

Study Guide



Matthew 20: 20-28 - Greatness in the Kingdom

May 13, 2018

Welcome (40 Minutes)

Be intentional to have authentic relationships...

Worship (5 Minutes)

As the group transitions from of a time of fellowship to a time of intentional study of the word, it is important to facilitate that transition with a time of worship. This can look like praying together, singing songs together, or rejoicing in what the Lord has done throughout the week.

Word (45 Minutes)

As we look at Jesus' five discourses in Matthew, we see Matthew and the other disciples "at the feet of Jesus." These teachings are in the context of Jesus' calling and equipping the twelve apostles to go and make disciples of all nations. In our nine months of studying Jesus' five discourses of Matthew we will be sitting at the feet of Jesus learning the ins-and-outs of being disciple-makers ourselves. Our prayer is that we will be challenged to understand that we were saved in order to be disciple-makers and that we will be inspired to sit at the feet of Jesus to be equipped for our calling to be disciple-makers.

For further study on this weeks study please check out the following pages...

Action Step

Discuss with your group what you are doing this summer to stay in God's Word. Discuss setting up discipleship groups with one another, to hold each other accountable and continue to be in God's Word.

Calendar

May 28th- June 1st — Camp in the City

June 11th-16th — Youth Camp

June 24th — Community Group and Service Team sign up begins

June 24th-28th — Camp Electric

Welcome (40 Minutes)

As you fellowship with one another, please be intentional about sharing what the Lord is doing in your lives. Get to know one another and encourage one another. Are your conversations pointing one another toward Christ?

Worship (5 Minutes)

If you are looking for a song to sing this week, here are the lyrics to "[Reckless Love](#)":

Before I spoke a word, You were singing over
me
You have been so, so good to me
Before I took a breath, You breathed Your life
in me
You have been so, so kind to me

Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless
love of God
Oh, it chases me down, fights 'til I'm found,
leaves the ninety-nine
I couldn't earn it, and I don't deserve it, still,
You give Yourself away
Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless
love of God, yeah

When I was Your foe, still Your love fought for
me
You have been so, so good to me
When I felt no worth, You paid it all for me
You have been so, so kind to me

And oh, the overwhelming, never-ending,
reckless love of God
Oh, it chases me down, fights 'til I'm found,
leaves the ninety-nine
And I couldn't earn it, and I don't deserve it,
still, You give Yourself away
Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless
love of God, yeah

There's no shadow You won't light up
Mountain You won't climb up
Coming after me
There's no wall You won't kick down
Lie You won't tear down
Coming after me
There's no shadow You won't light up
Mountain You won't climb up
Coming after me
There's no wall You won't kick down
Lie You won't tear down
Coming after me
Mountain You won't climb up
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There's no wall You won't kick down
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There's no shadow You won't light up
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And I couldn't earn it, I don't deserve it, still,
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Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless
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Word (45 Minutes)

Commentary: Read Matthew 20:20-28

The question “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” was raised and answered in 18:1-4 and in the portrayal of the “little ones” which followed in ch. 18. We see the same idea raised in the discussion of rewards in between the disciples and Jesus in 19:27-29, especially in the repeated slogan “The first will be last, and the last first” in 19:30 and 20:16 together with the parable of the laborers between them. Now the same question arises in its most unforgettable form in request of the sons of Zebedee and is dealt with by Jesus in 20:25-28. The natural human concern with status and importance is clearly one of the most fundamental instincts which must be unlearned by those who belong to God’s kingdom.

In this passage we have a mom representing the prideful hearts of her sons, James and John. James and John wanted a prominent place in Jesus’ kingdom, and we know this request ultimately came from them, because when Jesus responds, He addresses them directly (vs. 22). In fact, in Mark’s account of this story, the mom is not even mentioned (Mark 10:35). Jesus addressed the pride of these two disciples, but they weren’t the only ones who needed more humility, as the other ten disciples were displeased when they heard this (vs. 24). Their anger likely came from their own pride, so that in the end, Jesus had to address 12 proud disciples.

Jesus addressed their request in verse 28, “The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” This verse gets to the heart and reason why Jesus came. In this verse we see several components broken down. First, Jesus came to suffer, “the Son of Man,” highlights Jesus’ identification with us as men. As a man, he sympathized with us (Heb. 4:15), and he qualified as a sacrificial substitute for sinners (Rom. 8:3). He was the one to drink the cup of the wrath of God in the place of sinners. Jesus willingly walked into death on our behalf. Second, Jesus came to save. He came as a “ransom for many.” We are slaves to sin, self, and death, but Jesus gave his life so that we might be free (Rom. 6:17). Third, Jesus came to be our substitute. We deserve death, but Jesus took our place, he became our substitute. The glory of the gospel is not just that Jesus died because he loves you, but he died so you wouldn’t have to. He died instead of you. Lastly, Jesus not only came to suffer, to save, to be our substitute, but he came to show us how to live. He came to serve us. Jesus shows the disciples that they are to live selflessly for the good of others. God’s glory, not their own reputation, was to be their goal. They were to love people by serving them. When Jesus tells James and John, “You will drink my cup,” he is telling them that they too will live serving others. That their lives would be lived in sacrificial service to others based on what Jesus had done. Kingdom greatness is sacrificial service and it is denying ourselves. In Jesus’ kingdom, the way up is down. Jesus will exalt all who humble themselves. As Pastor Tracy said, “all who want to wear Jesus’ crown need to understand that the first crown was a crown of thorns, a crown of sacrifice, and self denial. Those who take on Jesus’ crown of thorns now will one day be given by Jesus the golden crown of life (Rev. 2:10, the unfading crown of glory (1 Peter 5:4), the crown of righteousness (2 Tim. 4:8). But even on that day we will all bow down and cast our crowns at the feet of Jesus declaring it is only him who is worthy.”

