

KINGDOM COUNSEL

MATTHEW 19



A Scriptorium Study from The Fellowship of Ailbe

T. M. MOORE

The Fellowship of Ailbe

Kingdom Counsel: Matthew 19
Copyright 2020 T. M. and Susie Moore
The Fellowship of Ailbe
www.ailbe.org

Except as indicated, Scripture taken from the New King James Version. © Copyright 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved. All psalms for singing adapted from The Ailbe Psalter. All quotations from Church Fathers from Ancient Christian Commentary Series, General Editor Thomas C. Oden (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2006).

Matthew 19: Introduction

For Jesus, time was growing short. His appointment with Calvary was just around the corner, and there was still so much He wanted His disciples to understand.

In Matthew 18-20, Jesus highlights important teachings about the Kingdom, and gives expert counsel to His disciples concerning what to expect and how to comport themselves as citizens and ambassadors of the heavenly realm.

Please visit our website, www.ailbe.org, to discover the many other resources available to serve your needs. The Fellowship of Ailbe is a spiritual fellowship in the Celtic Christian tradition. Visit our website also to subscribe to our thrice-weekly devotional newsletter, *Crosfigell*, or our daily *Voices Together* devotional and prayer guide.

If you find these studies, or any of our other resources, helpful, we hope you will consider making a contribution to help support our work. You can do so by using the donate button at the website or by sending your gift to The Fellowship of Ailbe, 360 Zephyr Road, Williston, VT 05495.

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.

T. M. Moore, Principal
tmmoore@ailbe.org

1 Marriage and Divorce

Pray Psalm 22.23.

You who fear the LORD, praise Him!
All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him,
And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel!

Sing Psalm 22.23.

(Darwall: [Rejoice, the Lord is King](#))

All you who fear the Lord, now praise His holy Name!
You children of His glorious Word, declare His fame!
We stand in awe of our eternal God, and on His mercy call.

Read and meditate on Matthew 19.1-10.

Prepare.

1. Why did Moses allow people to sue for divorce?
2. What reason did Jesus provide for lawfully seeking a divorce?

Meditate.

From Galilee, Jesus moved to the region east of the Jordan River to continue His ministry. As usual, “great multitudes followed Him.” And, as usual, “He healed them.”

How mean and hard-hearted were these Pharisees! Instead of seeing all the good Jesus was doing, all they could do was try to trip Him up on some detail of legal tradition. Note the form of their question (v. 3): “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for *just* any reason?” That is, can a man divorce his wife just because he wants to?

Jesus reminded the Pharisees that, from the beginning, God intended marriage as a permanent institution, the foundational institution of all human society and culture. When a man and woman are joined together under God, they need to work hard to make their marriage work. God wants marriages to be strong, resilient, and fruitful. He did not intend that difficulties, shortcomings, irritations, and the like should be grounds for ending a marriage (vv. 4-6).

So the Pharisees throw down their trump card: “Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?” (v. 7) You can hear them saying to themselves, “Gotcha!”

Jesus calmly explained that God, in giving the Law through Moses, took into consideration the ruinous effects of sin, even as these appeared in a marriage. Hard-hearted people, who will not repent of their sins, must not be allowed to foist their wickedness on a spouse. If a marriage partner, through recalcitrance, is unwilling to repent of sin against the spouse, a divorce can be granted, to free the innocent party from ongoing abuse. In the Old Testament, God repeatedly charged His people with such adultery, even though the form of it was mostly spiritual. While Jesus mentioned only adultery as the proper grounds for divorce, Paul – following Old Testament precedent – considered that adultery can take a variety of forms, including, it seems, the kind of self-love that refuses to submit to the Lord and makes the self in effect the lord of one’s life (1 Cor. 7.10-16). To abandon one’s spouse – whether physically or by adultery or abuse – is to abandon one’s vows to God, and to set oneself up as god. No believer should be expected to continue living with such a

person. The Law that binds couples together before God, looses the abused party from the ongoing sinfulness of the unrepentant partner.

The disciples – not surprisingly – leapt to the worst case scenario, and posited a consequence of Jesus’ teaching that is as absurd as it is wrong (v. 10). Jesus was not saying this; indeed, quite the opposite: that people should marry under God and in the Lord, and work hard to make their marriage the blessing God intends.

Reflect.

1. Why are unbelief and the refusal to repent of sin forms of adultery?
2. Why is marriage so important in the divine economy?
3. How can believers encourage one another in helping their marriages to become all that God intends?

