

ST. MATTHEW

The Gospel according to

INTRODUCTION

Conflict and tension are everywhere. Jesus gives us a wonderful pattern to follow to achieve reconciliation and to celebrate forgiveness.

Our Master gives us wonderful tools to promote healing. The gospel of free forgiveness not only removes barriers of hostility and resentment, it gives us the peace and freedom to live in harmony with God and at peace with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS

Read Matthew 18:15-35

Jesus lays out a step-by-step process for addressing sin and working toward reconciliation. List the steps:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

What is the overriding goal of this whole process? Why is this so important to remember?

What does binding and loosing on earth (and in heaven) refer to?

What is the point of the parable of the unmerciful servant? How does this parable (v. 21-35) tie in with the previous section on addressing sin and achieving reconciliation (v. 15-20)?

Read Matthew 19:1-12

When is divorce permissible, according to Jesus? (v. 9)

Why did Moses permit certificates of divorce, presumably for other reasons (v. 7)?

In 1 Corinthians 7:10-15 the Apostle Paul outlines another possible reason in which a divorce by a Christian may be permitted. What reason does Paul allow (1 Cor. 7:15)?

Has the church become too soft on divorce? Explain your answer.

Read Matthew 19:13-30

Note Jesus' attitude toward the little children. Why did the disciples rebuke the little ones? Why did Jesus say the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these?

What question did the rich young man ask Jesus?

Why did Jesus answer by saying, "If you want to enter life, obey the commandments?" Doesn't this contradict salvation by grace through faith alone, not by works?

What did Jesus want to show the young man in verse 21?

Explain what Jesus meant when he said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

Read Matthew 20:1-16

How is this parable a beautiful picture of grace? Explain it in the light of Jesus' audience at the time.

Read Matthew 20:17-28

Why was the request of James' and John's mother so presumptuous?

How did the rest of the disciples reveal that they were battling the same wicked presumptions?

Read Matthew 20:29-34

What did the blind men acknowledge by calling Jesus "Son of David"?

VERSE TO REMEMBER

Matthew 20:28 *The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.*

For next time read Matthew chapters 21-25