

The Gospel of Matthew

Course Lectures by Dr. Zane McGee can be found at: st.lukes.org/podcast

Questions for reflection and discussion are tied to weekly lectures

Intro to Matthew & the Beatitudes

- Why do we need more than one gospel?
- What new thing(s) did you learn from the gospel of Mark?
- What things do you hope to learn from the gospel of Matthew?
- What things did you learn previously that you might need to unlearn?

The Sermon on the Mount (part 1)

- If you were a 1st Century Christian who was familiar with Mark's gospel, what would be your response of a "new" gospel seemed to pop up from another community? How might you read this new gospel?
- How might a person respond to the beatitudes if they did not find themselves fitting the categories of poor, persecuted, or hungry?
- What should the church today learn from Jesus' interpretation of the Law and Mathew's use of the Old Testament?

The Sermon on the Mount (part 2)

- Why do we engage in religious practices? Should a "reward" be our concern at all?
- What religious practices am I doing outside of communal worship?
- What role does (should) social media play in our religious practice?
- Think of a different religious practice and ask how you might apply this pattern.

The Sermon on the Mount (part 3)

- What do you think are the heavenly treasures that Jesus refers to in to in this passage?
- How does this section relate to the Lord's Prayer?
- How does this passage present a "community rule" without recreating a "law?"
- What are some of the non-physical things in our life that we might worry about today that should fall under this instruction?

Have you removed the log from your eye? (The Sermon on the Mount pt. 4)

- Why are we prone to see the mistakes in others, yet ignore or own?
- What are situations within the church where we might easily "condemn" the speck in someone else's eye instead of focusing on restoring relationship?

- How do the instructions on asking, seeking, and knocking in Matt 7 relate to the Lord's prayer in Matt 6?
- How should we respond (emotionally, intellectually, spiritually, etc) when our prayer requests appear to go unanswered or are not answered in the way we asked?

Closing out the Sermon on the Mount

- What are your thoughts on reading these verses with an emphasis on 'action' or 'deeds'?
- How does the emphasis on 'judgement' and future consequences factor into the conversation we've had on reward?
- How are you putting Jesus' teachings in the Sermon on the Mount into practice?
- How are you becoming more aware of your own inner intentions when dealing with others?
- How are you loving others?
- How is your life confirming to Matthew's 'other-worldly' logic?

Revealing the Kingdom (part 1) Matthew 13:31-33

- What do you know about the Kingdom of Heaven?
- What does Jesus mean when he says the kingdom is like a mustard seed?
- What does Jesus mean when he compares the kingdom to yeast?
- How do things like a mustard seed and yeast help reveal the kingdom?
- How are you revealing the kingdom in your everyday ordinary life?

Revealing the Kingdom (part 2) Matthew 13:44-53

- What are the similarities and differences between the parable of the treasure and of the merchant searching for fine pearls?
- What treasures have you found lately? What pearls have you been in search of?
- How are you holding on to old treasures while making room for new ones?
- How do these parables call the church to use discernment? What have you discerned lately?
- How are you discerning God's plan for your life? How are you revealing the kingdom?

Revealing the Kingdom (part 3) Matthew 18:10-14

- What stumbling blocks have you tripped over in your faith journey?
- What stumbling blocks do you see causing harm to those in need of God's love and grace?
- Think of someone who might be considered a "little ones" in the church / community today. How are you watching over and helping them?
- How is the church called to go and find the one who is lost?
- How are you shepherding others on their own faith journey?

Revealing the Kingdom (part 4) Matthew 25:31-46; 28:16-20

- Read Matthew 25:31-46 and pay attention to all the things Jesus mentions in verses 34-36. Which of these do you find easy to do for/with others? Which of these do you find difficult?
- Read Matthew 28:16-20. In Matthew's gospel, the disciples got to see the resurrected Jesus. How do you think you would have reacted in that moment?
- What teachings do you think Jesus was referring to in verse 20? What things have you learned from your study of Matthew's gospel?
- How does it make you feel that Jesus promises to always be with you (us)?
- What inspires you after reading these two passages? Where do you hear God leading you?