

Matthew Survey — Section Three

2nd Pronouncement & Edification — Part B

Matthew 19:1 – 20:16
Topical Study Overview

About This Section

This section covers the third body of doctrine for the disciples' further edification following the second pronouncement. Beginning as Jesus departs Galilee and travels toward Jerusalem through the coasts of Judaea beyond Jordan, the Lord takes advantage of two encounters — the Pharisees tempting him about divorce, and a rich young man persisting in Israel's vain religious system — to deliver five major edificational issues to the remnant. These issues address marriage and eunuchs, the valuing of little children, the rich young man's false doctrine of justification unto eternal life, the stumbling block of riches in Israel's vain religious system, and the principle that many who are first shall be last and the last shall be first in the kingdom of heaven.



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Topics at a Glance

Topic	Core Content
The Lord's Route & Context	Jesus departs Galilee for the coasts of Judaea beyond Jordan, establishing the geographical and program context for this third body of doctrine.
Marriage, Divorce & Eunuchs	The Pharisees tempt the Lord on divorce; he reiterates corrective doctrine and uses the disciples' response to edify them concerning eunuchs and the urgency of the kingdom.
Little Children Revisited	The disciples rebuke those bringing children — revealing a persistent stronghold; the Lord delivers further corrective doctrine building on chapter 18.
The Rich Young Man & Justification	A rich young man approaches Jesus operating under the vain religious system's three options for justification; the Lord dismantles all three with a single response.
Riches as a Stumbling Block	The Lord edifies his disciples on how Israel's vain religious system treats riches as a sign of righteousness — a doctrine that will intensify through the fifth installment.
First Shall Be Last	Peter's question about reward prompts the Lord to teach about the twelve thrones, hundredfold reward, and the parable of the laborers establishing that many first shall be last.

Topic Summaries

P1

The Lord's Route Toward Jerusalem *Lesson 19 · Matt 19:1–2*

- The third body of doctrine follows the second pronouncement and runs from Matt 19:1 through 20:16; the third pronouncement begins at 20:17.
- Jesus travels to the coasts of Judaea beyond Jordan, opposite the city of Jericho, then through Jericho, then to Bethphage at the Mount of Olives.
- This route is significant and prophetically grounded — it parallels the route the Lord will take at the end of the fifth installment as the victorious Son of Man, connected to Zechariah 9:9, Joshua's crossing, and Psalm 8.
- Matt 19:1–2 — And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judaea beyond Jordan; And great multitudes followed him; and he healed them *there*.
- The signs of the kingdom and the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom continue even as the rejection becomes the predominant issue in the climatic stage.
- The third body of doctrine is composed of five major issues, paralleling the five issues of the second body of doctrine in chapter 18.

P2

Marriage, Divorce, and Eunuchs *Lessons 19–20 · Matt 19:3–12*

- The Pharisees come tempting the Lord with the question of whether it is lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause — looking for grounds to accuse him.
- The Lord's response reiterates corrective doctrine already given in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:27–32): God joined one man and one woman as one flesh from the beginning; putting away was permitted by Moses only because of the hardness of their hearts.
- Matt 19:9 — And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.
- By their own conduct in putting away wives for every cause the Pharisees have committed adultery, proving they are not the naturally righteous men they claim to be.
- The disciples' response — 'It is not good to marry' — gives the Lord an opportunity to deliver fresh edificational doctrine about eunuchs: those born so, those made so by men, and those who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake.

Eunuchs and the Urgency of the Kingdom

- Isa 56:5 — Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.
- This is the first of three categories of people the disciples were tempted to despise: eunuchs (ch. 19), Gentiles (ch. 17), and little children (ch. 18) — all requiring corrective doctrine.

P3

Little Children — A Persistent Stronghold *Lesson 20 · Matt 19:13–15*

- Immediately following the teaching on eunuchs, little children are brought to the Lord — and the disciples rebuke them, demonstrating the stronghold of despisal has not yet been pulled down.
- Matt 19:14 — But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.
- This is a repeat correction of the same stronghold dealt with in Matthew 18; the Lord reiterates and batters that stronghold again with corrective doctrine.
- The ignorance factor and the depth of the vain religious system's influence explain why the disciples continue to exhibit this resistance — the full effectual working awaits the coming of the Holy Ghost after the resurrection.
- The Lord himself laid hands on the children and departed, underscoring the value and dignity he places on this category of people.

