

# Bible Study 2023-2024

## Class #14

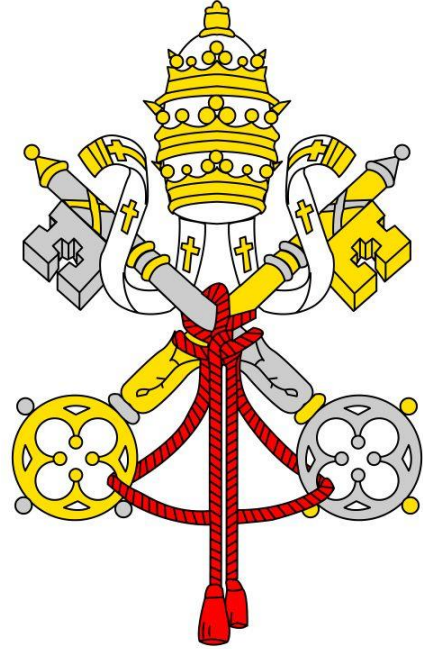
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# The Synoptic Gospels 2023-2024

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# Matthew 18 (Cont)

- **Matthew 18:18** *“Truly, I say to you, what ever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you lose on earth shall be loosed in heaven”*
  - What Jesus is saying here to the disciples is like what He said to Peter in **Matthew 16:18-19\***, that they will speak with the **authority of God**, because it will be in accordance with God’s will
  - It is not that the God will act in accordance with the will of Peter or the church



# Matthew 18 (Cont)

- The church is the body of Christ, and since Christ is God, then the church will do whatever God wants
- The church will act in accordance with the will of God, because the church is God on earth
- We are the temple of God

# Matthew 18 (Cont)

- **Matthew 18:19** “Again I say to you, ...there am I in the midst of them
  - Father asked that we look at **1<sup>st</sup> John 5:14\*** at this point
  - There are a few places in Matthew and John where Jesus says: *“Whatever you ask in my name will be given to you”*
  - We must understand that in the light of the will of God

# Matthew 18 (Cont)

- **1<sup>st</sup> John 5:13-14** *“I write this to you who believe in the name... that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us”*
  - To say, *“He hears us,”* is to say that *He listens to us, He gives us what we need (in accordance with His will)*
  - It is not that whatever the church does, or as seen in modern times whatever Christians pray for then God will do what they asked because he prayed in the name of Jesus
  - Protestants often say, *“in the name of Jesus, I pray”*

# Matthew 18 (Cont)

- This scripture means to speak in Jesus' name with His authority, and the only one who can do that is the church
- Jesus was not talking about our local "Mega Church" here
- He was speaking about His two men
- When He said that when two or three gather in my name and agree on something, there I am with them, the Holy Spirit will be there as well
- This is the church as is in the idea of "Council"



# Matthew 18 (Cont)

- **Matthew 18:20** *“For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them”*
  - This is another reference to Jesus’ divinity
  - Jesus is called *Emmanuel* (God is with us) in **Matthew 1**
  - Again, at the end of the gospel Matthew quotes Jesus as saying: *“Behold I am with you always”* (**Matthew 28:20**)
  - At the point in the middle of the Gospel, it says *“where two or three are gathered, there I am in their midst”*
  - This is the idea of the eternal God, who is with us always
  - God dwells in our midst when the apostles are gathered together

# Matthew 18 (Cont)

- Father pointed to a rabbinic saying that when two Jews gathered together to discuss the Torah, the “Glory Cloud” dwelt among them like the two cherubim on the top of the Ark
- Once again, we see the importance of context
- At this point, Jesus was talking to 12 men and preparing them for His final trip to Jerusalem
- He was giving the 12 some important directions just as He had given earlier to Peter
- He told them that if someone does not listen to you, even after you take one or two others with you, treat him like a Gentile who is outside the community (excommunicated)

