

LESSON 12 THE TRANSFIGURATION

AUGUST 26, 2020

Forgiveness
Matthew 18:15-35

TRUE GREATNESS AND STUMBLING BLOCKS

MATTHEW 18:1-14; MARK 9:33-50; LUKE 9:46-50

Again, the focus is on **purity of heart** rather than the flesh.

Matthew 5:27-30 stresses to make such sacrifices for the sake of your heart.

The key is to change our thinking, *“taking every thought captive”* (2 Corinthians 10:5) and *“girding up the loins of your mind”* (1 Peter 1:13, ASV)

Cutting off one’s hand or foot fails to address the root of the problem of sin ... the heart. (Matthew 15:19-20; cf. Proverbs 4:19-27)

TRUE GREATNESS AND STUMBLING BLOCKS

MATTHEW 18:1-14; MARK 9:33-50; LUKE 9:46-50

“For everyone will be salted with fire.”

(Mark 9:49)

We will be **“distressed by various (fiery) trials”** that will challenge our faith. (1 Peter 1:6; 4:12) Contrast with the eternal destruction described in Mark 9:43-48.

“Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.” (Mark 9:50)

It is the trials we go through that enable us to be useful to the Lord, and it is our peace and humility that enable us to endure the trials.

TRUE GREATNESS AND STUMBLING BLOCKS

MATTHEW 18:1-14; MARK 9:33-50; LUKE 9:46-50

What type of influence will we be in the midst of trials and tribulations?

- A stumbling block or an influence for good?
- By seeking the latter, we will avoid the argument the apostles had in Luke 9:46.
- The **“fiery ordeals”** will destroy us if we’re not at peace.

TRUE GREATNESS AND STUMBLING BLOCKS

MATTHEW 18:1-14; MARK 9:33-50; LUKE 9:46-50

“See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven continually see the face of My Father who is in heaven. [For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.]” (Matthew 18:10-11)

Not just the children, but any **“of these little ones”** whom man may **“despise”** or look down on.

How does Jesus know this?

TRUE GREATNESS AND STUMBLING BLOCKS

MATTHEW 18:1-14; MARK 9:33-50; LUKE 9:46-50

Don’t disregard those for whom:

- The **“angels in heaven”** have regard.
 - **“Heaven”** knows how we treat **“these little ones.”**
 - Angels are **“watchers”** (Daniel 4:17; cf. Luke 15:7) and not interveners - like so many want to think of “guardian angels” as.
- The Son of Man left the right hand of His Father to come to earth and save those whom the world despises. (Luke 18:9; 1 Corinthians 1:27-28; John 7:47-49)
 - As a shepherd seeks one lost sheep. (Matthew 18:12-14)

SIN AND FORGIVENESS

MATTHEW 18:15-35

The context for verses 15-35 is that of the Lord's desire to **seek the sinner** (even the despised), **and to seek reconciliation, so that no one perishes.**

Jesus now teaches of **our responsibility to seek the sinner who has gone astray and seek reconciliation** with them.

Jesus defines when reconciliation takes place and when man is **free from the bondage of his sin.**

SIN AND FORGIVENESS

MATTHEW 18:15-35

Beginning with verse 7, Jesus is teaching about:

- **The seriousness of sin** and the need to do everything possible to prevent it (**verses 7-11**; Matthew 5:29-30),
- **The need to seek those entrapped in sin** (**verses 12-14**; Galatians 6:1; James 5:19-20),
- **The need for forgiveness of sin** (**verses 21-35**; Psalms 130:3-4).

Why would we think that verses 15-20 are talking about God being with us while we're pursuing fleshly pursuits?

SIN AND FORGIVENESS

MATTHEW 18:15-35

An often misapplied text (verses 19-20 in particular):

- Used by many to excuse themselves from the assembly of the church – so they can engage in secular activities upon the first day of the week.
- Now, used by some to justify not coming together to worship and partake of the Lord's Supper.
- Others will use this verse to justify the practice of serving the Lord's Supper to others outside of the assembly.