

**LESSONS THIS QUARTER**

- 1) 05 March 2017..... Matthew 14-16 ..... Who is this Jesus?
- 2) **12 March..... Matthew 17-18 ..... Is Jesus Fully God?**
- 3) 19 March..... Matthew 19-20 ..... What is Required?
- 4) 26 March..... Matthew 21a ..... More Than a Prophet?
- 5) 02 April..... Matthew 21b ..... What Happens If I Reject Jesus?
- 6) 09 April..... Matthew 22-23 ..... Offered to All?
- 7) 16 April..... Matthew 28a ..... Where is Jesus?
- 8) 23 April..... Matthew 24-25 ..... What About the Future?
- 9) 30 April..... Matthew 26a ..... How Do We Remember?
- 10) 07 May..... Matthew 26b ..... Do I Have the Strength?
- 11) 14 May..... Matthew 26c ..... Loyal to Whom?
- 12) 21 May..... Matthew 27 ..... Crucified for What?
- 13) 28 May..... Matthew 28b ..... What Do We Do Now?

**INTRODUCTION**

- We read about and learn applications from the Lord's Transfiguration; the healing of a demon-possessed child; paying our fair share of taxes; who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven; Jesus' true mission on earth – to save the lost; church discipline; and the power of prayer and forgiveness

Passage	Comments
Matthew 17:1-13	<p><b>A Mountain Top Experience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why did Jesus only take Peter, James, &amp; John to witness His Transfiguration with Moses and Elijah?                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ <b>Principle to Live by.</b> If you have a secret to share, only trust a few close friends</li> </ul> </li> <li>• v9. This experience did not give Peter more faith or boldness. So, what was the significance of this experience that it could not be shared until much later?                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ <b>Consider this.</b> For them, the Apostles, it would sink in later the magnitude of this event confirming the Messiahship and Deity of Christ. For us, we look back on this event as an historical reality.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Is there anything more important than having Mountain Top experiences? YES! As Peter said, experiences are nice, but having “a more sure word of Prophecy,” i.e., the confirmed word of God is better....<b>2Pet 1:16-21</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ ...and as Jesus said, “Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed”.....<b>John 20:29</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
More on Moses & Elijah & John the Baptist	<p><b>Zechariah 4:11-14.</b> Two Olive Branches are depicted as “Two anointed ones who are standing by the Lord of the whole earth.” Possible renderings are Moses &amp; Elijah.</p> <p><b>Revelation 11.</b> Two witnesses are depicted working miracles similar to Moses'. Again, possible renderings are Moses &amp; Elijah, or Enoch &amp; Elijah since Enoch &amp; Elijah never died but were “assumed” into Heaven</p> <p><b>Scripture Records 4 Assumptions into Heaven:</b> Enoch and Elijah and the 2 witnesses in Revelation 11 (Sorry, Catholics, Mary was not assumed into Heaven)</p> <p><b>Consider This.</b> God always uses new human beings to accomplish His purpose for each generation. Some may be in the same manner as someone else (e.g., John the Baptist came in the spirit of Elijah), but they were never a reincarnation or a resurrection of someone else.</p>
17:14-23	<p><b>A Valley Bottom Experience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After every emotionally / spiritually uplifting “mountain top” experience comes the inevitable valley experience</li> <li>• In this case, Jesus, Peter, James, and John are hit with a father having a demon-possessed boy</li> <li>• v17. Jesus seemed rather irate either with His Disciples or with the spiritual leaders for not being able to dispatch this demon. Why was this hard to do?</li> </ul>