*Before Jesus made his own statement he made it clear through his opening remarks that what he had to say came from his Father’s commandment. In commanding this he was not in opposition to Moses but fully in agreement with him. Notice how he validates covenant sexuality not from the creation alone but from God’s commandment. For he did not say that God had made only one man and one woman but that God had also commanded that the one man should be joined to the one woman. John Chrysostom (347-407), *The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 62.1**

Lord, keep me from all forms of adultery today, and help me to...

Pray Psalm 22.24-28.

Praise the Lord for the great love He has shown us in Jesus. Ask Him for an opportunity to share His love with someone today.

Sing Psalm 22.24-28.

Psalm 22.24-28 (Darwall: [Rejoice, the Lord is King](#))

For He has not despised the anguish of our King,
nor from Him hid His eyes, Who knew such suffering.
Let praise arise from all who love and serve the Ruler of the skies!

The suffering King shall eat and praise with us the Lord.
Forever we His praise repeat and trust His Word.
Praise God above, all you who keep His vows and who His mercies love!

All nations shall repent and hasten to the Lord;
All those to whom His truth is sent shall praise His Word.
The Lord is King! His sovereign rule on high now we His people sing!

2 Eunuchs and the Kingdom

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 18.1-12; meditate on verses 10-12.

Prepare.

1. Jesus mentioned three kinds of eunuchs. What are they?
2. Why may someone legitimately become a eunuch?

Meditate.

This is a difficult passage, mainly because it addresses a practice more common in Jesus' day than ours.

Jerome (347-420) can explain this better than I: "There are eunuchs from birth who are of a rather frigid nature and not inclined to lust. There are others who are made eunuchs by men, those who are made so by philosophers, others who are made weak toward sex from their worship of idols, and still others who by heretical persuasion feign chastity so as to falsely claim the truth of religion. None of the above is receptive to the kingdom of heaven. Only the person who for Christ seeks chastity wholeheartedly and cuts off sexual impurity altogether [is the genuine eunuch]" (*Commentary on Matthew 3.19.12*).

In general, it is God's will that people should marry and bring children into the world (Gen. 1.26-28). In Jesus' day – as now – some men chose not to marry, either because of physical defects from birth or a decision to serve God exclusively. Becoming a eunuch for the Kingdom of God – choosing a life of complete chastity, whether by physical or spiritual means – is not God's norm; however, Jesus did recognize the validity of it.

But even for those called the ministry of the Gospel, the proper order is to marry, as Peter was married and, presumably, most of the other disciples (1 Cor. 9.5). Only if God clearly directs otherwise, and for the purpose of seeking the Kingdom of God, may someone undertake such a calling.

Reflect.

1. Why, in general, is marriage to be chosen over chastity?
2. What reason might one choose to become a eunuch, or to live a life of complete chastity?
3. All followers of Christ are called to be chaste. Explain.

Christ meant nothing more than that persons unmarried ought to have this for their object, that, being freed from all cares, they may apply themselves more readily to the duties of piety. John Calvin (1506-1564), *Commentary on Matthew 18.19.12*

Lord, I devote myself afresh to You and Your Kingdom, so that today I will...

Pray Psalm 96.5-13.

Are there any idols lurking in your soul? Anything that might distract you from following Jesus today? Confess them, and renew your devotion to the Lord, offering yourself and your day to Him, for His glory.

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 offerings 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 Kingdom Folk

Pray Psalm 28.1, 2.

To You I will cry, O LORD my Rock:

Do not be silent to me,

Lest, if You are silent to me,

I become like those who go down to the pit.

Hear the voice of my supplications

When I cry to You,

When I lift up my hands toward Your holy sanctuary.

Sing Psalm 28.1, 2.

(Angel's Story: [O Jesus, I Have Promised](#))

I cry to You, our Savior, O, be not deaf to me!

Lord, speak to me with favor, lest I should dying be.

Hear now my supplications when for Your help I cry.

Receive these, my oblations, before Your throne on high.

Read Matthew 19.1-15; meditate on verses 13-15.

Prepare.

1. How did the disciples respond to those who were bringing children to Jesus?

2. How did Jesus respond?

Meditate.

This is the second time in as many chapters (18, 19) that Jesus has used children to illustrate the kind of people who inhabit the Kingdom of God. In chapter 18, He pointed out the humility of a child, and said that Kingdom greatness depended on nurturing such a humble and self-effacing way of life (Matt. 18.1-5).

