whether for a long time or a short time, because our work isn't what saves us, but God's grace. It is still important that we work in the field, but we shouldn't be sad when Jesus offer the same grace to others that he has offered to us. We should rejoice at just how good he is.)

**Act it out:** Have the kids reenact the story

**Memorize:** Matthew 20:14

Close in prayer

