



## 2016 Q2 The Book of Matthew – Lesson 9

### Idols of the Soul (and Other Lessons From Jesus)

Memory Text: “At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, ‘Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?’” (Matthew 18:1 NIV)

#### SABBATH

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1. Idols
  - a. What is your idol?
  - b. The photo illustration for this weeks lesson:
    - i. Stereotypical depictions
      - (1) Boat
      - (2) Football game
      - (3) Credit Card
    - ii. Favorite possession
    - iii. Sports
    - iv. Wealth
    - v. A person’s appearance in a mirror
    - vi. How fast a person can complete a running race
    - vii. A number on the bathroom scale
    - viii. Ideas, thoughts, concepts, position, or attitudes
      - (1) That separate us from God
      - (2) That prevent us from becoming servants for those we were meant to serve.
  - c. It is not important what your idol is, anything that beckons you to loosen you hold on God, or distracts you, or occupies your time or controls your thoughts: is dangerous for you.
2. Read the first paragraph: “As human beings, we are products of our environment, of our culture.” . . .
3. Read the second paragraph. It ends with: “It’s just so hard for us to see because we are so immersed in our culture and environment.”
  - a. John 3:3 “unless you be born again, cannot see the kingdom of God.”
4. If love is serving others, then who ever serves more is the greatest in love and the kingdom of heaven. **God** is the servant of all (that is an almost unbelievable thought). All of God’s



attributes and being are used for the holding together of the universe and giving of himself for his children throughout the universe.

## SUNDAY:

### The Greatness of Humility

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5. Read the second paragraph: “The problem, however, comes in defining “greatness.” . . .”
6. Ecclesiastes 9:10 (NASB) “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might; for there is no activity or planning or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol where you are going.”
7. Is trying hard (“all your might”) really greatness?
  - a. We have become a society that arbitrarily rewards participation and effort.
  - b. Children receive trophies for being on a team
  - c. Workers are rewarded for just being on a team
8. Matthew 18:1-4 “ At that time the disciples came to Jesus and said, “Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” And He called a child to Himself and set him before them, and said, “Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven”
9. Read the first sentence of paragraph #3: “To define true greatness, Jesus called a child to stand before Him . . .”
  - a. Christ lived in a particular time and era.
    - i. People may act differently then than now. Those of older years can think back when they were growing up. Behavior is different now than even then.
    - ii. What are the characteristics of children now?
  - b. Would you do that now?
  - c. Is there a better metaphor now?
  - d. “Becomes like **this** child”
  - e. The devil is a master at portraying God as having attributes of character like Satan himself.
  - f. Currently, we need to be careful of our metaphors for God
  - g. Ask for divine guidance to mold our thoughts, ideas, and ideals to those of who God truly is.
  - h. Our concept of who God is and what He is like determines the kind of people we become



- i. Mother Teresa
- ii. Mohamed Atta (who flew a plane into World Trade Center towers)
- iii. (I almost did not use this person's name / description due to our thoughts molding us into what we contemplate and think about).
- iv. Philippians 4:8 (NASB) "Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things."

## MONDAY

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### The Greatness of Forgiveness

10. Read the first paragraph
11. Read Matthew 18:15 - 35
  - a. The story of reconciliation to a offending brother/sister in the faith.
12. Matthew 18:21 - 35 Admonition on Forgiveness
13. How is reconciliation in the first portion of the text (verses 15 - 20) related to the issue in the last 15 verses (forgiveness)?
  - a. We need to forgive someone of their wrongs against us **before** we try to make a reconciliation with them.
  - b. We should be trying to restore the individual for their best interest, not for ours.
14. The myths of forgiveness:
  - i. In his book, "Could It Be This Simple"
  - ii. 7 myths of forgiveness
    - (1) Forgiveness comes after people say they are sorry.
    - (2) God's forgiveness equals salvation
    - (3) Forgiving someone means that what that person did was OK.
    - (4) Forgiveness leads to greater vulnerability.
    - (5) Forgiveness means restored trust.
    - (6) Forgiveness means forgetting.
    - (7) Forgiveness means that the guilty person gets away with it.
15. Read the first sentence of the second paragraph: "Let's face it: it's easier to go behind someone's back to complain about him or her than to go directly to the person and deal with the issue."
  - a. Why?
    - i. We have not forgiven them
    - ii. Selfishness for our own pride, position, ideas