In this passage, people were bringing children to Him so that He might lay His hands on them and pray (v. 13). They had seen the power of Jesus' touch, and they gathered that He was very close to God. They sought for the children whatever blessing might flow to them by His touching and praying for them. Bringing people to Jesus is always a good thing to do.

The disciples – undoubtedly meaning well, and wishing to guard Jesus from unnecessary interruptions – rebuked those who were bringing the children. Didn't Jesus have enough to do already, without these parents and friends foisting their children on Him?

Jesus did not rebuke them; instead, He merely instructed them to "let the little children come" to Him (v. 14). We must not forbid any who want to come to Jesus, no matter how inconvenient we may consider their coming. The Kingdom of heaven belongs to those who come to Jesus, and to those who are brought to Jesus by those who love them. The children came expectantly, obediently, and humbly. They submitted to Jesus' touch (v. 15), and thus became qualified as proper citizens of the Kingdom of God.

What can we learn here? First, we must come to Jesus as often as we may, to be renewed and revived in His grace. Second, we must receive His Word and carry it out to our full potential. Third, we must

take every opportunity to bring others to Jesus, telling them of His grace and offering through Him the gift of eternal life. Those who come to Jesus to receive His grace are the kind of folk who inhabit His Kingdom.

Reflect.

1. What's involved in bringing someone to Jesus? What does Jesus offer them?
2. What can hinder us from bringing others to Jesus? How can we overcome such hindrances?
3. What does it mean for us to be like children in the Lord's Kingdom?

*Why did the disciples keep the children back? Not because of the children's wickedness but because it was not the right time. They did not want the Lord to be tired by the great crowd. To them he said, "Let the children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven." Epiphanius the Latin (late 5th, early 6th century), *Interpretation of the Gospels* 25*

Let me be like a child today, Lord, as I seek Your Kingdom and...

Pray Psalm 28.3-9.

Seek the Lord's cleansing, strength, and Presence to help you in seeking His Kingdom and righteousness today.

Sing Psalm 28.3-9.

Psalm 28.3-9 (Angel's Story: [O Jesus, I Have Promised](#))

Lord, count me not among those who walk in sinful ways.
With words of peace their tongue glows while evil fills their days.
Your works they disregard, Lord, while evil fills their hands.
Destroy them by Your Word, Lord, and let them no more stand.

Blessed be the Name of Jesus, for He will hear our prayer.
His strength protects and shields us with mercy and with care.
In You our heart rejoices; You help us by Your Word.
To You we raise our voices to praise and thank You, Lord.

Our strength are You, O Savior, our strong defense and sure.
Anointed with Your favor, we rest in You secure.
Save us, and bless us, Jesus, upon us turn Your face.
With shepherd's care, Lord, keep us forever in Your grace.

4 Not So Fast

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 19.1-22; meditate on verses 16-22.

Prepare.

1. What was the young man seeking from Jesus?
2. What prevented him from being able to gain that?

Meditate.

Three times in this vignette, Jesus said to the young man, in effect, “Not so fast.” His purpose in each case was to make the young man stop and think. Which he did, although he didn’t like the conclusions he reached.

First, Jesus interrupted the young man when he referred to Jesus as “Good Teacher”. Hold on, friend; not so fast. Jesus wanted the young man to think about that, and to think about the Person he was addressing, Who did not deny that the title was appropriate for Him, but Who turned the address into a not-so-veiled claim of Deity: “Not so fast, young man. Do you realize you’re talking with God?”

It’s a good question to keep in mind whenever we turn to Jesus in prayer.

Second, Jesus led the young man to reflect on the Law of God, and its requirements for gaining “eternal life” (v. 16). “Not so fast, young man. You want eternal life? In the terms you and I know you’re thinking about? Fine. All you have to do is keep God’s Law perfectly, entirely, and at all times.”

The young man’s reply, “Done that,” showed where his true thinking was. He was coming with his own works to gain the salvation God alone gives freely: “What do I still lack?”

How easy it is to lapse into the mindset that believes that we and our good works sre impressive to

God, or actually gain His favor. In fact, any good works that might issue *from* us are only because God is at work *within* us, willing *and doing* according to His good pleasure (Phil. 2.13).

Then, finally, Jesus says, “Not so fast” to the young man by putting his finger on the real problem keeping this man from following Him into eternal life: his stuff: “If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”

Matthew says the young man turned away sad, “for he had great possessions.” In fact, his possessions had him, just like everything has us that we cannot or will not give up in order to follow Jesus. Like your leisure time more than time in the Word or in serving Jesus? Like your stuff more than Him? Like the convenience of doing what you want when you want, without having to consider how this or that contributes to your witness for Christ? Like not having to read and study God’s Word – since it gets in the way of TV or surfing the web or a little extra sleep, or whatever?

