

July 09, 2023



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:
People were bringing children to Jesus that He might touch and bless them. But the disciples tried to prevent this from happening

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:
Jesus, help me to reveal Your love and presence to all people, including children. Make me mindful of ways to ensure that they can always come to You

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:
But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God

(Mark 10:14 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", June 13, 2021)

Series: The Righteous Reign of God

UNIT 2: Jesus Envisions the Kingdom

NEXT WEEK

The Sower and the Seed
(Matt 13:1-9, 18-23)

The Kingdom Has Come Upon You Matthew 12:22-32

Lesson Background and Introduction

The name Matthew is from the Hebrew language and means "gift of the Lord." Some believe this may have been a nickname given to him, perhaps even by Jesus (compare Matthew 16:18; Mark 3:16-17). His given name was Levi (Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27-29), being named after one of the 12 sons of Jacob (see Genesis 29:34; 35:23). We know little about Matthew's family background, although he is once identified as a "son of Alphaeus" (Mark 2:14), creating the possibility that he was a brother of "James son of Alphaeus" (Matthew 10:3), another of the 12 apostles. Matthew's chosen profession was to be a tax collector. Tax collectors were seen as traitors. Indeed, the Gospels categorize them with "sinners" and "prostitutes" (Matthew 9:9-10; 21:32).

In Book IV of Paradise Lost, author John Milton has Satan musing at length on his situation and prospects. Satan realizes that his rebellion against God has left him without hope for redemption; thus he utters, "Farewell, hope." Satan then reasons, "All good to me is lost." He had begun a journey away from God from which there was no return. Therefore, he decided, "Evil, be thou my good", one of the most chilling lines in all of literature. What does it take to commit an eternal sin, a sin that cannot be forgiven, ever? Are we in daily danger of this, always walking a tightrope between salvation and eternal damnation? Could a careless word or thought condemn us for eternity? We should recognize that some Christians fear the possibility of committing an unpardonable sin. However, we are probably not in a position to evaluate for sure whether it has been committed. Paul speaks of those who have a "seared" conscience (1 Timothy 4:2), referring to those who will not and so cannot repent. They have willingly reversed the order of good and evil in the universe, becoming like those Isaiah condemns when he says, "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness" (Isaiah 5:20). These are the ones who have agreed with Milton's Satan: "Evil, be thou my good." Some would say today that evil and depravity are celebrated more than good. But we must not turn our backs on the unrepentant people in our community, just as Jesus did not abandon the Pharisees without a warning. In the end, it is for God, not us, to judge whether or when the unforgivable sin has been committed. The old rule of thumb is that if you are concerned about it, you have not yet committed it, for you still have a conscience that discerns good from evil. God and his Word call us constantly to repent. If you still sense the stirring in your heart to get right with the Lord, even if the stirring is weak, you must do so. Jesus' words remain a lesson for today's church. Opponents of Christianity will always seek to discredit Jesus and divide his followers. Once confronted with the gospel, it is impossible to remain neutral. To reject Jesus is to be against him. This may done subtly, however. If we're not careful, we may end up working against Jesus to divide and scatter his followers, bringing disunity to the body of Christ.

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Kingdom that Provides Healing (Matt 12:22-24)

Healing of the afflicted (22)

Afflicted healed to lead unbelievers to Jesus (Mark 9:19)

Afflicted healed to prove Jesus is the Son of God (Mark 3:10-11)

Afflicted healed to fulfill prophecy (Isa 29:18)

Afflicted healed as part of Jesus' ministry (Matt 4:23)

Afflicted healed to prove that God sent Jesus (John 11:41-42)

Healing by Jesus (23)

Healing because it is one of the signs of the power of Jesus (Mark 16:17-18)

Healing because Jesus is the only power that heals (Acts 4:7-10)

Healing not accomplished by human will (Acts 19:13-16)

Healing through faith in Jesus (Acts 3:16)

Healing misunderstood (24)

Misunderstood because God's works are too numerous to understand (Ps 40:5)

Misunderstood because of ignorance (Eph 4:18)

Misunderstood because of not having the indwelling Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:14)

Misunderstood because of not relying on the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:17)

Kingdom that Provides Unity (Matt 12:25-30)

Unity that is not divided (25)

Unity not divided through the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom 15:5-6)

Unity not divided through being in agreement (1 Cor 1:10)

Unity not divided through being firm in one spirit (Phil 1:27)

Unity not divided through being like-mindedness (Phil 2:2)

Unity that stands against Satan (26-27)

Against Satan because he is always prowling trying to devour Saints (1 Peter 5:8)

Against Satan because he wants others to follow him and the world (Eph 2:1-2)

Against Satan because he holds captive those who fail the test (2 Tim 2:26)

Against Satan because he wants to sift us (Luke 22:31-32)

Unity that cast out Satan and demons through the Holy Spirit (28-29)

Cast out because Jesus gave the authority to do it (Matt 10:1)

Cast out because the power of God can destroy them (Mark 1:23-24)

Cast out because Jesus one day will come and eternally defeat them (Rev 19:11-20)

Cast out because they will eventually receive what they deserve (2 Cor 11:14-15)

Unity through being with Jesus (30)

With Jesus when we are raptured (1 Thess 4:17)

With Jesus because when He arose we are alive with Him also (Rom 6:8)

With Jesus when we share in His resurrection (Phil 3:10-11)

With Jesus when we receive the inheritance waiting us in heaven (1 Peter 1:3-4)

Kingdom that Must Believe in the Holy Spirit (Matt 12:31-32)

Belief that allows forgiveness (31)

Forgiveness because God blots out our transgressions (Isa 43:25)

Forgiveness because God is faithful to forgive (1 John 1:9)

Forgiveness through Jesus' sacrifice (Heb 10:14)

Forgiveness because God is able to save completely (Heb 7:25)

Unbelief that is blasphemy (32)

Unbelief that Jesus is the Christ, Son of the living God (1 John 5:10)

Unbelief that God exists (Heb 11:6)

Unbelief in the Name of Jesus (John 3:18)

Unbelief because of ignorance (1 Tim 1:12-14)

Unbelief because of weaknesses and persecutions (2 Cor 12:10)