Discussion - Read Matthew 20:20-28

1. What were some takeaways from the sermon? What convicted you? How were you challenged?
2. What did the mother of James and John ask from Jesus? Is it likely that she thought this request might be fulfilled in their current lifetime? Look at John 6:13-15 and Acts 1:6 to help answer this question.
3. Looking at verse 22, what cup is Jesus about to drink? What does drinking that cup have to do with whom is the most important in his kingdom?
4. In what way did the mother and her sons not know what they were asking?
5. Think about what Jesus is saying in verse 23. Who does he say will sit in the prominent places in his kingdom? How will they be “prepared” and who will prepare them to sit in those spots?
6. Why do you think the other 10 disciples were indignant at James and John? What do you think your attitude would be in a similar situation?
7. What is the meaning of verses 25 and 26? What is nature of the value system in the world? What is the nature of the value system in Jesus’ kingdom? How do you get ahead in the world and what are the rewards of doing so? If you want to succeed in Jesus’ kingdom, what must you decide to become and what are the rewards?
8. How is Jesus the ultimate example of the person who is honored in his kingdom? Also read Philippians 2:5-9.

9. What can we learn from these verses regarding how we should conduct ourselves in relationships with fellow-believers? Also look at Philippians 2:3-5.

10. What would it be like to live in a society made up only of people who are working to succeed in Jesus kingdom?

11. How would you summarize the teaching of Jesus regarding ambition, honor, and authority in his kingdom? In Jesus' kingdom do you think there is anyone who has authority? How would that person exercise his authority?

Gospel Resources

1. **[Sharing your faith \(Article\): \(https://billygraham.org/story/sharing-your-faith-101/\)](https://billygraham.org/story/sharing-your-faith-101/)**
2. **[Life Conversation Guide \(Video\): \(https://www.namb.net/video/3-circles-life-conversation-guide\)](https://www.namb.net/video/3-circles-life-conversation-guide)**
3. **[Questions about Sharing your Faith \(Article\): \(https://jdgrear.com/blog/ask-anything-friday-questions-about-sharing-christ/\)](https://jdgrear.com/blog/ask-anything-friday-questions-about-sharing-christ/)**
4. **[Everyone You Meet Will Live Forever \(Article\):\(https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/everyone-you-meet-will-live-forever\)](https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/everyone-you-meet-will-live-forever)**
5. **Download the “Life On Mission” App for all iOS and Android devices. This app helps teach and walk you through the 3 Circles: Life Conversation Guide.**

Walk (30 minutes)

After enjoying fellowship, worship, and time in God's word together, it is now time to pray together as a group and encourage one another in the faith. It is very easy for this portion of the group time to be consumed by the other portions. However, this segment of the group time is crucially important. It answers the question, how do we apply what we are learning in Matthew to our lives today?

Many groups have found that it is helpful to sometimes break up into a men's group and a women's group for the purpose of being able to be more transparent and honest as we encourage one another and keep one another accountable. I encourage you to try this in your groups.

In addition to praying for, and encouraging, one another, this portion of the group time should also be used for planning how your group can participate in God's work outside the walls of our church – "neighbors and nations." Discuss with your group some ideas on how you can be intentional with building relationships with your neighbors and co-workers. What can your Community Group do to impact the area around you?

Here is a list of local ministries Norris Ferry is actively involved in:

Hub/purchased	Celebrate recovery
Young life	Samaritan counseling
Heart of hope	Last call ministries
First priority	Golden age ministries
Ark-la-Tex crisis pregnancy center	Rescue mission
Community renewal	Luke's lighthouse
Grief counseling	FCA

Here is a list of missionaries Norris Ferry is actively involved in:

Shannon & Carrie Lewis (South Sudan)
Matt & Angie Johnson (Panama)
Meggie Hickson (Tanzania)
Kyle & Suzy Jagers (New Orleans)

May the Lord bless and encourage you as you are in your groups this week! Know that we are praying for you on a weekly basis and that we are here to help you in any way that we can!

Walk

Prayer & Missions

For further information visit
norrisferrychurch.org or contact Jared
Clary (clary@norrisferrychurch.org)

Calendar

May 22nd — Hub Family Missions
June — Serve Shreveport
July — Community Outreach