

FOLLOW ME

The Gospel of Matthew

SERIES OVERVIEW

This is the final part of our multi-part deep-dive into the gospel of Matthew. As with Parts I-III, we will explore key passages in Matthew which help us understand not just the ministry of Jesus, but the realities faced by Matthew's first readers in the late first century. As a reminder, there are three key distinctives of Matthew which we will continue to build on through this series:

- Kingdom Manifesto – Matthew's gospel is a declaration of just how "upside-down" and unexpected the kingdom of God really is. The last are first, the poor are blessed, etc.
- Discipleship Manual – Matthew is writing intentionally to help his readers learn how to follow Jesus in their own lives.
- Story of Fulfillment – Over and over we see how Jesus fulfills the laws and promises and prophecies of the Old Testament.

WEEK 1 - THE IMPORTANCE OF SERVING OTHERS

OVERVIEW

When the mother of two of Jesus' disciples asks for them to be given roles of great importance and power in his kingdom, Jesus reveals a surprising truth: that those desiring greatest influence should seek the humblest position of a slave. As we see many times throughout the gospel of Matthew, Jesus upends the ordinary expectations of humanity by introducing an "upside down" kingdom. In his kingdom, the key to true greatness lies not in human power but in self-giving love.

Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must become your slave.

Matthew 20:26-27

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Give an example of someone wanting to be first or greatest in today's world. How does that compare to people wanting to be "great" in Jesus' time?
2. Who is the greatest in Christ's kingdom? (see Matthew 18:1-4)
3. Why do you think there is no response recorded from the disciples when Jesus shares what was going to happen in Matthew 20:17-19?
4. Read Matthew 20:20-23.
 - a. What is the mother of James and John really asking?
 - b. Why do you think she asked this of Jesus?
 - c. What is the path to true authority in Christ's kingdom?
 - d. Why do you think the same language is used to describe who is on Jesus' right and left in Matthew 27:38 and 20:23?
5. Read Matthew 20:24-28. Describe how "*it will be different*" among Jesus' followers.
6. Where do you see the "Story of Fulfillment" through this passage from Matthew (Matthew 20:17-28)?
7. How is this passage an example of the "Kingdom Manifesto" that Barry has described?
8. What can we learn from this passage as a "Discipleship Manual"?
9. What should we beware of when we choose whom to follow? (see Colossians 2:20)
10. What characteristics should we look for in someone to follow?