Passage	Comments
More on Demonic Activities	<p><b>Satan has permission from God to Torment through Oppression, Obsession, and Possession</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no indication from Scripture that Satan can possess believers, but he can impede or hinder our progress as affirmed by Apostle Paul..... <b>1Thes 2:18</b></li> <li>• Though Scripture states Satan and his demons can work “great wonders” and miracles (Rev 13), yet Scripture also calls them “Lying Wonders”.....<b>2Thes 2:9</b></li> <li>• Satan's sole purpose is to deceive man..... <b>Rev 13:14</b></li> <li>• There are varying levels of demonic powers, from tormenting individuals to controlling nations (<b>Daniel 10</b>)</li> <li>• The greatest weapon we have is to draw near to God through obedient submission (e.g., prayer &amp; fellowship) – Then Satan has to flee .....<b>James 4:7-8</b></li> </ul>
17:24-27	<p><b>Even Jesus Can't Get Away from Paying Taxes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• v27. Miracle of Convenience – Fish with money in it</li> <li>• Other miracles of convenience are seen with the healing of Peter's mother-in-law's fever so she could get up and feed them, &amp; turning water into wine so everyone can continue to enjoy themselves at a wedding</li> <li>• <b>NOTE:</b> Though, God is not performing supernatural healings &amp; miracles today, He is still concerned about everyday things we have concerns about, and our prayers allow Him to answer them <b>PROVIDENTIALLY</b></li> </ul>
18:1-14	<p><b>Who is Greatest in Heaven?</b> To be Great we must become Small (Servant of others)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ <b>NOTE:</b> This is not being a doormat</li> </ul> <p><b>Who are Stumbling Blocks?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vv6,14. How do we make “little ones” stumble?                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Did Saul / Paul cause young believers to stumble?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Hyperboles for Impact – To Get to Heaven Cut your Hand Off, Your Foot Off, and Pluck Your Eye Out</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vv8-9. Jesus used “hyperboles” or extreme exaggerations to make a point. No one gets to Heaven by plucking out their eyes or cutting off body parts (including circumcision).</li> <li>• But we should be willing to give up ANYTHING which keeps us away from God</li> </ul>
Other Hard, Extreme, Radical, Hyperbole Sayings of Jesus	<p><b>Mark 10:25.</b> It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into Heaven</p> <p><b>Mark 19:21.</b> Sell everything and give to the poor</p> <p><b>Luke 14:26.</b> Hate mother &amp; father, sons &amp; daughters, brothers &amp; sisters, your spouse &amp; yourself</p> <p><b>Luke 14:33.</b> Forsake everything</p> <p><b>John 6:54.</b> We must eat His flesh and drink His blood</p>