Like any of those things more than Jesus, and you’re kidding yourself if you think you believe in Him *truly*.

Would Jesus say, “Not so fast” to you?

Reflect.

1. Why can we not be saved by keeping the Law of God?
2. Why was the young man correct in addressing Jesus as “Good Teacher”?
3. What things in your life can potentially keep you from following Jesus into eternal life?

When he has sold it to give it all to the poor, he has begun to prepare for himself a treasure in the kingdom of heaven. Nor is this sufficient for perfection unless after despising riches he follows the Savior, that is, abandons evil and does good. For more easily is a little purse despised than one’s will. Many abandon their wealth but do not follow the Savior. To follow the Savior is to be an imitator of him and walk in his steps. Jerome (347-420), Commentary on Matthew 3.19.211

O Lord, let there be nothing in the way of my following You today, so that I...

Pray Psalm 63.3-11.

Praise the Lord for His steadfast love, and call on Him to help you love Him and your neighbor more completely and consistently.

Sing Psalm 63.3-11.

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 Right Riches

Pray Psalm 27:4-6.

One *thing* I have desired of the LORD,
That will I seek:
That I may dwell in the house of the LORD
All the days of my life,
To behold the beauty of the LORD,
And to inquire in His temple.
For in the time of trouble
He shall hide me in His pavilion;
In the secret place of His tabernacle
He shall hide me;
He shall set me high upon a rock.
And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me;
Therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle;
I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the LORD.

Sing Psalm 27:4-6.

(Joanna: *Immortal, Invisible God Only Wise*)
One thing we request but to dwell with You, Lord,
Your beauty to test and to think on Your Word.
In trouble You hide us secure in Your grace;
no foe may o'erride us: We sing of Your praise!

Read Matthew 19:1-26; Meditate on verses 23-26.

Prepare.

1. What did Jesus say about people who love material riches?
2. How did the disciples respond to this?

Meditate.

The rich young man turned away because he loved his riches more than the idea of following Jesus. Through the years, many who profess faith in Jesus have believed they could have both – the riches of material wealth and the riches of heaven. But Jesus offers an important caveat concerning this matter.

Material riches are not evil. Trusting in them and organizing your life around them, rather than in and around Jesus, *is* evil. Material wealth can become an idol. We labor for it, indulge in it, store it up, covet more of it, look to it for all our wants and needs, and never seem to have enough of it. A person who thus clings to material riches – to any degree – or to anything other than Jesus, is trusting the wrong god for eternal life. Jesus refuses to be an add-on to your life's security, enjoyment, or convenience. He insists on being all these and more. A camel can't squirm through the eye of a sewing needle, and a person who trusts in anything but Jesus and the riches that come with knowing Him is not going to make it into the Kingdom of God.

The disciples were astonished to hear this (v. 25). Why? Because, like many people, they assumed that material prosperity was an indication of the favor of God. Those who were wealthy and happy must

surely be favored by God. If *they* can't be saved, then who can?

Those whom God chooses to save, that's who. All who truly believe in Jesus recognize that the treasures of heaven – which are all to be enjoyed in Christ (Col. 2.3) – are more valuable than all earthly wealth or treasure. God saves on the basis of merit – the merit of Christ, and not our own.

Reflect.

1. How can we keep wealth, material possessions, and prosperity in a proper Kingdom framework?
2. What did Jesus mean by “treasure in heaven” (v. 21)?
3. Since all things are possible with God, how should this lead us to think about our daily needs?

When the disciples were upset, he said, “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” But why were the disciples upset since they were poor, in fact very poor? They were upset for others' salvation and because they possessed great love toward them all. Already they were taking on the tenderness of teachers. At least they were in such trembling and fear for the whole world from Jesus' declaration as to need much comfort. John Chrysostom (344-407), The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 63.2

Thank You, Lord, for riches I have in Jesus Christ. Help me to use them wisely today as It...

Pray Psalm 27.1-3, 7-14.

Meditate on the beauty of the Lord and the glory in His face (2 Cor. 4.6). Give thanks and praise for the riches that are stored up for you in Him.

Sing Psalm 27.1-3, 7-14.