P4

The Rich Young Man — Three Options for Justification Dismantled *Lessons 20–21 · Matt 19:16–22*

- A rich young man approaches Jesus calling him 'Good Master' — a technical term in Israel's vain religious system for one who is naturally righteous and can prescribe justification unto eternal life.

The Three Options in Israel's Vain Religious System (John 1:13)

- Option 1 — Born of blood: Pharisees claimed natural righteousness by tracing a pure genealogical line to Abraham; they declared themselves naturally justified unto eternal life.
- Option 2 — Born of the will of the flesh: A Pharisee master prescribed a system of heavy burdens and works of penitence; upon satisfying the Pharisee, the individual was pronounced justified.
- Option 3 — Born of the will of man: A Pharisee father pronounced someone justified based upon a single great benevolent deed, typically a substantial monetary gift.
- The rich young man, being wealthy, sought Option 3 — 'What good thing shall I do?' — expecting the Lord to name a single deed and pronounce him righteous.
- Matt 19:17 — And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.
- By declaring 'there is none good but God,' the Lord destroys all three options at once: if there is no naturally good Pharisee master, Options 2 and 3 have no foundation.
- The Lord presses him to the only remaining path if he will justify himself by works: sell all, give to the poor, and follow him — the young man departs sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

P5

Riches as a Stumbling Block *Lessons 21–22 · Matt 19:23–26*

- Israel's vain religious system taught that riches were a sign of God's righteousness, blessing, and favor; the lack of riches was a sign of God's disfavor and the individual's unrighteousness.
- Matt 19:23 — Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.
- Verse 23 applies especially to the fourth installment and extension of mercy — entrance is difficult but not impossible; James 1:9–11 shows some rich men were 'made low' by the gospel.
- Matt 19:24 — And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.
- Verse 24 looks forward to the fifth installment when the riches doctrine intensifies — the rich man's wealth becomes his 'strong city' and 'high wall in his own conceit' (Prov 18:11), making entrance nigh unto impossible.
- Prov 11:28 — He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.
- The disciples' response — 'Who then can be saved?' — demonstrates how deeply the riches doctrine was entrenched; the Lord responds that with God all things are possible.
 - Luke 12:15 — 'a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth' — is the corrective doctrine the Lord gave earlier to combat this stronghold.

P6

The Twelve Thrones, Hundredfold Reward, and the Last Shall Be First *Lesson 23 · Matt 19:27–20:16*

- Peter's question — 'We have forsaken all and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?' — is a demonstration of proper respect unto the recompense of the reward.
- Matt 19:28 — Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.
- Isaiah 1:26 — 'I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counselors as at the beginning' — is the prophetic foundation for the twelve apostles ruling on twelve thrones in the kingdom.
- Verse 29 extends the promise to all members of the remnant who forsake houses, family, or lands for the Lord's name sake, promising hundredfold reward and the inheritance of everlasting life.

The Parable of the Laborers — Matt 20:1–16

- The parable illustrates that many who are first to hear the gospel of the kingdom may end up last to enter kingdom rewards, while those who hear near the end of the fifth installment may be first.
- The eleventh-hour workers represent those who hear and respond near the climax of the fifth installment; the Lord counts their faithfulness in a short but intensely costly period as equal to those who labored longer.
- Matt 20:16 — So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.
- Those 'chosen' are chosen on the basis of their faithfulness to the corrective doctrine and their stand in the face of apostate Israel — justification unto

eternal life does not by itself guarantee immediate entrance into the kingdom with rewards.

Key Doctrinal Distinctions

Three Options for Justification in Israel's Vain Religious System vs. God's Way

Israel's vain religious system offered three paths to justification unto eternal life, all presided over by the Pharisees: (1) being born of blood — tracing a pure genealogy to Abraham to claim natural righteousness; (2) being born of the will of the flesh — performing a prescribed list of works to the satisfaction of a Pharisee master; and (3) being born of the will of man — making a great benevolent deed by which a Pharisee father pronounced one righteous. The Lord demolished all three with a single statement — 'There is none good but God' — because if there is no naturally good Pharisee master, Options 2 and 3 have no foundation. The only true way is justification by a judicial act of God's justice as a gift of grace in response to faith alone.

