

The Kingdom of Heaven - Matthew 18:1-35 ESV

At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" 2 And calling to Him a child, He put him in the midst of them 3 and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

4 Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5 "Whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me, 6 but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

7 "Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes!

8 If your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. 9 And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire.

10 "See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven. 11 For the Son of Man came to save the lost.

12 What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? 13 And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. *14 So it is not the will of My Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.*

15 "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. 16 But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.

17 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

18 Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

19 Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. 20 For where two or three are gathered in My name, there am I among them."

21 Then Peter came up and said to Him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" 22 Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven.

23 "Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. 24 When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. 25 And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made.

26 So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' 27 And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt.

28 But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, 'Pay what you owe.' 29 So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' 30 He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt.

31 When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. 32 Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. 33 Should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' 34 And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt.

35 So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

Eternal Life - Matthew 19:1-30 ESV

Now when Jesus had finished these sayings, He went away from Galilee and entered the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. 2 Large crowds followed Him, and He healed them there.

3 Pharisees came up to Him and tested Him by asking, "Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?" 4 He answered, "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, 5 and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? 6 So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate."

7 They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and to send her away?" 8 He said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.

9 I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery."

10 The disciples said to Him, "If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is better not to marry."

11 But He said to them, "Not everyone can receive this saying, but only those to whom it is given. 12 For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made

themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Let the one who is able to receive this receive it."

13 Then children were brought to Him that He might lay His hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked the people, 14 but Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven." 15 He laid his hands on them and went away.

16 Behold, a man came up to Him, saying, "Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?" 17 He said to him, "Why do you ask Me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments."

18 He said to him, "Which ones?" And Jesus said, "You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, 19 Honor your father and mother, and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

20 The young man said to Him, "All these I have kept. What do I still lack?" 21 Jesus said to him, "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

22 When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. 23 Jesus said to His disciples, "Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven. 24 Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God."

25 When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?" 26 But Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

27 Then Peter said in reply, "See, we have left everything and followed You. What then will we have?" 28 Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for My name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life. 30 But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

Laborers - Matthew 20:1-34 ESV

"For the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. 2 After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. 3 And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, 4 and to them he said, 'You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.' 5 So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same.

6 About the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all day?' 7 They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' he said to them, 'You go into the vineyard too.'

8 When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.' 9 When those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. 10 Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. 11 On receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, 12 saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.'

13 But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? 14 Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. 15 Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?' 16 So the last will be first, and the first last."

17 As Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, He took the twelve disciples aside, and on the way He said to them, 18 "See, we are going up to Jerusalem. The Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn Him to death 19 and deliver Him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified, and He will be raised on the third day."

20 Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came up to Him with her sons, and kneeling before Him she asked Him for something. 21 And He said to her, "What do you want?" She said to Him, "Say that these two sons of mine are to sit, one at Your right hand and one at Your left, in your kingdom."

22 Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?" They said to Him, "We are able." 23 He said to them, "You will drink My cup, but to sit at My right hand and at My left is not Mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by My Father."

24 When the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers. 25 But Jesus called them to Him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 26 It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, 28 even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many."

29 And as they went out of Jericho, a great crowd followed Him. 30 And behold, there were two blind men sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was passing by, they cried out, "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!" 31 The crowd rebuked them, telling them to be silent, but they cried out all the more, "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!" 32 And stopping, Jesus called them and said, "What do you want Me to do for you?" 33 They said to Him, "Lord, let our eyes be opened." 34 And Jesus in pity touched their eyes, and immediately they recovered their sight and followed Him.

Triumphal Entry - Matthew 21:1-46 ESV

Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, 2 saying to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you

will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. 3 If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord needs them,' and He will send them at once."

4 This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying, 5 "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.'"

6 The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. 7 They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and He sat on them. 8 Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

9 The crowds that went before Him and that followed Him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

10 When He entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, "Who is this?" 11 The crowds said, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee."

12 Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who sold and bought in the temple, and He overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. 13 He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you make it a den of robbers."

14 The blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. 15 But when the chief priests and the scribes saw

the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant, 16 and they said to Him, "Do you hear what these are saying?"

