

GLORY AND THE GRIND

MATTHEW 17



A Scriptorium Study from The Fellowship of Ailbe

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Glory and the Grind: Matthew 17
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Matthew 17: Introduction

This chapter begins at the second highest point in the book of Matthew, then quickly descends to the daily grind of life and ministry with Jesus.

Great glory awaits us in the then and there; and in the now and here, much of glory can be realized as well, as long as we stay close to Jesus and keep our eyes on Him.

He is sovereign in all the details of life, and He can bring His glory to light in even the most impossible situations, in the most unlikely of ways. He just wants us to stay focused on Him and follow as He leads.

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We hope you find this study of Ecclesiastes a challenging and stretching experience of journeying more deeply into the Word of God. Thank you for joining us.

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1 Glory on the Mountain

Pray Psalm 93.1, 2.

The LORD reigns, He is clothed with majesty;
The LORD is clothed,
He has girded Himself with strength.
Surely the world is established, so that it cannot be moved.
Your throne *is* established from of old;
You *are* from everlasting.

Sing Psalm 93.1, 2.

(Trinity: [*Come, Thou Almighty King*](#))

The Lord in majesty reigns, girded and clothed in strength!
Earth stands secure: Nor shall it e'er be moved;
God on His throne above set it in place with love –
His reign is sure!

Read and meditate on Matthew 17.1-8.

Prepare.

1. Who came to be with Jesus on the mountain? What do they represent?
2. How would you describe the disciples' response?

Meditate.

There's more happening in these verses than we can do justice to in one brief meditation. Let's concentrate on just a few key items.

Jesus took the inner group of His disciples with Him, knowing what was going to happen. They saw Him become transfigured, so that He shone with His eternal glory, and everything about Him was radiant with heavenly brightness. Moses and Elijah appeared to Him there – symbols of Old Testament revelation, talking with Jesus (as Luke tells us) about His “departure” (Lk. 9.31). By this we learn that the entire Old Testament pointed to Jesus and His glory, depicted and predicted His suffering, and showed the way to redemption through Him.

Naturally, the disciples were excited about this experience, and sought to prolong it. Until, that is, a bright cloud overshadowed them all, and “a voice came out of the cloud saying, “This I My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!”” Then they became terrified and fell on their faces – a natural response to being exposed to the glory of God.

Jesus calmed their fears, and when they looked up, they were alone with Him again. Jesus had allowed these three disciples to see His glory, thus giving them a foretaste of their own destinations (1 Jn. 3.1-3), and a proper incentive for the work He would be assigning to them. They were to understand that all the revelation of Scripture, given in the past, and all that might be given in the days to come, were for the glory of Jesus and the furthering of His divine will.

In these three disciples, all the disciples are represented, just as in Moses and Elijah all the Old Testament is represented. This includes us. It is the will of God, for the glory of Jesus Christ, that we listen to Jesus, obey His Word, and seek His glory in everything we do. Faith that does not have

these parameters and objectives is not true faith at all.

Reflect.

1. What are some ways that Old Testament depicts and predicts the suffering of Jesus? How should this guide us in reading the Old Testament?
2. What is the glory of God? What does it mean to live for the glory of God (1 Cor. 10.31)?
3. Why did Jesus consider it necessary that these three disciples should have this experience?

*Why does he take only these three with him? Because each one of these three was elevated above the rest. Peter showed his preeminence by exceedingly loving him; John by being exceedingly loved by him. James showed his superiority by his ready response to his brother: we are able to drink the cup and by his works and by doing what he said. John Chrysostom (344-407), *The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 56.2**

Lord, I would live for your glory today as I...

Pray Psalm 93.3-5.

Whatever you're facing today – whatever seems as if it might overwhelm or drown you – Jesus is greater and more glorious still. Listen to Him, and follow His every Word.

Sing Psalm 93.3-5.

Psalm 93.3-5 (Trinity: [*Come, Thou Almighty King*](#))

What, though the floods arise, raising their voice to the skies?
Strong though they be, God on His mighty throne,
drowns out their fearsome drone, hasting to save His own,
eternally.