- iii. Fear of rejection, consequences, outcomes
  - iv. We are fallen and haven't been restore to godliness
16. Read paragraphs 3 & 4: "Where two or three are gathered. . ."
- a. Jesus, the Holy Spirit and God the Father are all in the reconciliation business.
  - b. Romans 8
    - i. 8:26 - the Spirit intercedes for us
    - ii. 8:28 - God is working everything for our behalf
    - iii. 8:32 - God the Father is for us
    - iv. 8:34 - Christ gave all of himself for us
  - v. The Holy Spirit is closest when we are actively acting as reconciliation agents for the kingdom.
    - (1) Is He present in small gatherings of believers? Yes
    - (2) Is He present when we are worship with only a few present? Yes
    - (3) Is He present in dungeon or solitary cells of isolation? Yes
    - (4) But He is not only present, but actively working when the "work" of reconciliation is actively being promoted because that is the kind of being He really is!
17. In the last paragraph before colored section at the bottom of the page: "but if we don't forgive others the way we have been forgiven by God, we can face dire consequences."
- a. Why?
  - b. What level of moral development is implied in this statement.
18. Forgiveness is not only something we do, but who we are. It is a characteristic of a loving individual.
- a. 1 Corinthians 13:5 NASB "does not take into account a wrong suffered"
  - b. 1 Corinthians 13:5 GNT "love does not keep a record of wrongs;"
    - i. (Think about that in relationship to God and the final judgment of sin and sinners)
19. Forgiveness is for your own good.
- a. In forgiving others we ourselves are healed.

## **TUESDAY**

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### Idols of the Soul

20. Matthew 19:16 - 20 The story of the rich, young, ruler.
21. Read Revelation 19:7 - 8
- a. "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has



- come and His bride has made herself ready.” It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.”
22. Read Isaiah 64:6
- a. For all of us have become like one who is unclean,  
And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment;  
And all of us wither like a leaf,  
And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
23. What are the correct outward works called in the Bible?
- a. Righteousness
  - b. Why is some righteousness correct and other righteousness is “filthy rags”?
24. Christ’s Object Lessons page 311 “By the wedding garment in the parable is represented the pure, spotless character which Christ’s true followers will possess. To the church it is given “that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white,” “not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.” Revelation 19:8; Ephesians 5:27. The fine linen, says the Scripture, “is the righteousness of saints.” Revelation 19:8. It is the righteousness of Christ, His own unblemished character, that through faith is imparted to all who receive Him as their personal Saviour. {COL 310.3}

The white robe of innocence was worn by our first parents when they were placed by God in holy Eden. They lived in perfect conformity to the will of God. All the strength of their affections was given to their heavenly Father. A beautiful soft light, the light of God, enshrouded the holy pair. This robe of light was a symbol of their spiritual garments of heavenly innocence. Had they remained true to God it would ever have continued to enshroud them. But when sin entered, they severed their connection with God, and the light that had encircled them departed. Naked and ashamed, they tried to supply the place of the heavenly garments by sewing together fig leaves for a covering. {COL 310.4}

This is what the transgressors of God’s law have done ever since the day of Adam and Eve’s disobedience. They have sewed together fig leaves to cover the nakedness caused by transgression. They have worn the garments of their own devising, by works of their own they have tried to cover their sins, and make themselves acceptable with God. {COL 311.1}

But this they can never do. Nothing can man devise to supply the place of his lost robe of innocence. No fig-leaf garment, no worldly citizen dress, can be worn by those who sit down with Christ and angels at the marriage supper of the Lamb. {COL 311.2}

Only the covering which Christ Himself has provided can make us meet to appear in God’s presence. This covering, the robe of His own righteousness, Christ will put upon every repenting, believing soul. “I counsel thee,” He says, “to buy of Me ... white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear.” Revelation 3:18. {COL 311.3}

This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. Christ in His



humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us. “All our righteousness are as filthy rags.” Isaiah 64:6. Everything that we of ourselves can do is defiled by sin. But the Son of God “was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin.” Sin is defined to be “the transgression of the law.” 1 John 3:5, 4. But Christ was obedient to every requirement of the law. He said of Himself, “I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within My heart.” Psalm 40:8. When on earth, He said to His disciples, “I have kept My Father’s commandments.” John 15:10. By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God’s commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness. Then as the Lord looks upon us He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah. {COL 311.4}

The guests at the marriage feast were inspected by the king. Only those were accepted who had obeyed his requirements and put on the wedding garment. So it is with the guests at the gospel feast. All must pass the scrutiny of the great King, and only those are received who have put on the robe of Christ’s righteousness. {COL 312.1}

Righteousness is right doing, and it is by their deeds that all will be judged. Our characters are revealed by what we do. The works show whether the faith is genuine. {COL 312.2}

