

Further Study – November 8, 2020

Read: Matthew 18

If you heard the sermon this week, was there any part of the message or scripture passage that was particularly important or meaningful to you? If so, what?

Understanding Questions:

- What does Jesus teach about what true greatness means? Whom does he use as an example of greatness and what characteristic of greatness does he lift up?
- Describe what happens in Jesus' parable of the lost sheep. What is the relationship between the shepherd and the sheep like?
- What does Jesus teach Peter about forgiveness? How often does he say we should forgive one another?
- Describe the events that occur in the parable of the unforgiving servant. How does the King treat his servant? How does his servant treat his peers? What does Jesus say this has to do with how we forgive one another?

Application Questions:

- How does Jesus' definition of greatness differ from the world's definition of greatness? Name examples of some things the world might view as "great" or "lowly" that Jesus would say is actually the reverse.
- In Matthew 18:15, how does Jesus say you should resolve a situation where another member who has sinned against you? Can you name a time you think a conflict would have been better resolved had you approached it in this manner? Or is there a time you did approach a conflict in this way to good results?
- What does it mean to you that Jesus instructs us to forgive someone who wrongs us seventy times seven times? Are there times you have struggled to forgive someone? What has helped you to do this?

Additional Notes:

Matthew 18:1-5: See also Mark 9.33-37, Luke 9.46-48

Matthew 18:22: Because the number *seven* symbolizes completeness, this comment is meant not to limit to a certain number but rather to suggest “as often as necessary.”

Mathew 18:23-35: This parable continues Jesus’ answer to Peter’s question about forgiveness. The servant owed an enormous sum of ten thousand talents. One talent was worth more than fifteen years’ of wages of a laborer. The debt the king forgave was huge. The debt owed by the servant’s peer was much smaller by comparison. Our sins, which God forgives, are far greater than any sin against us we refuse to forgive.