Almighty God on high, Your Word can never lie!
Your truth is sure – holy and just are they
who tread Your holy way; Yours shall they ever stay,
Lord, evermore.

2 Restoration's Beginning

Pray Psalm Psalm 96.1-4.

Oh, sing to the LORD a new song!
Sing to the LORD, all the earth.
Sing to the LORD, bless His name;
Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day.
Declare His glory among the nations,
His wonders among all peoples.
For the LORD *is* great and greatly to be praised;
He *is* to be feared above all gods.

Sing Psalm 96.1-4.

(Mit Freuden Zart: *All Praise to God, Who Reigns Above*)
Sing to the Lord! O, bless His Name! All nations tell His glory!
Salvation's tidings loud proclaim; let earth rehearse His story!
For God is greatly to be praised; His throne above all gods is raised –
Fear Him, and sing His glory!

Read Matthew 17.1-13; meditate on verses 9-13.

Prepare.

1. What did the disciples ask Jesus?
2. What did they understand from His answer?

Meditate.

Peter, James, and John had just seen a wonderful vision of Jesus (vv. 1-8). They had heard Him talking with Moses and Elijah about His death. They'd been enveloped in a cloud of glory and heard the voice of God commanding them to hear Jesus and listen to Him. This was undoubtedly the most exciting experience of their entire lives.

And Jesus forbade them to speak about it (v. 9). That would certainly be a test of their willingness to hear Him.

His goal, of course, was to make sure that nothing would get in the way of His realizing the full glory of why He'd come – His suffering, death, and resurrection. Only after that would the vision on the mountaintop make proper sense. The disciples had glimpsed His glory for a few moments there; in the aftermath of His resurrection, His glory would increase in and through them to the ends of the earth, as they proclaimed the Good News of the Kingdom, made disciples, and carried out the Lord's agenda of building His Church (Eph. 1.15-23).

The disciples had just seen Elijah with Jesus on the mountain. It was first time they'd seen him, so naturally they wondered why the religious leaders taught that Elijah must come *first, before* the coming of the Messiah (v. 10). Jesus' answer cleared matters up: John the Baptist was Elijah, albeit symbolically (vv. 11, 12). His ministry, in preparing the way for the coming of Christ, was to "restore all things." Here Jesus indicated that the time of the restoration of all things began with John the Baptist. John's role in that was twofold: To set forth repentance and good works as the essence of restoration, and to point to the Messiah – Jesus – Who would take away the sins of the world.

Through His life, death, and resurrection, Jesus reconciled the fallen world to God. On that basis, God would give to all disciples the ministry of reconciliation – of carrying out the restoration of all things, until Jesus comes again to complete that great work (2 Cor. 5.18-21).

This work has been given to us. By it, we expect to glorify God in everything we do, until the knowledge of the glory of the Lord covers the earth as the waters cover the sea (Matt. 5.13-16; 1 Cor. 10.31; Hab. 2.14).

Reflect.

1. What does the work of restoring all things entail?
2. Why was the glory of the cross and the empty tomb more significant than the glory of the mount of transfiguration?
3. Are we supposed to be silent about the glory of the Lord in our day? Explain.

John was forerunner of the first, John whom Christ also called by the name Elijah, not because he was Elijah but because he was fulfilling Elijah's ministry. John Chrysostom (344-407), *The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 57.1*

Grant me grace, Lord, that I may work to restore the reconciled world today as I...

Pray Psalm 96.5-13.

Jesus has led the way for us into the work of restoring the reconciled world. Commit your day to Him, that He might work through you to make all things new.

Sing Psalm 96.5-13.

Psalm 96.5-13 (Mit Freuden Zart: *All Praise to God, Who Reigns Above*)

All other gods are idols vain – the Lord created heaven.
Splendor and strength with Him obtain; to Him be glory given!
All fam'lies, praise this mighty Lord! Give strength and glory to His Word;
exalt the Lord of heaven.

Bring off'rings sweet to Him, our Lord, in holy garments praise Him!
Tremble before Him, all the earth; among the nations raise Him!
The earth is fixed, it will not move; the peoples will His justice prove –
exalt the Lord and praise Him.

