

BA Devotional: Matthew 17-20

Overview

We all love the mountaintop moments with God—those glimpses of glory, peace, and power.

But Jesus didn't stay on the mountain.

And neither can we.

In **Matthew 17**, He reveals His glory—face shining, clothes blazing, Moses and Elijah by His side. It's a scene of divine splendor. Peter, James, and John are overwhelmed.

“This is My beloved Son... listen to Him.” (Matt. 17:5)

But almost immediately, Jesus leads them *back down*—straight into a **demon-possessed child**, a helpless father, and frustrated disciples who couldn't cast it out.

Lesson? Glory is real, but the battle is in the valley.

Men aren't made in the clouds. They're forged in the conflict.

Faith That Moves Mountains—And Kills Comfort

Jesus rebukes the disciples for their lack of faith. They had *proximity* to Jesus, but lacked *intimacy* and *authority*.

He says:

“This kind only comes out by prayer and fasting.” (cf. Mark 9:29)

Men, some victories aren't won by willpower.

They're won through **consecration**. Through secret places.

Through obedience when no one's watching.

Greatness Is Low to the Ground

In Matthew 18, the disciples ask the question we all secretly ask:

“Who's the greatest in the kingdom?”

Jesus doesn't point to a warrior or a theologian.

He points to a child.

Why? Because children are dependent. Trusting. Unimpressed with power.

And then Jesus drops the grenade:

“If your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out... If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off.” (Matt. 18:8–9)

That's not hyperbole.
That's holy aggression.

Jesus isn't telling us to manage our sin. He's telling us to **kill it**.

Real masculinity doesn't pet temptation. It puts it to death.

Marriage, Wealth, and the One Thing You Won't Give Up

In Matthew 19, Jesus defines **marriage** as a permanent covenant between one man and one woman—what God joins, no man separates.

That's kingdom talk. That's a call to *covenantal masculinity*—to stay, protect, lead, and sacrifice.

Then comes the rich young ruler. He's moral. Religious. Respected.

Jesus says:

“Sell everything you have... then come, follow Me.”

“He went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.” (Matt. 19:22)

The issue wasn't money—it was **idolatry**.

Jesus will always put His finger on *the one thing you don't want to let go of*.

So here's the question: What are you walking away from Jesus to keep?

THE TATTOOED APOLOGIST
Service, Not Status

Matthew 20 ends with a power grab. James and John—through their mom—ask to sit next to Jesus in glory.

Jesus doesn't rebuke them for wanting greatness. He redefines it.

“Whoever would be great among you must be your servant.”

“Even the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve...” (Matt. 20:26–28)

Leadership in the kingdom means you bleed first, carry weight no one sees, and lift others before lifting yourself.

It means cleaning feet. Carrying crosses. Serving quietly.

This is biblical masculinity:

Sacrifice over spotlight. Holiness over hype. Obedience over opinion.

Devotional Challenge

Here's what Jesus is asking you to do right now:

1. Come down the mountain.

Stop living for spiritual highs. Step into the valley. Fight the demons. Pray with power. Fast with purpose.

2. Confess the thing you won't give up.

Whether it's your image, your comfort, your control, or your sin—name it. Kill it. Follow Him.

3. Lead like Jesus.

Not from a throne, but from a towel. Serve the people around you without needing thanks.

4. Be ruthless with your sin.

Jesus didn't die so you could play nice with what He bled to destroy.

Final Word

Jesus shows His glory, but He leads His men straight into the fire.

Because you don't become a kingdom man on a mountaintop.

You become one in the **trenches**.

When you pray when no one's watching.

When you serve when no one claps.

When you obey even when it costs you comfort, reputation, or everything you thought you wanted.

Jesus didn't call you to safety.

He called you to **follow Him**.

So pick up your cross.

Cut off what needs to go.

And get back in the fight.

