

On the Path to Kingdom Maturity

Text: Matthew 17:22-27

Summary

This week's sermon focused on seeing our discipleship through to completion. We cultivate this growth by regularly remembering old truths because we are forgetful, stubborn, and constantly changing. Secondly, we must embrace the freedom of sonship, recognizing that Christ has fully paid our ransom, brought us into the Royal Family, and we are no longer outsiders looking in. Finally, as mature disciples, we willingly lay down our personal rights and freedoms for the sake of others, ensuring our conduct remains honorable and never becomes an unnecessary stumbling block that keeps people from the Kingdom.

Introduction: Seeing Things Through to Completion

- 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says that all Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for us so the man of God may be complete and equipped for every good work. Somehow, somehow, that includes today's passage.
- Therefore, Matthew included these verses to see our discipleship through to completion, wholeness, and maturity.
- Today we are looking at three ways this passage contributes to the picture of a mature disciple so that we might be complete, equipped for every good work.

Point 1: Mature Disciples Regularly Remember Old Truths

Scripture: Matthew 17:22-23; 2 Timothy 2:8

- Jesus predicts His death and resurrection, a truth He previously shared with His disciples.
- The repetition of this truth was necessary to confront their unbelief and give them an opportunity to realign themselves with God's purposes.
- We also need the same old truths repeated again and again so they might take root.
- **Three reasons we need repetition:**
 1. **We are forgetful.** We read and experience truth one day, and forget it the next.
 2. **We are stubborn.** Like a sculptor using a chisel, God must hit us on the heart with the same old truths over and over to shape us.
 3. **We are different today.** The "you" hearing the text has changed since the last time you heard it, and this "new you" needs to hear those old truths again.

Point 2: Mature Disciples Embrace the Freedom of Sonship

Scripture: Matthew 17:24-26; Exodus 30:11-16; Romans 8:15-17

- The collectors ask Peter about the two-drachma tax, which was an annual Jewish temple tax dating back to Exodus 30. It was atonement money given to support the work of the temple.
- Jesus uses an analogy about ancient kingdoms: kings do not tax their own family. The royal family is exempt. He then connects the analogy to the temple tax, stating, "Then the sons are free".
- The temple is becoming obsolete in Christ. He is the final sacrifice to atone for the sins of His people. Through faith in Christ, we are brought into the family of God and experience life as heirs.
- Embrace your sonship and stop living like you owe back-taxes to God that you must make up for with religious efforts. Your birth certificate now says, "Son or Daughter of God".

Point 3: Mature Disciples Lay Down Their Rights for Others

Scripture: Matthew 17:27; 1 Corinthians 1:23, 9:19-23; 1 Peter 2:11-17

- Jesus instructs Peter to pay the tax so as not to give offense.
- Jesus willingly offended people to proclaim the truth, defend the vulnerable, and do the Father's will.
- However, here He says to pay the tax because the sons should not use their freedom to be an offense (literally an obstacle or stumbling block) for others on their way to the Kingdom.
- The gospel confronts sinners with their rebellion and is inherently offensive. Ensure your behavior and your words are not the offense.
- Keep your conduct honorable with neighbors, coworkers, and online. Don't confuse people about Jesus by being a jerk.
- Jesus laid down His rights, and so can we.

Conclusion

Scripture: Philippians 1:6

- We want to see the work in our lives through to completion. To finish the race well. God is faithful. He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion on the day of Jesus Christ.