Psalm 27.1-3, 7-14 (Joanna: *Immortal, Invisible God Only Wise*)

Lord, You are our Light and our Savior most dear!
You guard us with might; therefore, whom shall we fear?
Though evil surround us, our enemies fall;
no harm shall confound us when on You we call.

Hear, Lord, when we cry and be gracious, we pray!
Lord, do not deny us Your favor this day!
Our help, our salvation, though others may fall,
preserve our good station when on You we call.

Lord, teach us; Lord, lead us because of our foes!
Hear, Lord, when we plead for release from their woes.
Had we not believed all Your goodness to see,
our heart sorely grieved and in turmoil would be.

Wait, wait on the Lord; persevere in His grace.
Hold fast to His Word; seek His radiant face.
Be strong, set your heart to abide in His Word;
His grace He imparts; therefore, wait on the Lord.

6 When the Kingdom?

Pray Psalm 110.1-3.

The LORD said to my Lord,
“Sit at My right hand,
Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”
The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion.
Rule in the midst of Your enemies!
Your people *shall be* volunteers
In the day of Your power;
In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning,
You have the dew of Your youth.

Sing Psalm 110.1-3.

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

“Sit by Me at My right hand,” the Lord says to my Lord,
“Until I make Your foot stand on all who hate Your Word.”
From in His Church the Savior rules all His enemies;
while those who know His favor go forth the Lord to please.

Read Matthew 19.1-30; meditate on verses 27-30.

Prepare.

1. When does “the regeneration” begin?
2. What will happen at that time?

Meditate.

Peter’s question prompted Jesus to provide a critical insight relative to the coming of the Kingdom and its character and purpose (v. 27). We note that Jesus did not rebuke Peter for asking about what they should expect who have left all to follow Him. Of course we have expectations! But just what should they be?

By the time Paul was writing 1 Corinthians, Jesus had already taken His seat at the Father’s right hand (cf. 1 Cor. 15.20-28). Stephen saw Jesus standing there, ready to welcome home a beloved martyr and friend (Acts 7.56). The ascension of Christ and His enthronement at the right hand of God marks the beginning of the historical period Jesus referred to here as “the regeneration” (v. 28). “The regeneration” marks the new age of the Spirit, when multitudes are being regenerated in Jesus – born again into eternal life – and seeking and striving for the Kingdom of God.

Notice what Jesus says about this time – the historical moment in which we live. First, those who follow Jesus will be established as rulers to bring His judgments into the household of God (v. 28). As He showed us in chapter 18, all believers have responsibility for learning and wielding the Word in helping one another to hate sin and live in the righteousness, peace, and joy of the Kingdom. Peter picked up on these words of Jesus in 1 Peter 2.8, 9 when he referred to believers as a “royal priesthood”. We are all kings, and each of us has authority and responsibility for a sector in Christ’s cosmos-wide domain, to bring the word of God to bear on all aspects of it, beginning in the household of faith.

Second, having forsaken all earthly goods and ties to follow Jesus, we become part of a worldwide family of brothers and sisters (v. 29). All the resources of the household of faith are available to us, and all that we have is available for Jesus to use as He will in making disciples, building His Church, and advancing His Kingdom. The first believers understood this perfectly well (cf. Acts 4-6), and they lived in abundant peace, blessing, and fruitfulness. We should expect the Kingdom to be made up of communities like those we see in Acts and the rest of the New Testament. Today's churches often bear little resemblance to the Kingdom communities Jesus promised we would know. No wonder we're not realizing the kind of Kingdom impact they did.

Finally, it's the last, the least, the humble, the ready-to-serve who are the leaders in these communities. Those who seek power, prestige, and prominence as Jesus' followers will be lagging far behind the true leaders, those who understand that Kingdom greatness comes to the humble, the servants, and those who learn, obey, and teach God's Law.

Reflect.

1. Have you identified the extent of that sector of the Kingdom over which you are called to rule and judge – your [Personal Mission Field](#)? Are you working it faithfully each day?
2. Meditate on Deuteronomy 17.14-20 and Ezekiel 36.26, 27. Can we be effective as kings and judges if we neglect the Law of God? Explain.
3. Whom among your brothers and sisters in the household of faith can you encourage today?

They followed him in the washing of baptism, the sanctification of the faith, in the adoption of the inheritance and in the resurrection from the dead. For this is that regeneration that the apostles received and that the law could not grant. It joined them together above the twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, to the glory of the twelve patriarchs.
Hilary of Poitiers (315-367), *On Matthew 20.4*

Help me to seek Your Kingdom and live within Your Word today as I...