The 'Hardly' of Verse 23 vs. the 'Camel Through a Needle' of Verse 24

Keith carefully distinguishes two statements the Lord makes about rich men. Verse 23 — 'a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven' — applies to the fourth installment and the extension of mercy, where entrance is difficult but not impossible; James 1:9–11 confirms some rich men did respond and were 'made low.' Verse 24 — 'it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God' — applies to the opening of the fifth installment when the riches doctrine intensifies, making the wealth a 'strong city' and 'high wall' (Prov 18:11) so formidable that entrance is nigh unto impossible.

Justification unto Eternal Life vs. Rewards in the Kingdom

A critical distinction running through this entire section is the difference between justification unto eternal life (the unconditional possession of every believer in the remnant) and the rewards associated with entering the kingdom right away. The Lord's promise of 'everlasting life' in verse 29 is the inheritance every justified member possesses. The hundredfold reward, sitting on twelve thrones, and being among the 'first' to enter the kingdom are separate from and conditional upon faithfulness. The parable of the laborers reinforces this: all workers receive the agreed-upon wage (eternal life), but the order of entrance into kingdom rewards differs based on faithfulness under the cost borne.

The First Shall Be Last — Faithfulness Over Chronological Priority

The Lord's teaching in Matthew 19:30 and the parable of the laborers (20:1–16) establishes that the chronological order in which members of the remnant hear and respond to the gospel of the kingdom does not determine their order of entrance into kingdom rewards. Many who are first to hear may capitulate under pressure and end up last, while those who hear near the eleventh hour of the fifth installment, bearing intense tribulation for a short but deeply costly period, will be honored as first to enter

the kingdom and enjoy its rewards. The distinction is not time served but faithfulness demonstrated in proportion to the cost borne.

Key Scripture References

Matt 19:3–9	The Pharisees' temptation on divorce gives the Lord occasion to reiterate the corrective doctrine of Matt 5:27–32 concerning marriage, adultery, and the one permissible cause for putting away.
Matt 19:11–12	The Lord directs the disciples' conclusion toward the urgency of the kingdom and the three categories of eunuchs, teaching them not to despise this group.
Matt 19:13–15	Demonstrates the persistence of the stronghold against little children in the disciples' thinking, requiring repeated corrective doctrine.
Matt 19:16–22	The rich young man's encounter; Keith expounds each verse to show Option 3 thinking, the Lord's destruction of all three options, and the young man's refusal to admit he cannot justify himself.
Matt 19:23–24	Keith distinguishes these two statements as applying to two different time periods: the fourth installment (hardly) and the fifth installment (camel through needle).
Matt 19:28	The Lord promises the twelve apostles twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes in the regeneration; Keith connects this to Isaiah 1:26 as its prophetic foundation.
Matt 19:29–30	Extends the hundredfold reward to all faithful remnant members who forsake family or possessions for the Lord's name, and introduces the first-shall-be-last principle.
Matt 20:1–16	The parable of the laborers: chronological priority does not determine entrance order into kingdom rewards; faithfulness under the cost of each person's circumstances is the determining factor.
John 1:13	The structural key to the three options in Israel's vain religious system — born of blood, of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man — contrasted with being born of God.
John 8:33–44	The Pharisees' claim to be Abraham's seed and the Lord's critical distinction between being Abraham's seed and being Abraham's children (by faith, as in Gen 15:6).
Isa 56:3–5	The Lord promises eunuchs a place and name in his house better than sons and daughters — used to show they must not be despised.
Prov 18:10–12	The name of the LORD is the strong tower for the righteous; the rich man's wealth is his strong city and high wall in his own conceit — explaining the fifth-installment intensification.
Isa 1:26	The prophetic basis for the twelve apostles sitting on twelve thrones: 'I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counselors as at the beginning.'

James 1:9–11

Some rich men in Israel did respond positively ('made low') to the gospel of the kingdom, confirming that verse 23's 'hardly' means difficult but not impossible.

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