Passage	Comments
18:12-13	<p><b>Straying Sheep</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The sheep here are seemingly victims of either neglect or self-inflicted injury</li> <li><b>Ezek 34.</b> In some instances, God condemns the shepherds (spiritual leaders) for neglecting the sheep. They failed to feed them God's word, to strengthen the weak, to heal the sick, and to seek the lost</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Some reasons people leave church include:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>False or unfamiliar teachings</li> <li>Not able to fit in or they were convicted of sin</li> <li>They got offended by someone or something</li> <li>Their spiritual, mental, emotional or other needs not met</li> <li>They couldn't find a mate or someone in their social group</li> <li>Other reasons? _____</li> </ol> </li> <li><b>When is it NOT appropriate to chase after wayward sheep?</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When they act divisively or unruly ..... <b>Rom 16:17</b> Even God cannot manage "stubborn cows" ..... <b>Hos 4:16</b></li> </ol> </li> <li><b>When is it appropriate to leave a church?</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Abhorrent teachings..... <b>Rm 16:17,18; 2Thes 3:6,14,15;</b> ..... <b>2Cor 6:14; Rev 2:14-16</b></li> <li>Differing Philosophies ..... <b>Acts 15:39</b></li> <li>Judgment ..... <b>Jer 51:45</b></li> <li>They defame you (hostile environment) ..... <b>Prov 14:7;</b> ..... <b>Mt 10:23; Acts 9:24,25; 18:6; 19:9</b></li> <li>Other reasons _____</li> </ol> </li> </ul> <p><b>CAUTION ON DROPPING OUT OF CHURCH FRIVOLOUSLY.</b> Some churches in Revelations 2-3 were noted for severe problems such as being dead (Sardis); lacking love (Ephesus), holding to false doctrines (Pergamum); tolerating immorality (Thyatira), and having wealth but no zeal (Laodicea); – Yet, Christ acknowledged them as His Church, and He applauded the true believers who were in them for hanging tough and remaining faithful</p>
18:15-20	<p><b>Discipline Principle – Confront to Restore or Eject</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When does love cover a multitude of sins (<b>1Peter 4:8</b>) and when should we run a sin up the flag pole?</li> <li><b>Examples:</b> What do you do if you see a Pastor, Elder, Deacon, Sunday School teacher, new church member, or church visitor telling a course joke, speeding, being critical, chewing tobacco, smoking, having a beer or wine, or out with someone other than their spouse?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you treat all incidences and people the same?</li> <li>Do you ignore what you see, or raise the flag?</li> <li>Do you confront them first, or do you tell others first?</li> <li>Do you exercise grace or the guillotine?</li> <li>How do discern the more serious charges from frivolous accusations from overzealous / passionate folks or meddlers or busybodies who have a critical spirit and constantly find fault everywhere? ..... <b>Rom 16:17</b></li> </ul> </li> <li><b>The Intent of all Church Discipline is Always to Restore.</b> In all cases, love, discernment, gentleness, grace, truth, and mercy need to prevail</li> </ul>
How do you turn someone over to Satan?  1Tm 1:20	<p>Turning someone over to Satan is a church discipline euphemism with intent to restore, not to excommunicate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are commanded not to even fellowship with evil doers of 'unfruitful works of darkness' ..... <b>Eph 5:11</b></li> <li>Fellowship ceases. Must protect the sheep.. <b>1Cor 5:1-5</b></li> <li>The offender is removed from the church..... <b>1Cor 5:13</b></li> <li>When the offender repents, fellowship is to be fully restored (sort of)..... <b>2Cor 2:6-8</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shouldn't allow a former thief to be an accountant, or a former child molester to work in the nursery</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Passage	Comments
18:21-35	<p><b>How Often Should We Forgive?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forgiveness is a simple yet complex concept</li> <li>Without forgiveness from God we are doomed</li> <li>We are to forgive others as God forgives us – totally and freely – but forgiveness does have conditions             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One must want forgiveness (e.g. thieves on crosses)</li> <li>One must be sincere (though they may seek it 70x7)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>When Is It Appropriate Not to Forgive?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider this. If someone doesn't ask or want our forgiveness, then we are not obligated to forgive. Which thief on the cross did Jesus not forgive?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you forgive a child molester who asks for forgiveness and let them work again in the nursery?</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>What about our Age of Grace?</b> Yes, child molesters, murderers, adulterers, rebellious sons, etc., can now receive forgiveness like the 2<sup>nd</sup> thief on the cross, thanks to Christ being the perfect sacrifice and High Priest; whereas in the Old Covenant they were taken to the rock quarry. The Law (being imperfect) provided no means for an atoning sacrifice or grace &amp; mercy for such atrocious/abominable/abhorrent sinners.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the NT, we virtually see all sins being forgivable (e.g., murder, child molestation, other immorality); EXCEPT for "blaspheme of the Holy Spirit" which we take it to mean rejection of Christ's atonement on the Cross ..... <b>Mark 3:29</b></li> <li>Other sins in the NT that require different treatment are unrepentant behavior as we see in <b>1Cor 5</b>, of a presumed believer who sleeps with his step-mom; BUT that sin, as bad as it is, led to expulsion from the church &amp; not the loss of salvation or an early physical death</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Consider this.</b> We may be asked to forgive a transgressor 70x7 times, but nice words do not reflect changed behavior. For example, we should not put a "repentant" child molester in the nursery.</li> </ul>

**CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS.** These 2 chapters touched a lot of issues from having a mountain top experience to casting out demons, chasing down wayward sheep, and dealing with principles of church discipline. In all cases, we need love, truth, discernment, gentleness, grace, and mercy to prevail. These qualities come as we draw close to God by soaking up His word.

**NEXT WEEK: Matthew 19-20.** Jesus continues to heal everyone of everything in large crowds; we come across another difficult passage dealing with divorce and remarriage; we see that all things are possible with God; then we come across the vineyard workers; and we learn how to be great by being small.



"I haven't forgotten what you said to me last year."