



Sermon Discussion Questions: Matthew 17-19

Matthew 17:1-13

1. Share a story where you had a mountaintop experience with Jesus. What was that like? How did it change you?
2. Imagine what it was like for the disciples to be on the mountain with Jesus when He was transfigured before them. What aspect of this story sticks out to you most and why?
3. Moses and Elijah figuratively represent the whole Old Testament. What has your experience of the Old Testament been like? What might change if you viewed it as all witnessing to Christ?
4. Jesus and the disciples must leave the mountain. How are you struggling to face the realities of life right now? How might Jesus' power and glory sustain you as you come down from the mountain?
5. Spend some time praying for one another. For those in the valley—that God might grant them temporary relief with mountaintop experiences and also give them hope for the forever mountaintop experience with Jesus that is still to come. For those on the mountain—that they might bring their experience of Jesus down to those in the valley.

Matthew 17:14-21

1. Share a time when you felt completely out of control. What were the circumstances? How did that impact your walk with God?
2. Put yourself in the shoes of the father and the son. What must that have been like for them?
3. Now, put yourself in the shoes of the disciples. What must their experience have been like?
4. Now, see Jesus. How does He respond? What might you learn from Him?
5. What is going on in your life that you are powerless to change? How do you long for Jesus to move towards you and/or change your situation? What would it look like for you to turn to Jesus and trust in Him right now? Spend some time in prayer for one another.

Matthew 17:22-27

1. Do you tend to pay a lot or a little attention to politics? What's a story that displays your disposition towards politics and government?
2. Jesus is asked about his view on and willingness to pay taxes. Summarize his answer. What other passage(s) might further articulate what should be our posture towards the government?
3. Compare and contrast earthly rulers (v. 25-26) with our heavenly king (v. 22-23). How do they relate to us? How should we relate to them?
4. In what way(s) might your attitude and behavior change to be more in line with Jesus' instructions to relate to our earthly rulers and our heavenly king?
5. Spend some time praying for our rulers, our country, and our world. Also, pray for wisdom in how best to live as citizens of both a temporary, earthly kingdom and an eternal, heavenly one.

Matthew 18:1-9

1. Right now, who do you think the world would say is "the greatest" and why?
2. Who does Jesus say is the greatest and why? What would it look like for you to "be like a child" in the kingdom of heaven?
3. Jesus provides a stern warning for those who cause children to sin. What is it? How does this warning reflect His heart for children? How might your heart become more like His?
4. Jesus uses strong language when talking about our fight against sin. Why?
5. Where are you currently being tempted or have recently given in to temptation? How might you turn away from sin and turn to Christ? Be specific.
6. Spend some time as a group praying for one another, for your children, and for anyone your heart goes out to who might be stuck in the throes of temptation.

Matthew 18:10-14

1. Share a time when you or someone you loved was lost. What happened? How were you or your loved one found?
2. Talk about this parable. How are we like sheep?
3. Now talk about the shepherd. How do his actions reveal the heart of God? How might that encourage you as you relate to Him?
4. Who is lost that you long to be found by God? How might you reflect the heart of God as you pray for and pursue them?
5. Spend some time as a group praising God for His rescue of you and praying for other lost sheep who need to be found.

Matthew 18:15-20

1. Share a story when you were disciplined as a kid. What happened? What was positive or negative about it?
2. What is the process of discipline Jesus outlines in this passage? What is the aim of each step?
3. When have you seen this process of discipline followed well? followed poorly? What were the results?
4. Jesus makes several promises in verses 18-20. How should we properly understand and apply them?
5. Spend some time in prayer as a group, seeking to apply these promises of God's presence and power to specific situations in your life.

Matthew 18:21-35

1. Share a story of forgiveness. What was the situation? How did it impact you?
2. Peter asks Jesus a question about the extent to which he should forgive. Can you relate to his question? How might you assess your ability, willingness, and readiness to forgive?
3. Jesus not only gives Peter an answer but also a parable about forgiveness. Summarize it and then discuss the "hidden spiritual truths" you think Jesus seeks to reveal regarding forgiveness.
4. How do you personally relate to this parable? What is most encouraging? Convicting? Challenging?
5. How is God speaking to you right now to apply His Word to your life? Spend some time as a group praying for one another.

Matthew 19:1-12

1. How have you seen and experienced the impact of divorce—personally, societally, or both?
2. The Pharisees ask Jesus a question about the legality of divorce. What do you think was their intent in asking this question?
3. How does Jesus respond? What sticks out to you about His answer? Is there anything surprising, convicting, or new to you on the topic of marriage and divorce?
4. How does Jesus' response reveal His (and the Father's) heart for His people and how they are to live with one another? How might your heart more align with His?
5. For those who are married, how might your group pray for you as you seek to grow in oneness with your spouse? For those who are not married, how might your group pray for you regarding relationships you're your family/friends/significant other?

Matthew 19:13-30

1. Share a time you were asked to do something really hard. What were the circumstances? How did it go? How did it challenge your faith?
2. This passage begins with parents bringing their children to Jesus to bless them. How do you long for Jesus to bless your children? How do you long for Jesus to bless you as a child of God?
3. While Jesus welcomes and blesses the children, He says some hard things to the rich, young ruler that lead the man to walk away sorrowful. Compare and contrast these two interactions. Why does Jesus address them differently?
4. Jesus says that it is difficult for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven. How have you seen or experienced this? How might Jesus' promise of a future inheritance speak to those who are holding onto riches in this life?
5. When asked who can be saved, Jesus responds: "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." How have you seen this promise already fulfilled? How might this promise encourage your heart today? Now, spend some time as a group thanking God and praying for God to do the impossible.