Let heaven sing with lusty voice; let earth and sea sing sweetly!
Let fields and trees in Him rejoice, for He is coming swiftly
to judge the world in righteousness, the peoples in His faithfulness –
He comes; exalt Him greatly!

3 How Long?

Pray Psalm 13.1, 2.

How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever?
How long will You hide Your face from me?
How long shall I take counsel in my soul,
Having sorrow in my heart daily?
How long will my enemy be exalted over me?

Sing Psalm 13.1, 2.

(Melita: [*Eternal Father, Strong to Save*](#))

How long, O Lord, O Lord, how long will You forget me and my song?
How long will You conceal Your face and keep from me Your precious grace?
How long must I my soul consult? When shall my weary heart exult?

Read Matthew 17.1-18; meditate on verses 14-18.

Prepare.

1. What was the man seeking from Jesus?
2. How did Jesus respond?

Meditate.

We're not the only ones who cry out from time to time, "How long?"

There are at least three candidates here for the term "faithless and perverse generation." The first might be the man – perhaps as a representative of the crowds who were always thronging Jesus. The man came to Jesus imploring Him to deliver his son from spiritually-influenced epilepsy (v. 15). If we ever doubted the role of Satan and his minions in foisting misery on human beings, this vignette should dispel that once and for all. The child was recognizably epileptic, being subject to uncontrollable fits which at times endangered his life. But the real problem back of all this was demonic, as Jesus well knew.

Was Jesus getting a little tired of all the press and pleading? I don't think so. I don't believe the man or the crowd he represented was who Jesus had in mind as a "faithless and perverse generation."

Perhaps the disciples? They had given it their best shot at healing this child (v. 16). We can imagine them, repeating what they'd seen in Jesus, and doing what they themselves had done on occasion. But to no avail. Was Jesus upset with the disciples? I don't think so. They were only trying to do the best they could to help this poor boy. Surely Jesus must have been pleased with them for their efforts.

The "faithless and perverse generation" to which Jesus referred here are those spiritual forces of wickedness that just don't seem to know when they're beaten. Jesus had defeated and bound their leader (Matt. 4.1-11; 12.22-29). Now He was plundering Satan's dominion, winning souls, healing the sick, and raising the dead. And still that wicked and perverse generation of heavenly rebels persisted, as if any place they might hide or anything they might do could escape the notice and power of Jesus. In casting out the demon, Jesus cured the child, and reminded Satan once again that his days are numbered.

I don't mean to suggest that all illness or misfortune is demon-related. It is, however, *sin*-related, though not necessarily the sin of the sufferer (cf. Jn. 9.1-3). Sin in the world makes the world groan and travail in ways that often bring misery to people (Rom. 8.19-22). How long must this continue? Until Jesus comes and with a Word, dispatches sin and death and sets us firmly in the sweet fields and still waters of the new heaven and new earth.

The answer to Jesus' question, "How long?" is "Not yet; but soon, and very soon."

Reflect.

1. Jesus longed for the day when the world would be free from sin and death. Do you long for that day, too?
2. Jesus brought God's healing power to the people He encountered. Who needs to know the grace of God from you today?
3. What can we do to make sure we don't come under the influence of spiritual forces of wickedness?

When the Savior says, "O faithless and perverse generation," he shows that wickedness has entered us through perversity, that it is contrary to nature and makes us perverse. Origen (185-254), Commentary on Matthew 13.7

Let Your Word go with me today, Lord Jesus, and grant me Your power to...

Pray Psalm 13.2-6.

Give the challenges, trials, and difficulties of the day to the Lord, and call on Him to give you victory in them all.

Sing Psalm 13.2-6.

Psalm 13.2-6 (Melita: [*Eternal Father, Strong to Save*](#))

Exalt not, Lord, my enemy; Lord, hear my prayer and answer me!
Give light unto my weary eyes; let not death claim me for its prize.
Let not my foe rejoice to say that I have fallen in the way.

Yet I have trusted, Lord, in You; Your lovingkindness sees me through.
My heart breaks forth in happy voice; in Your salvation I rejoice!
Thus I will sing triumphantly: "My God has dealt full well with me!"

