

# HUMILITY & RESPONSIBILITY

MATTHEW 17:24-18:14

## 35: *Humility & Responsibility* (Mt 17:24-18:14)

Christians must demonstrate our humility towards the weakest among us, while we appreciate our responsibility to guide all people - young & old, weak & strong - to the feet of Jesus.

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### teachingnotes

**Matthew 17:24-25a** (NIV) After Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma temple tax came to Peter and asked, “Doesn’t your teacher pay the temple tax?” “Yes, he does,” he replied.

The **temple tax** was a carry over from the half-shekel offering for the tabernacle commanded for every person over the age of 20 (Ex 30:11-16). The half-shekel was equivalent to the Greek **two-drachma** silver coin.

**Matthew 17:25b-26** (NIV)

When Peter came into the house, Jesus was the first to speak. “What do you think, Simon?” he asked. “From whom do the kings of the earth collect duty and taxes—from their own children or from others?” “From others,” Peter answered. “Then the children are exempt,” Jesus said to him.

The children of **kings** were typically exempt from taxes. So, the answer is obvious - they **collect taxes from others**, but **not from their own children**. The Temple is the house of Yahweh, the true King of Israel. Jesus is His Son. Remember when He called the temple “my Father’s house” (Lk 2:49; Jn 2:16)?

- As the Son, Jesus doesn’t HAVE to pay a temple tax. Neither does Peter, as he is now a child of God by faith in Jesus (Jn 1:12). In the not too distant future, the disciples of Jesus would not need to pay a temple tax because the temple would be destroyed.

**Matthew 17:27** (NIV) But so that we may not cause offense, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours.

We’re not told what happens next, but it’s implied that this is exactly what occurred. Simon Peter, a fisherman by trade, goes fishing and comes home with the **temple tax** for him and Jesus.

### THE NECESSITY OF HUMILITY

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

*Why were they asking this?* Mark gives us a little more information, and evidently the disciples weren’t the ones who prompted this question - Jesus was.

**Mark 9:33-34** (NIV)

They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, “What were you arguing about on the road?” But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest.

This jockeying for position doesn’t work in our homes and this isn’t going to work in the Kingdom of Jesus, so it’s time for a practical lesson in **HUMILITY & RESPONSIBILITY**.

**Matthew 18:2-5** (NIV) He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. And he said: “Truly I tell you, **unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes one such child in My Name welcomes Me.**”

- First we see **the necessity of humility before God**, coming to Him **like little children** - trusting Him to do what we can’t do, as a child trusts his/her parents. Those who want to enter the Kingdom must turn from their own self-righteousness and trust God’s mercy. Those who do NOT, **will never enter the kingdom of heaven**.

• Next we see the importance of demonstrating **HUMILITY to other people**, a willingness to **take the lowly position** AND a willingness to **welcome a child** - showing kindness and gentleness to those who can't do anything for YOU - in the **name** of Jesus, because the way we treat them is the way we treat JESUS.

🕒 This isn't just about how we treat young folks - **it's about how we are to treat each other** - with genuine care and value!

❓ **Does MY life demonstrate the way Jesus values all people?**

### THE GRAVITY OF RESPONSIBILITY

**Matthew 18:6-7** (NIV) If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to stumble! Such things must come, but **woe to the person through whom they come!**

Jesus is willing to forgive Christians who fall momentarily into sin, but Jesus will not put up with those who cause others to **stumble** - those who lead others AWAY from Jesus instead of leading them to HIM. To them Jesus declares **WOE** - a warning of future judgment.

Tying a **large millstone around your neck** and being thrown in deep water would be more inviting than the punishment God will give to those *who lead others away from allegiance to Jesus!*

- **Teachers in the church will face stricter judgment** (James 3:1) because a teacher's lessons & life will either **clarify or confuse** their students regarding WHO God is and WHAT God says. So while teaching is a great privilege it is also a great responsibility.
- Teachers in the church aren't the only ones who should be concerned. **If you are leading someone** - *your spouse, friends, children & grandchildren* - **then YOU are accountable for your LIFE and the LESSONS you teach too.**

❓ **Does MY life demonstrate CLARITY or CONFUSION to those who are watching me?**

### FEET TO FAITH

**Ask God and those you love to reveal whether your life is bringing CLARITY or causing CONFUSION.** Be ready to change gears if someone honestly shares a concern they see in your life.

**Matthew 18:8-9** (NIV) If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, **cut it off and throw it away**. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be **thrown into eternal fire**. And if your eye causes you to stumble, **gouge it out and throw it away**. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be **thrown into the fire of hell**.