Jesus said to them, "Yes; have you never read, "'Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise'?" 17 And leaving them, He went out of the city to Bethany and lodged there. 18 In the morning, as He was returning to the city, He became hungry. 19 And seeing a fig tree by the wayside, He went to it and found nothing on it but only leaves. And He said to it, "May no fruit ever come from you again!" And the fig tree withered at once.

20 When the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, "How did the fig tree wither at once?" 21 Jesus answered them, "Truly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what has been done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' it will happen. 22 Whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith."

23 And when He entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came up to Him as He was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" 24 Jesus answered them, "I also will ask you one question, and if you tell Me the answer, then I also will tell you by what authority I do these things. 25 The baptism of John, from where did it come? From heaven or from man?" They discussed it among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe Him?' 26 But if we say, 'From man,' we are afraid of the crowd, for

they all hold that John was a prophet." 27 So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And He said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.

28 "What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' 29 And he answered, 'I will not,' but afterward he changed his mind and went. 30 And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, 'I go, sir,' but did not go. 31 Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first."

Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you. 32 For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe Him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed Him. And even when you saw it, you did not afterward change your minds and believe Him.

33 "Hear another parable. There was a master of a house who planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a winepress in it and built a tower and leased it to tenants, and went into another country.

34 When the season for fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to get his fruit. 35 The tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. 36 Again he sent other servants, more than the first. And they did the same to them.

37 Finally he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' 38 But when the tenants saw the son, they said to

themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.' 39 And they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

40 When the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" 41 They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons."

42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: "'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?"

43 Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits. 44 The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him."

45 When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking about them. 46 And although they were seeking to arrest Him, they feared the crowds, because they held Him to be a prophet.

The Wedding Feast - Matthew 22:1-46 ESV

Again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, 2 "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, 3 and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. 4 Again he sent other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, See, I have

prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast.'

5 But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, 6 while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. 7 The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.

8 Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. 9 Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.' 10 And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests.

11 "But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. 12 And he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. 13 Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' 14 For many are called, but few are chosen."

15 Then the Pharisees went and plotted how to entangle Him in His words. 16 They sent their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that You are true and teach the way of God truthfully, and You do not care about anyone's opinion, for You are not swayed by appearances. 17

Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?"

18 Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why put Me to the test, you hypocrites? 19 Show Me the coin for the tax." And they brought Him a denarius. 20 Jesus said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" 21 They said, "Caesar's." Then He said to them, "Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

22 When they heard it, they marveled. They left Him and went away.

23 The same day Sadducees came to Him, who say that there is no resurrection, and they asked Him a question, 24 saying, "Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies having no children, his brother must marry the widow and raise up children for his brother.'

25 Now there were seven brothers among us. The first married and died, and having no children left his wife to his brother. 26 So too the second and third, down to the seventh. 27 After them all, the woman died. 28 In the resurrection, therefore, of the seven, whose wife will she be? For they all had her."

29 Jesus answered them, "You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. 30 For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.

31 As for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God: 32 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not God of the dead, but of the living." 33 When the crowd heard it, they were astonished at His teaching.

34 When the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. 35 One of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question to test Him.

36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?"

37 He said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. 38 This is the great and first commandment.

39 The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. 40 On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

41 While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, 42 saying, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is He?" They said to Him, "The son of David."

43 He said to them, "How is it then that David, in the Spirit, calls Him Lord, saying, 44 "'The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet'? 45 If then David calls Him Lord, how is He his son?"

46 And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask Him any more questions.

Psalms 73:1-5, 9-12, 23-28 ESV

Truly God is good to those who are pure in heart. 2 But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled, my steps had nearly slipped. 3 For I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. 4 For they have no pangs until death; their bodies are fat and sleek. 5 They are not in trouble as others are; they are not stricken like the rest of mankind.

9 They set their mouths against the heavens, and their tongue struts through the earth. 10 Therefore His people turn back to them, and find no fault in them. 11 And they say, "How can God know? Is there knowledge in the Most High?"

12 Behold, these are the wicked; always at ease, they increase in riches.

23 Nevertheless, I am continually with You; You hold my right hand. 24 You guide me with Your counsel, and afterward You will receive me to glory. 25 Whom have I in heaven but You? There is nothing on earth that I desire besides You.

26 My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

27 For behold, those who are far from You shall perish; You put an end to everyone who is unfaithful to You. 28 But for me it is good to be near God; I have made the Lord God my refuge, that I may tell of all Your works.