4 Right Faith

Pray Psalm 63.1, 2

O God, You are my God;
Early will I seek You;
My soul thirsts for You;
My flesh longs for You
In a dry and thirsty land
Where there is no water.
So I have looked for You in the sanctuary,
To see Your power and Your glory.

Sing Psalm 63.1, 2.

(Nun Danken: [*Now Thank We All Our God*](#))

O God, You are my God, and earnestly I seek You!
My soul thirsts and my flesh in weariness now greets You!
Thus I would see Your face, with glory and pow'r arrayed,
In this Your holy place – Your beauty here displayed.

Read Matthew 17.1-21; meditate on verses 19-21.

Prepare.

1. What did the disciples want to know?
2. What did Jesus say they needed?

Meditate.

Jesus shows us that, while there can be great glory in times of worshipful retreat with the Lord, there is also glory to be realized in the daily grind of serving God. The healing of the epileptic child surely brought great joy to him and his father; and we can be sure the crowds around the situation rejoiced and gave thanks and praise to God.

The disciples asked the right question of Jesus: Why could they not cast out the demon? (v. 19) That's what true learners do: they try to learn from their mistakes and failures, so that they can improve and grow.

Jesus responded by saying their faith wasn't up to speed (v. 20). He understood that, while they meant well, and wanted to help, they didn't really believe their efforts would have any effect. Don't we all do that from time to time? We go through the motions of faith – reading our Bibles, going to church, praying – but we don't really expect God to do much in or through us. We don't need a lot of faith to get beyond this impasse, just enough of the *right* faith. Faith that believes God can do what seems impossible is faith that changes lives and empowers them for serving Jesus.

Jesus is not counseling us to pursue faith-tricks. He's saying, in effect, that what may seem impossible to us – that we could ever get past some besetting sin, or love our co-workers more, or share the Gospel with a neighbor – can actually come to pass, if we believe that God can do this in us, and obey Him in the matter. Our problem is not God's inability to do great things in and through us; our problem is failing to ask, believe, and obey Him for such things (Eph. 3.20). What you think is

impossible today is a symptom of weak faith. Weak faith needs exercise. Ask God for big things, then go expectantly to obey Him for them.

Verse 21 is not actually in the best Greek texts – those which are earliest, shortest, and clearest. The NKJV is based on the KJV Bible, which was translated before some of the best and most reliable Greek texts came to light. It's a good translation, but it needs correcting here and there, and usually a marginal note will tell you when that should be done. Verse 21 seems to have been extrapolated into this passage from Mark 9.29, where the best ancient texts have “prayer” but not “fasting.” Let's assume that Jesus did say “this kind does not go out except by prayer”. So when did Jesus pray? We don't see any evidence of His stopping to pray, either here or in the accounts in Mark or Luke. Jesus was *always* in prayer, just as He expects us to be *always* in prayer (Lk. 18.1), always communing with our Father, and always offering everything we do to Him.

And as you're praying, ask Jesus for more of the right faith. Then go out and move some mountains.

Reflect.

1. What can we learn from the disciples here about being a disciple (a learner)?
2. What can we learn from Jesus about being a disciple?
3. How can Christians help one another have more of the right faith?

The disciples wonder that the power which they once possessed has been taken from them; but they had lost it by their own fault. Christ therefore attributes this want of ability to their unbelief, and repeats and illustrates more largely the statement which he had previously made, that nothing is impossible to faith. John Calvin (1509-1564), Commentary on Matthew 17.19

Give me right faith today, Lord, so that I may...

Pray Psalm 63.3-11.

Thank God for His abundant lovingkindness. Seek His protection and grace for this day. Go forth rejoicing in Him, and to live for His glory.

Sing Psalm 63.3-1.

Psalm 63.3-11 (Nun Danken: [*Now Thank We All Our God*](#))

Your steadfast love, O Lord, than life is better to me.
So I will praise Your Name, and bless You, Lord, most truly.
My soul is richly blest; to You my hands I raise,
and open now my mouth to offer joyful praise.

By night, Lord, fill my mind with pleasant meditation;
for You have been my help as 'neath Your wings I station.
My soul clings, Lord, to You; I rest in Your Right Hand;
may all who seek my life in Your displeasure stand.