Pray Psalm 110.3-7.

Pray that the Lord will fill you with His power and send you forth today to seek and advance His Kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Sing Psalm 110.3-7.

Psalm 110.3-7 (Aurelia: [The Church's One Foundation](#))

Filled with the Spirit's power, in holy robes of love,
from early morning's hour, they serve their Lord above.
Christ reigns a priest forever, the King of Righteousness
and King of Peace who ever His chosen ones will bless.

The Lord at Your right hand, Lord, in wrath shall shatter kings,
when judgment by His strong Word He to the nations brings.
Then, all His foes defeated, He takes His hard-won rest,
in glorious triumph seated with us, redeemed and blessed!

7 The New Reality

Pray Psalm 146.1, 2.

Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD, O my soul!

While I live I will praise the LORD;

I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

Sing Psalm 146.1, 2, 10.

(Hallelujah! What a Savior: [*Man of Sorrows*](#))

Praise the Lord, my soul, give praise! While I live, His Name I'll raise!

And exalt Him all my days – God forever reigns in Zion!

Read and meditate on Matthew 19.1-30.

Prepare.

1. Who can expect to be in the Kingdom of God, and what should they expect to be doing?
2. What obstacles can keep people from seeking the Kingdom?

Meditate.

Chapter 19 continues to expand our understanding of the difference the Kingdom of God makes in our lives:

- The Kingdom of God shores up important institutions like marriage, helping us to get back to God's original idea about this foundational social bond.
- Devotion to the Kingdom demands chastity of us all – not abstinence, but moral purity at every turn.
- It demands as well the kind of humility that comes natural to children
- As for riches, Jesus helps us to understand that the true riches are Kingdom riches – that vision of and those gifts, powers, and blessings that flow from the heavenly Father, so that we can live for His glory in every area of our lives. We should desire to be rich, and long for it earnestly, but not in the riches of this world. If such riches do come our way – to whatever extent they do – focusing on the treasures of heaven will help us to make good use of all our material blessings.

We are part of a new community, and each of us is set up as a ruler and judge in that community. Our mission is to bring the reality of the Kingdom into all our relationships, roles, and responsibilities, beginning among those who share our common calling to the Kingdom and glory of God.

The more we work at getting a Kingdom mindset about our lives, the more we'll be able to see the wisdom and grace in the teaching of Jesus and all Scripture. And the more we will realize the promises and power of the Kingdom for restoring the world and making all things new.

Reflect.

1. How would you explain what it means to be developing “a Kingdom mindset”?
2. What would you say to someone who asked you to explain what Jesus meant by “treasure in

heaven”?

3. What does being a ruler and judge in the Kingdom of God mean for your daily life in the Lord?

I rather explain regeneration as referring to the first coming of Christ; for then the world began to be renewed, and arose out of the darkness of death into the light of life. And this way of speaking occurs frequently in the Prophets, and is exceedingly adapted to the connection of this passage. John Calvin (1509-1564), Commentary on Matthew 19.28

Give me a Kingdom mindset, Lord, that I might serve You well today as I...

Pray Psalm 146.3-10.

What opportunities for advancing the Kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Spirit are before you today? Commit each one to the Lord, with thanksgiving and praise.

Sing Psalm 146.3-10.

Psalm 146.3-10 (Hallelujah! What a Savior!: [*Man of Sorrows*](#))

Trust we not in prince or man – no salvation’s in their hand;

Death shall take them, breath and plans – God forever reigns in Zion!

Blessed are they whose hope resides in the Lord, Christ at His side.

By Him heav’n and earth abide – God forever reigns in Zion!

He is faithful evermore; He gives justice to the poor,
feeds the hungry from His store – God forever reigns in Zion!

Jesus sets the pris’ner free, heals blind eyes that they may see,
lifts those burdened painfully – God forever reigns in Zion!

He the righteous loves the best; wand’rers in His grace are blessed;
needy ones in Him find rest – God forever reigns in Zion!

But the wicked who defame His eternal blessèd Name,
Them He brings to ruin and shame – God forever reigns in Zion!

Questions for Reflection or Discussion

1. What is the Kingdom of God? Who can enter the Kingdom?
2. What are some differences between earthly riches and the treasure in heaven?
3. How does seeking heavenly treasure help us in dealing with earthly riches?
4. How can we become more effective and consistent as rulers and judges in the Kingdom of God?
5. What's the most important lesson you've learned from Matthew 19.1-30? 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.