# Matthew 18 (Cont)

- Jesus was speaking to the “church,” (His apostles) when He said, *“Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven...”*
- Father asked that we look at **1<sup>st</sup> John 4:14-16\*** for clarification
  - *“And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world...and God abides in him”*”

# Matthew 18 (Cont)

- **Matthew 18:21** *“Then Peter came up and said to him,...but seventy times seven”*
  - Seven is the image of covenant
  - When God forgives a man, we see the image of covenant
  - **Leviticus 26** presents the imagery that Jesus is alluding to here

# Leviticus 26

- **Leviticus 26:9-14** *“And I will have regard for you...I will do this to you”*
  - If you keep my covenant, there will be a very happy time
  - If you break it (that is sin against me and do not do what I say to do), then I will do these things to you
  - This is followed by a long list of punishments
- **Leviticus 26:18\*** *“And if in spite of this you will not harken to me,...and I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like brass*
  - Sevenfold because he broke the covenant

# Leviticus 26 (Cont)

- **Leviticus 26:21-28** *“Then if you walk contrary to me,...Sevenfold for your sins”*
  - Father said that the idea of “seven” is the image of the covenant in which we are in agreement with God
  - God tells us to do certain things, and we say that we will do them
  - It is an agreement; a relationship; a covenant
  - But, if we do not do what we have agreed to do, and break the covenant, then God will chastise us “sevenfold”
  - With this in mind, look at Peter’s question

# Matthew 18 (Cont)

- Peter asked Jesus: *“If my brother sins against me then how often should I forgive him? Seven times? Then Jesus says no, you should forgive him as God forgives which is 70 X 7”*
  - $70 \times 7 = 490$
  - This should remind us of **Daniel 9:2** which deals with the time when Daniel was confessing his sin, and the sin of the people, and he realized that the 70 years were up
  - The people had sinned against God, and for 70 years they were supposed to be in exile
  - Daniel was confessing the sins of the people, and asking for God’s mercy

# Matthew 18 (Cont)

- God then sent the angel Gabriel to tell Daniel that his prayers had been heard by God, and His people were about to be able to return home
- This was the “good news”
- But, the bad news was that the punishment was not just for 70 years, but for “seventy weeks of years” (**Daniel 9:24\***)
- This meant that God’s mercy would come after 490 years
- God would count their sins for 490 years, and then He would be merciful to them



# Matthew 18 (Cont)

- His ultimate gift would be the restoration of the Kingdom of God
- The time from this promise to Danial and the coming of Jesus, was approximately 490 years
- This is the image presented by Matthew
- The only other verse parallel to this one related to the mercy of God is in **Daniel 9**

# Matthew 18 (Cont)

- **Matthew 18:23-35** *“Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants...if you do not forgive you brother from your heart”*
  - 10,000 *talents* - one *talent* equaled 6,000 *denarii* (a *denarii* was a single day’s wage), so a *talent* was approximately 164,000 years of wages
  - This was an insane amount of money
  - The other debtor owed 100 *denarius* or 100 days of wages
  - One guy owed a great deal, and the other almost nothing in comparison

# Matthew 18 (Cont)

- Jesus gave them the meaning of the parable when He said: *“That also my father will do to you if you do not forgive your brother from your heart”*
- This is the end of a framing device which began with Peter’s question: *“How many times should I forgive my brother?”*
- Jesus proposes to Peter that he think of how merciful God has been with him, and that is how he could understand how merciful he should be towards his brother
- He asked Peter to think about his sins against God, before he thought about his brother sinning against him

# Matthew 18 (Cont)

- Jesus concluded by asking Peter to look at the mercy of God toward him, versus what he was being asked to do for his brother, when He said: *“You must be like your heavenly father who gives the rain upon the good and the bad...but he cares for all”* (**Matthew 5:45\***)
- The answer to Peter was that he must forgive his brother as God had forgiven him
- Father pointed out that only Matthew gives a little explanatory note concerning this teaching when he adds: *“For if you do not forgive your brother, then God will not forgive you”* (**Matthew 6:14\* The Our Father**)