Unto the sword's strong pow'r let our foes be delivered!
Pursue them to devour their mortal lives forever!
In God will we rejoice and glory in His grace;
but all who live by lies shall perish from His face.

5 Stay Focused!

Pray Psalm 119.15, 16.

I will meditate on Your precepts,
And contemplate Your ways.
I will delight myself in Your statutes;
I will not forget Your word.

Sing Psalm 119.15, 16.

(Passion Chorale: (O Sacred Head, Now Wounded)

We contemplate Your precepts and cherish all Your ways,
delighting in Your statutes, rememb'ring all our days.
With wondrous bounty bless us, Your humble servants, Lord,
that we may live with Jesus and keep His holy Word.

Read Matthew 17.1-23; meditate on verses 22, 23.

Prepare.

1. What was Jesus focusing on at this time?
2. How did the disciples respond to what He told them?

Meditate.

In his commentary on verse 17, Calvin wrote, “The nearer that the time of his death approached, the more frequently did Christ warn his disciples, lest that melancholy spectacle might give a violent shock to their faith.” Three of the disciples had just seen Him in His glory. All of them had witnessed the mighty work of healing an epileptic boy. They had inquired of Jesus how they might be able to have such power. Were they beginning to lose sight of what He had told them in Matthew 16.21-28? Were they losing focus?

Jesus had come, as He insisted, to “bring near” the Kingdom of God (Matt. 4.17). He brought the disciples and the people to the very edge of the Kingdom sea, and pointed them to the fast-approaching horizon. The Kingdom would come when the Spirit fell, and when the Gospel began to make all things new. As John the Baptist prepared the world for Jesus, so Jesus was preparing the world for the coming of the Kingdom.

But that would never happen without the cross and the resurrection. These were the linchpins to the great work of reconciling the world to God which Jesus had come to do. Everything depended on this, and from those events forward, the coming of the Kingdom depended on understanding, embracing, and living in those realities. “Stay focused!” Jesus seems to be saying to His disciples.

And even at that, they could only hear a portion of what He said. They “were exceedingly sorrowful.” Why? Because He was going to rise from the dead? No, because He was going to die. That much they could understand, and so they could believe it might happen. They had not paid attention when Jesus raised the dead girl, to know that death is not the end for Jesus, but merely the portal to resurrection and the Kingdom.

And we are so much like them! We only hear what we can understand of the Word of Jesus. What is too hard or unfamiliar, or perhaps even uncomfortable or inconvenient, we don't hear, and so we

don't follow, and we don't gain the blessings of faith and power the Word brings to those who hear and obey it.

Reflect.

1. What is the Gospel? What does the Gospel promise those who believe?
2. What did Jesus accomplish in His death on the cross? What did He accomplish in His resurrection?
3. How can believers help one another to be more faithful and obedient in all the Word of Jesus?

*They knew that he would die, having heard it continually. But as yet they did not know clearly what kind of death this was to be, or that there would be a speedy release from it, or that it would work innumerable blessings, or what this resurrection might be. They did not know it, and so they were distressed, for they greatly adored their Master. John Chrysostom (344-407), *The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 58.1**

Help me to believe all Your Word, Lord Jesus, so that today I will...

Pray Psalm 119.12-14.

Plead with the Lord to teach you His Word, and give you His Spirit to understand and obey it, that you may know His Word to be more valuable than all the riches of this world.

Sing Psalm 119.12-14.

Psalm 119.12-14 (*Passion Chorale: O Sacred Head, Now Wounded*)

Be blessed, O God our Savior! Teach us Your holy Word!

Our lips proclaim with favor the statutes of the Lord.

How great our joy, dear Jesus, to follow in Your ways.

What more than this could please us, or brighten all our days?

6 Sovereign in the Details

Pray Psalm 147.12-14.

Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem!
Praise your God, O Zion!
For He has strengthened the bars of your gates;
He has blessed your children within you.
He makes peace in your borders,
And fills you with the finest wheat.

Sing Psalm 147.12-14.

(St. Anne: [*Our God, Our Help in Ages Past*](#))
O praise your God, Jerusalem, O Zion, praise the Lord!
He strengthens those who trust in Him with blessings from His Word.