Just as Matthew previously quotes Jesus saying the same thing in Mt 5:27-30, so Jesus uses this *hyperbole* (an exaggeration to make a point). *The reality of the OTHER SIDE of eternity* should cause us to **make holy decisions on THIS SIDE of eternity**.

Does **your hand or foot** - *what you touch or where you go* - Does **your eye** - *what you look at* - **cause you to stumble?**

**Why remove temptation to sin from your life?** *A Just Judge who will condemn those who disobey Him to the eternal fire of hell.*

- Jesus says that **hell** is a place of **eternal fire** - a place of forever punishment for disobeying the Creator of the Universe.

**Matthew 18:10** (NIV) See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.

This is where many people get the idea of **guarding angels**. Hebrews 1:14 refers to **angels** as "ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation." (see Gen 48:16; Ps 34:7 , 91:11). God cares about the people that some see as insignificant and sends His angels to minister to their needs.

🌟 **John MacArthur:** *"The implication is that the holy angels never take their eyes off God, lest they miss some direction from Him regarding a task they are to perform on behalf of a believer...The fact that Almighty God is so concerned about the care of His beloved children that He has hosts of angels in His presence ready to be dispatched to their aid demonstrates clearly how valuable believers are and how unthinkable wicked it is to look with disdain on someone whom God so highly prizes."*<sup>1</sup>

🔍 No verse 11 in most contemporary translations because it is not found in the earliest manuscripts of Matthew. The phrase "For the Son of Man came to save the lost" seems to be inserted into later Matthew manuscripts from Lk 19:10.<sup>2</sup>

### Disciples of Jesus follow His Example

**Philippians 2:3-5** (NIV)

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, **in humility value others above yourselves**, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, **have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:**

<sup>1</sup> John F. MacArthur Jr., Matthew, vol. 3, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1985), 118-119.

<sup>2</sup> The NET Bible (Second Edition) - The most important MSS (x B L\* Θ\* f1, 13 33 892\* pc e ff1 sys sa) do not include 18:11 "For the Son of Man came to save the lost." The verse is included in D Lmg W Gc 078vid R lat syc,p,h, but is almost certainly not original, being borrowed, as it were, from the parallel in Luke 19:10. The present translation follows NA27 in omitting the verse number as well, a procedure also followed by a number of other modern translations.

### **Matthew 18:12-14** (NIV)

What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and **go to look for the one that wandered off**? And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. In the same way **your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should perish**.

Jesus left the glory of heaven to seek YOU out because He doesn't want YOU to perish. He doesn't want others to perish either, nor that person who lives near you, nor the person with a different skin color.

#### **2 Questions:**

1. **Do you demonstrate HUMILITY?** Ask yourself the question: **Does MY life demonstrate the way Jesus values all people?**
2. **Do you appreciate the RESPONSIBILITY to lead people TO Jesus and not away from Jesus?** Ask yourself: **Does MY life demonstrate CLARITY or CONFUSION to those who are watching me?**

🕒 **Next Week** - Hear our men who served in the Kairos Prison Ministry last weekend.

## heretoserveyou

Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

\* Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Christy** (850-673-9764), **Caleb** (864-315-8015), **Gary** (850-673-2507), **Betty** (850-973-3266), or another follower of Jesus soon!

\* Or call our **deacons & wives: Alan & Christy Androski** (850-464-1428), **Steve & Debbie Bass** (850-673-7952), **Tim & Joni Hughey** (850-464-1156), **Mark & Dot Mancil** (850-253-5405), **Boss & Amelia Mulkey** (850-464-6717), or **Tom & Martha Waddail** (850-973-0011).

## discussionquestions

Take some time to discuss these questions with your family, friends, or group.

1. What challenged or encouraged you *most* from today's teaching?
2. **Read Matthew 17:24-27.** Take some time to explain why Jesus did not have to pay the Temple tax, but chose to anyway. What does Jesus' knowledge about where to find the coin tell you about who he is?
3. **Read Matthew 18:1-5, 10.** According to Jesus, why is humility necessary? Name some ways that we can choose to be: a) prideful in how we treat others, b) humble in how we treat others.
4. **Read Philippians 2:1-14.** How did Jesus model the mindset that we are to have in our relationships with one another? Take time to discuss the characteristics of Christ that we are to share in following His example.
5. **Read Matthew 18:6-9.** What is the punishment for those who lead people away from Jesus instead of to him? Share some characteristics of those who demonstrate clarity to those who are watching versus those who cause confusion to those who are watching. What is the disciple of Jesus to do about the actions, words, or thoughts that cause themselves or others to stumble? Give an example of what that might look like.
6. What is the heart of the Father toward people who are perishing and how should that impact the way we view those who are currently lost?
7. What does God want YOU to do with what we studied today?
8. Share prayer needs and pray for one another.