

Not what I thought...

When might people misjudge a situation?

- Café in Spain
- Walmart greeter and a friend from Italy
- Other examples?

What could go wrong if we misjudge a situation?

What if we misjudge God and His ways?

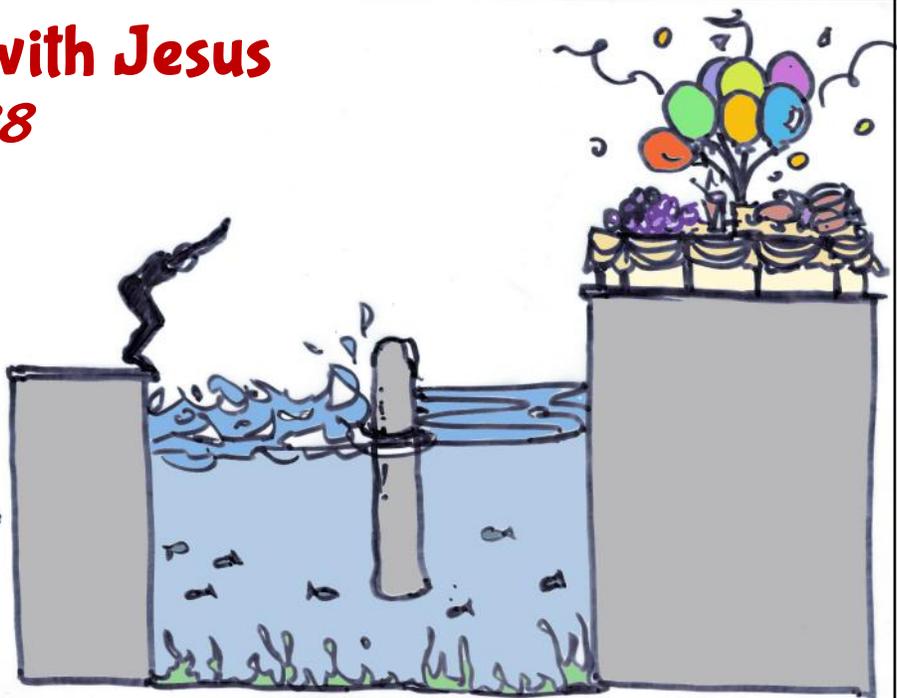
Prayer: Transform us to see You and Your Ways more clearly

1

On the Road with Jesus

Matthew 20:17–28

bib.ly/Mat20.NIV
tiny.cc/cmchandouts



2

The basic outline of Jesus' life

Birth

Miraculous birth, fleeing to Egypt, & returning to Nazareth

Getting 'lost' in the His Father's House (the Temple) at 12

Ministry years (mostly in Galilee), about 30–33 years old

Journey to Jerusalem for conflict, condemnation & crucifixion

Death

Resurrection and periodic teachings over 40 days

Ascension to heaven

Return to reign over His Kingdom **

3

Matthew's version of the Journey to Jerusalem

#1 “From that time on Jesus **began to explain** to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and **that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.**” *Matthew 16:21*

#2 “When they came together in Galilee, he said to them, ‘The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. **They will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised to life.**’ And the disciples were filled with grief.” *Matthew 17:22-23*

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#3

Matthew 20:17-19

Now Jesus was going up to Jerusalem. On the way, he took the Twelve aside and said to them, “We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day he will be raised to life!”

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Matthew 20:17-28

17-19: Jesus predicted His suffering, death, and resurrection

- Specifically taught the 12 apostles
- Direct, specific prediction of conflict and death
 - Jewish religious leaders and Gentiles worked together to condemn, mock, flog, and crucify Jesus
 - He taught this repeatedly, yet it was hard to grasp
- Jesus’ death and resurrection
 - became** central in the teaching of the Apostles
 - His death was not an accident. It was His purpose!
 - His death and resurrection were central to God’s plan and work in Jesus’ existence

20-23:

24-28:

6

Matthew 20:20-23

Then the **mother of Zebedee's sons** came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down, asked a favor of him.

“What is it you **(singular)** want?” he asked.

She said, “Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom.”

“You **(plural)** don't know what you **(plural)** are asking,” Jesus said to them **(plural)**.

**As Jesus was described His suffering and death,
they were trying to get honor from Him!**

The loneliness of Jesus' suffering and death begins here.

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**God's plan, *Matthew 20:20-23*
generally with suffering**

“Can you drink the **cup** I am going to drink?”

“We can,” they answered. **Perhaps they thought this was to fight with Him (like Peter's assurance)**

Jesus said to them, “**You will indeed drink from my cup,** but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father.”