Around us He has spread His peace; our borders are secure.
His bounty daily shall increase; His grace to us is sure!

Read Matthew 17.1-27; meditate on verses 24-27.

Prepare.

1. What question was Peter pondering?
2. How did Jesus demonstrate His sovereignty?

Meditate.

This is a charming story, and it demonstrates the sovereignty of our Lord Jesus Christ over all the details of life. The tax collectors asked Peter whether Jesus would pay the temple tax (v. 24). Peter answered without hesitation that He would (v. 25), assuming that Jesus would keep whatever the Law required (cf. Ex. 30.13).

Jesus saw this exchange without even being present, just as He saw Nathanael under the fig tree (Jn. 1.48), and just as He sees you and me at every moment of our lives. But what a strange way to arrange for the payment of the tax!

First, though, a lesson on the freedom of Christ and His followers (vv. 25, 26): Jesus intimates that He was exempt from the tax by virtue of being the Son of the high King of heaven. Thus He showed that He is above the Law, and greater than the temple. But by submitting to the Law He fulfilled all its requirements for righteousness. Jesus did not need to keep the Law for His own sake, but for Peter's, and ours.

So Jesus sent the fisherman off to do what he did best, knowing full well that He had already arranged – by whatever means – both for the fish Peter would catch and the fact that that fish would have in its mouth just the right money to pay the tax for both Jesus and Peter.

Jesus is not bound by human regulations or limitations. He is sovereign in all the details of life. We can trust Him to provide whatever we need.

Reflect.

1. Jesus kept the Law to fulfill all righteousness. Why should we keep it?
2. Jesus is sovereign in all the details of your life. He is with you always. How can knowing this help to improve your prayer life?
3. Jesus knows our needs before we get to them. How should knowing this guide our morning prayers?

*What he says is something like this: "I am free from paying tribute. For if the kings of the earth do not take it from their sons but from their subjects, much more ought I to be free of this demand, being the Son not of an earthly king but of the king of heaven and myself a king as well." Do you see how he has distinguished the sons from them that are not sons? John Chrysostom, (344-407), *The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 58.2**

I rest my life in Your sovereign care, Lord Jesus, so that I can...

Pray Psalm 147.1-11, 15-20.

Praise God for the many ways His sovereignty brings goodness and blessing to your life.

Sing Psalm 147.1-11, 15-20.

Psalm 147.1-11, 15-20 (St. Anne: [*Our God, Our Help in Ages Past*](#))

Praise God, for it is good to sing loud praises to the Lord!

With joy our songs of praise we bring to God and to His Word.

The Lord builds up His Church and He His people gathers in.

The broken hearts He tenderly repairs and heals their sin.

The stars He counts, He knows the name of every chosen soul;

His pow'r is great, and great His fame Who understands us whole.

The humble God exalts above; the wicked He casts down.

Sing thanks to this great God of love; let songs of praise abound.

He brings refreshing rain to earth and feeds the beasts so dear.

He puts in man's strength naught of worth, but loves those who God fear.

His Word to earth runs to and fro to carry out His will;

He brings the rain, He sends the snow, and none can keep Him still.

His Word He to His Church bestows – His promises and Law.

No other nation God thus knows: praise Him with songs of awe!

7 Glory Then and Now

Pray Psalm 8.1, 2.

O LORD, our Lord,
How excellent is Your name in all the earth,
Who have set Your glory above the heavens!
Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants
You have ordained strength,
Because of Your enemies,
That You may silence the enemy and the avenger.

Sing Psalm 8.1, 2.

(Aurelia: [*The Church's One Foundation*](#))

O Savior, how majestic, Your Name in all the earth!
The heav'ns display Your glory, and tell Your wondrous worth!
From babes and nursing infants, Lord, let Your strength increase,
till all Your foes surrender, and all their boasting cease.

Read and meditate on Matthew 17.1-27.

Prepare.

1. How many different ways is the glory of Jesus revealed in this chapter?
2. How do we see His sovereignty?

Meditate.

Matthew 17 gives us a glimpse of the glory that is to come, and reminds us that God can bring glory into all the activities of our daily grind. We should be looking forward to the one, and living to realize the other as much as possible – living the then and there, as it were, in the now and here.