It is not enough for us to believe that Jesus is not an impostor, and that the religion of the Bible is no cunningly devised fable. We may believe that the name of Jesus is the only name under heaven whereby man may be saved, and yet we may not through faith make Him our personal Saviour. It is not enough to believe the theory of truth. It is not enough to make a profession of faith in Christ and have our names registered on the church roll. “He that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us.” “Hereby we do know that we know Him if we keep His commandments.” 1 John 3:24; 1 John 2:3. This is the genuine evidence of conversion. Whatever our profession, it amounts to nothing unless Christ is revealed in works of righteousness. {COL 312.3}

The truth is to be planted in the heart. It is to control the mind and regulate the affections. The whole character must be stamped with the divine utterances. Every jot and tittle of the word of God is to be brought into the daily practice. {COL 314.1}

He who becomes a partaker of the divine nature will be in harmony with God’s great standard of righteousness, His holy law. This is the rule by which God measures the actions of men. This will be the test of character in the judgment. {COL 314.2}

25. As an observer can you tell which acts are righteousness and which are not?
- Maybe
  - Not for sure.
  - We do not have the divine gift of discernment.



26. The last paragraph above the colored section:
- a. “The gospel needs to penetrate the heart, to go right to the idols of the soul, and whatever we are holding on to that’s an impediment to our relationship to God needs to be gone.”

## WEDNESDAY

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### What’s in It for Us?

27. Peter’s question: Matthew 19:27
- a. Then Peter said to Him, “Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?”
  - b. Jesus’ Response
    - i. 19:28 - 30 direct response
      - (1) assurance of position and future rewards for those men who were following him
    - ii. 20:1 - 16 : Parable of laborers in the vineyard
      - (1) A different economy
      - (2) God’s character is that of love and He gives us out of his graciousness not our obligations
      - (3) “Fairness”
        - (a) God is the one most “Fair”
        - (b) He is truly lovely
28. Bottom colored section: “If someone were to ask you, “What will I get by serving Jesus?” what would you answer?
- a. Any scriptures that come to mind?
  - b. John 14:27 (NLT) “I am leaving you with a gift - peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don’t be troubled or afraid.”
29. Why do we want heaven?
30. 1 Corinthians 12:31 (KJV) “Covet the best gifts.”
- a. Is the introduction to discussion of true love (1 Corinthians 13)
  - b. What is our motive for wanting heaven
  - c. We may start out wanting heaven for selfish reasons
    - i. We may need to grow in grace (God’s attributes)
    - ii. We are changed to God-like-ness as we behold Him
      - (1) 2 Corinthians 3:18 (GNT)
        - (a) “All of us, then, reflect the glory of the Lord with uncovered faces; and that same glory, coming from the Lord, who is the Spirit, transforms us into his likeness in an ever greater degree of glory.”



## THURSDAY

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### “We Are Able”

31. Read Matthew 20:20 - 27 - story of James and John and their mother’s request for preeminence.
32. Read Luke 9:51-56 Asking to call down fire upon prejudiced village.
33. Where were they?
  - a. What kingdom was this taking place in: Judah or Israel?
  - b. What were the current locations and populace of these two areas?
    - i. Judah - pure bred
    - ii. Samaria - half or mixed breeds
      - (1) attempted to thwart rebuilding of Jerusalem’s wall and temple
      - (2) Wouldn’t worship at Jerusalem’s temple
        - (a) Remember the question of the woman at the well. John 4:20
      - (3) They were located in Samaria and were traveling from village to village on their way to Jerusalem.
34. Read 2 Kings 1 & 2 (especially 1:12 - “Elijah replied to them, “If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty.” Then the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.”
  - a. Read Luke 9:54 - 56
    - i. Who is more “a man of God” than Christ?
      - (1) This is right after Luke 9:18 - 20
        - (a) “You are the Christ of God”
        - (b) These were the same “heathens” not respecting the Lord’s anointed.
    - b. What was wrong with their idea of fire from heaven?
    - c. See Desire of Ages Pg 483 paragraph 3

## FRIDAY

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### Natural Law

35. The final sentence: “. . . we need to study God’s Word and from it derive the morals, values, and principles that should govern our lives. Nothing else, of itself, is reliable.”
  - a. How do you interpret what you read.
    - i. evidence-based integrative approach to Bible study
    - ii. Evidence-Based approach of understanding scripture. This method harmonizes scripture, science, and experience.
      - (1) Bible by itself



- (2) Science by itself
  - (3) Experience by itself
- iii. This is not a static process.
- (1) 2 Peter 3:18 “But continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory, now and forever! Amen”