

Matthew 17

Ears not eyes.

Vs 4 Peter was grouping Jesus as one among equals with Moses and Elijah!

The emphatic command "Listen to Jesus!" reveals the folly of Peter's decision

Why Moses and Elijah? Exodus 24:12-18 and 34; 1 Kings 19:8-18. Why do they go up MT Sinai? To speak with God. They are the only ones to do this in the OT. Who are they speaking with in Mt 17? Speaking with Jesus

Divine rebuke of Peter: This One is My Beloved Son! Not Moses. Not Elijah.

Father speaks while Jesus is still present: Rebukes modalism-the doctrine that the persons of the Trinity represent only three modes or aspects of the divine revelation, not distinct and coexisting persons in the divine nature. Thus, God does not exist as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit at the same time. Rather, He is one person and has merely manifested himself in these three modes at various times.

Listen to Him. This is the way of the cross that He must go. Peter at first refused this way of things.

Jesus' Baptism and the Transfiguration Compare and contrast. This One will take the humble lowly road being baptized and hindered by John, by the Apostles, by Satan.

17:9-13

If John the Baptizer is dead, that means he was wrong.

Mal 4:1-6 Now and not yet. Mt 11:12 It can be resisted and violent men try to take hold of it.

Nevertheless, the Day of the Lord is at hands in ways that are difficult to perceive: Jesus dying on the cross and rising from the dead.

14-21

Contrasts poor in the spirit disciples with utterly faithful Jesus. They fail to show faith even the size of a mustard seed. Jesus' prediction about His death in Jerusalem is the humblest, most shocking smallest seed imaginable! The seed will grow in Resurrection!

Jesus calls His disciples Faithless and Crooked! As opposed to evil and adulterous (12:39, 16:4)

Jesus gave them power to do this in Mt 10:1 and they still fail

Disciples faith is still small, it has yet to become faith like a mustard seed, it has not grown. Cf Mt 21:21-22

Vs 20 Hyperbole to express what seems to be impossible.

22-27 Jesus' Second Passion Prediction and the Temple Tax

What is this tax? From Nehemiah 10:32-33

This tax would function as a ransom for your own soul. Whoever paid the half-shekel to the Temple expressed his allegiance to the Jewish community and his desire to share in the sacrifices which made atonement for sin.

Vs 25 Peter once again speaks and acts without comprehension

Jesus divides into two groups: sons and strangers.

Kings don't ask their sons to pay taxes. But only those of lesser status.

Who are the sons in this context? Jesus and the disciples! God does not ask or expect the sons to support the temple in Jerusalem and specifically its sacrificial system!

Jesus is the sacrifice and will be raised on the third day, therefore there is no longer the need for the temple or the atonement sacrifices! The One greater than the temple is here! Mt 12:6

Matthew 18

- When we think of "worldly greatness" what comes to mind and why?
- What is our perception of children?
- When we think of "The Church" who do we think of as the greatest?
- What is our perception of children?
- How does the role of children in our world today differ from the role of children in a farming family a few generations ago?
- What characteristics do we attribute to children?
- What was the perception of children in the time of Christ?
- Who is the greatest in Christ's Church today? Those who need to hear God's word and feel Christ's forgiving grace the most.
- What are children in the ancient world? They are weak, defenseless, and they are without understanding. They have little or no social standing. That is why we are called to train them up. Children have no power. They cannot care for themselves. They cannot provide for themselves and they are vulnerable. With children one of the things us parents will typically hear "I can't mom. I can't dad. Can you help me?" Think about when a little child is really sick. It can be a scary

thing. Why? Because they cannot communicate clearly what is even wrong with them. They can't always tell you where it hurts. Children are weak and vulnerable. They need their parents to protect them and watch over them.

- God describes His people as a child: Ezekiel 16:1-6, Hosea 11; Mt 2, "Out of Egypt I called my Son." While this child Israel was still enslaved, still helpless, still not even a nation God with His mighty hand free Israel!

Matthew 18 is not how to clean up membership rolls or get rid of people we don't get along with. Matthew 18 is about regaining wandering, hurting brothers and sisters in Christ. This is not a simple check list where we say, "Well I talked with them once, or I left a voicemail and they never called me back, so now it is on to bringing it before the elders." As Jesus tells the parable of the Lost Sheep I picture Jesus going through a wilderness, searching buttes, canyons, and rolling hills. Jesus pursues the lost sheep high and low and we are to do the same. It is about caring enough, caring and loving them enough to reach out to that erring brother or sister in Christ. Pursuing that lost or erring person just as Jesus pursues the lost sheep.

Following Matthew 18 means loving them enough to go out after the one who is straying, regaining a brother or sister through the unlimited forgiveness in Christ Jesus. It is not about getting even or getting back at someone, it is all about a Christ-like concern so sin and Satan do not gain a foothold. Jesus pursues His lost sheep Isaiah 53, "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." The Lord laid all of our sin upon Jesus. And talk about searching high and low for you, Jesus comes down from heaven and descends even to the depths of hell for His lost sheep.