The transfiguration of Jesus on the mountaintop gave the disciples – and us – a look ahead to where we are headed. We are bound for glory, to be united in glory forever with Jesus and all the saints. The promise of this should thrill our hearts and lift us in all our daily activities to realize a measure of that glory in all we do (1 Cor. 10.31).

There are still illnesses to suffer, spiritual forces of wickedness to repel, growth in faith to achieve, and, yes, taxes to pay. But even in these, Jesus wants us to know, we can realize His promise of glory – of union with Him and the Father, in the Spirit, according to His Word. By setting our mind on the things of glory that exist beyond the veil of this world in the unseen realm where Jesus sits enthroned, we can be transformed, from glory to glory (2 Cor. 3.12-18) into the likeness of Jesus *now and here*, so that even the daily grind can radiate with the glory and majesty of the Lord. Our calling is to take up our cross, deny ourselves, and give ourselves to our work with a view to glorifying Jesus in all things.

In every trial, work, undertaking, challenge, or difficulty, there's a fish with a coin in its mouth, waiting for us to bait the hook, cast the line, wait on the Lord, and reap the glory.

Reflect.

1. What is your practice of focusing on the glory of Jesus in the unseen realm? How could you

improve in this?

2. In what areas of your daily grind would you like to realize more of the glory of the Lord? Are you praying about this?

3. How might you turn to prayer, throughout the day, to realize more of the glory of then and there, now and here? Do you have a prayer partner to help support you in this effort?

*Why does he not tell Peter to give of what they have laid up? So that, as I said, in this too he might show that he is God of all and that he rules even the sea. He had already demonstrated this when he rebuked it and by his commanding Peter to walk on the waves. Now again he signifies the same thing, though in another way, yet so as to cause great amazement. For it was not a small thing to predict that the fish carrying the tribute would be the first one caught in those depths or that the net thrown into the deep would obey his command and would bring in the fish carrying the coin. Thus it is an act of divine and unutterable power. John Chrysostom (344-407), *The Gospel of Matthew*, Homily 58.2*

Lord, glorify Yourself in me today as I...

Pray Psalm 8.3-9.

Pray that Jesus will glorify Himself in you today, as you take up whatever the daily grind has in store. Rejoice in His excellence, and praise Him for every good thing.

Sing Psalm 8.3-9.

Psalm 8.3-9 (Aurelia: [*The Church's One Foundation*](#))

When I regard Your heavens, Your handiwork above,
ordained by Your good pleasure, according to Your love,
then what am I, O Savior, that You take thought of me?
Or I should know Your favor and thus delivered be?

Yet we in Your own image with glory have been crowned,
to worship and to serve You throughout creation 'round.
These works that sing Your glory in our poor hands are placed,
that we may rule before You to magnify Your grace.

Let every beast and creature, in sky or sea or field,
in our hands bring You glory as we Your favor wield.
Let all things sing Your praises, let all declare Your worth!
O Savior, how majestic, Your Name in all the earth!

Questions for Reflection or Discussion

1. How does the transfiguration of Jesus teach us to think about the glory to come?
2. How can we realize more of the Lord's glory in the daily grind of our lives?
3. Why are the suffering and death of Jesus the greatest example of God's glory? What do these mean for us, as followers of Jesus?
4. What does it mean to rest in the sovereignty and glory of Jesus in all we do?
5. What's the most important lesson you've learned from Matthew 17.1-27? How are you putting that lesson to work in your Personal Mission Field?

For prayer:

The Fellowship of Ailbe

The Fellowship of Ailbe is a spiritual fellowship in the Celtic Christian tradition. Our goal is to promote revival, renewal, and awakening, following the teaching of Scripture and the example and heritage of our forebears in the faith.

The Fellowship of Ailbe offers many opportunities for training, prayer, personal growth, and ministry. Visit our website at www.ailbe.org to learn more.

We hope you found this study helpful. If so, please consider making a gift to The Fellowship. You can contribute to our ministry by using the donate button at the website, or by sending your gift to The Fellowship of Ailbe, 360 Zephyr Road, Williston, VT 05495.

Thank you.