

Together with Jesus

Week Nine – Matthew 17 and 18
Transfiguration and the Emergence of
the Church



Warm Up

Who do people find the most difficult to forgive?



Matthew 17:1-13

The Transfiguration

Almost a full week of time passes between Jesus foretelling His passion and His invitation to 3 close disciples to see Him transfigured. After the Transfiguration, the disciples ask a question about Elijah that seems to connect to what they have just seen.



Question: How do you suppose the disciples know it is Elijah and Moses?



Question: What do you think this story is supposed to tell us? Why might Matthew include it?

Matthew 17:14-23

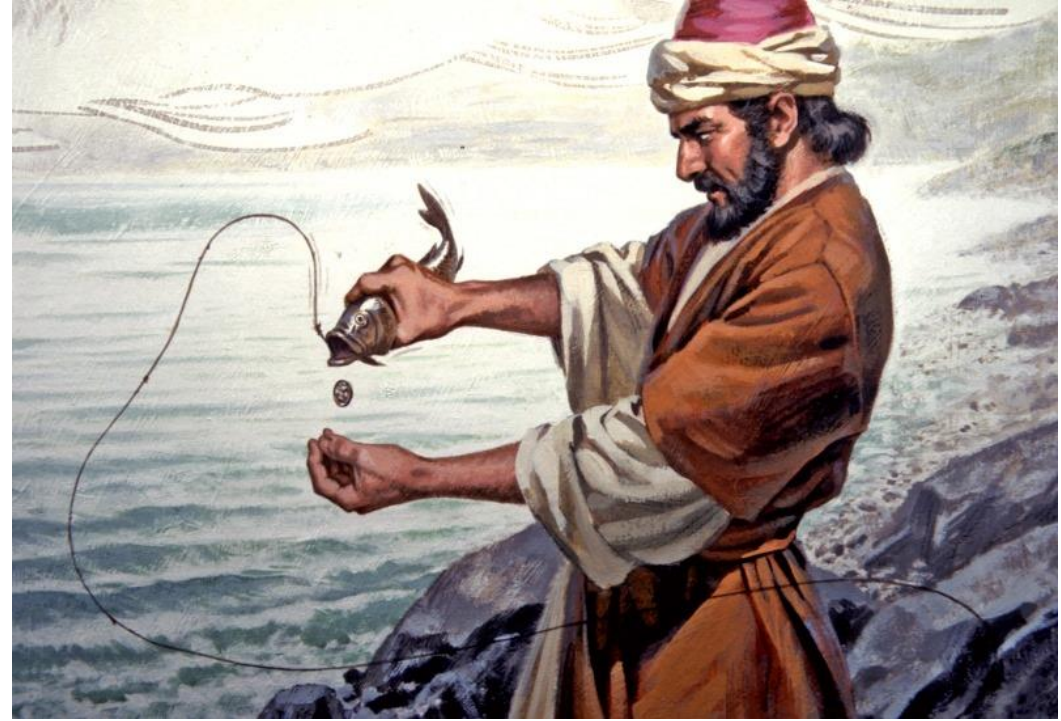
Jesus Heals the Epileptic

Coming down from the mount of transfiguration, Jesus finds a scene developing between His disciples and a father of (seemingly) an epileptic boy. Jesus heals the boy but seems frustrated with His disciples. He then gives them the second of His three passion predictions of His death.

Matthew 17:24-27

The Two Drachma Tax

Jewish tax collectors (as opposed to Roman) come to collect an annual two drachma tax from Peter, asking specifically if Jesus pays the tax (priests were not required to). This tax would go specifically to maintenance of the Temple. Jesus provides not only for His tax but also for Peter's.



Question: Jesus could have made a point here not paying the tax. Why do you think He does pay it?



Question: How would you explain what the church is to someone?

Matthew 18:1-11

Stumbling into Sin

Jesus seems to begin to teach in a new way, about the ethics of an alternative community called the “church”. This begins in response to the disciples arguing about who is greatest (perhaps about John the Baptist) and continuing with warnings against causing others to sin.

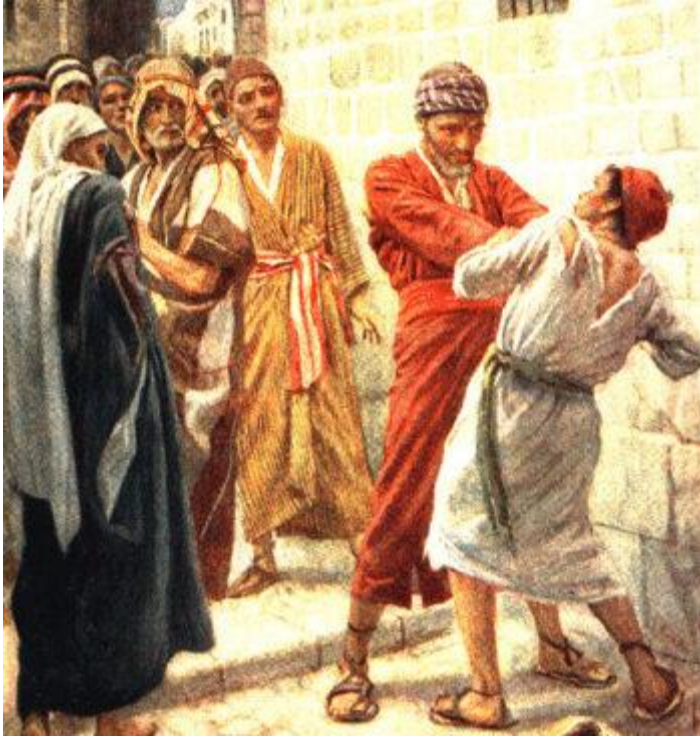
Matthew 18:12-20

Seeking the Lost

After warning the disciples about causing others to sin, He then talks about how the church should act when sins occur. He gives the parable of the lost sheep and then gives instructions on what happens when sins occur within the church.



Question: What do you think the message of the lost sheep is?



Matthew 18:21-45

The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

Upon discussing forgiveness, Peter asks how often he should forgive. This prompts Jesus to tell the parable of the unforgiving servant.

Question: Only Matthew records this parable. Why do you think it stands out to him?



Wrap Up

What does it mean to you to be a part of this thing Jesus calls “the church”?

Next week – Matthew 19 and 20