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Matthew 20:17-28

17-19: Jesus predicted His suffering, death, and resurrection

20-23: James, John & their mom sought places of honor

- All 3 were united in the request
 - Jesus corrected the brothers with their mom
 - Jesus had just said that the apostles would sit on 12 thrones to rule with Jesus (Matthew 19:28)
 - Wrongheadedness is often based on true elements within Christianity **while missing the big picture**
 - And these were top leaders of the early church!
 - Next mention of Jesus' right and left: on the cross!
 - James: first apostle to be killed for Christ
- 24-28: • John: exiled to Patmos for Christ

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Matthew 20:24-28

When **the ten** heard about this, they were indignant with the **two brothers**. Jesus **called them together and said**, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your **servant**, and whoever wants to be first must be your **slave**—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and **to give his life as a ransom for many.**”

Humility was not honorable

in the Roman world Theological statements are rare in the Gospels

This is the Gospel in very few words!

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Matthew 20:17-28

17-19: Jesus predicted His suffering, death, and resurrection

20-23: James, John & their mom sought places of honor

24-28: Jesus corrected their upside-down thinking

- They all shared a profound misunderstanding of God and His ways
 - “You know the rulers of the Gentiles...”
 - More than awareness, they saw the world the same way as this world’s rulers
- “Not so with you”
 - How God’s people live often must be so different from our natural tendencies (“the days are evil...”)

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Matthew 20:17-28

17-19: Jesus predicted His suffering, death, and resurrection

20-23: James, John & their mom sought places of honor

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The Big Idea

**Jesus and His Kingdom and salvation
are characterized by
humble, generous service and self-giving
from beginning to end**

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I thought this is how God's Kingdom works

- Jesus lowered Himself in service
- So He could achieve greatness on the other side
- And we are to do the same: lower ourselves in service so we can be raised to greatness on the other side
- **"Hold your breath until you are done serving..."**



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Now I see that Jesus' **humble, generous, self-giving service** is His glory!

- Jesus lowered Himself in service...

because that is who He is

- For which He is praised by all

- We are to do the same:

lower ourselves in service as an act of joining in His glory



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The Big Idea

Jesus and His Kingdom and salvation are characterized by humble, generous service and self-giving from beginning to end

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This is the glory of Jesus: the Almighty, holy, perfect Creator gave His life to rescue purely as an act of love

- “Jesus exhibits his exalted status precisely in taking up a serving role.”

- Service is not a means to greatness

- **Humble, generous service IS His greatness!**

- Jesus will humbly, generously, selflessly serve forever

- “He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?” *Romans 8:32*

- Not because of shame but because it is His character

Serving IS greatness, not a means to achieve it

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My Learning

- **Jesus sacrificed for our sins**
so we don't have to sacrifice for sins

- **AND**

His goal is to transform us to be like Him...

- Jesus opened the way for us to become like Him

- And He will never leave His humble, generous, self-giving, and serving ways

- God has been self-giving in the Trinity in the forever past

- We join in that self-giving unity for the forever future!!

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Application

Rejoice in our God who is humble and self-sacrificing

- The humility of the Son of God in the incarnation is **WHO HE IS**, not just something He had to do a for a time
- He is the grace-filled, humble, generous, selfless, serving Husband of the Church forever!
 - This is a wonderful and beautiful surprise!
 - Heaven is not merely an avoidance of Hell
 - It is to enter fellowship and life with this generous, self-giving, creative, all-powerful, all-knowing, life-giving God...forever!
- **What a tragedy for people who don't know this God!**
- **Who can you tell??**

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Application

Rejoice in our God who is humble and self-sacrificing Become like our humble self-sacrificing God

- We were made in the image of God so we would live like God
 - Sin has perverted our understanding of God and His ways
- God is love, and love sacrifices itself for the good of others
- This is why jealousy, selfishness, self-seeking, selfish-ambition, and greed are so evil, destructive, ugly, and out of place
 - “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, **in humility value others above yourselves**, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.” *Philippians 2:3-4*

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Application

Rejoice in our God who is humble and self-sacrificing

Become like our humble self-sacrificing God

- We are called to **generous, joy-filled, self-giving** service
- Not...
 - Begrudging, bitter, unhappy service
 - Upset if the ones we serve don't "pay us back"
- Humble, joy-filled, self-giving service can include correcting, rebuking, and encouraging
 - Yet to be Christ-like, correcting and rebuking must be humble, joy-filled, and self-giving

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So do you and I ever misjudge God and His values?

Absolutely!!

- In my prayers, certainly God often says, **"You don't know what you are asking"**
- In our actions, certainly God often says, **"You know the ways of the world. They must not be true among you!"**
- My confusion is deeply embedded in my automatic impulses!

Correct me, Lord!

- "Let a righteous man strike me—that is a kindness; let him rebuke me—that is oil on my head." *Psalm 141:5*
- **There is so much for us to unlearn!**

22

“For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you
except **Jesus Christ and him crucified.**” *1 Corinthians 2:2*

We preach Christ crucified because it is the means of
our salvation

AND because this self-sacrifice of our all-powerful
Creator is His glory

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The Big Idea

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humble, generous service and self-giving
from beginning to end**

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