

Talk It Over 45: Bible Study Edition

Teaching Series: *Challenging What Is*
Message: *Challenging what is ... together* — Todd Petkau
Passage: Matthew 21
Date: September 21-22

How to use Talk It Over

This version of *Talk It Over* is designed for groups whose primary focus is studying the Word of God. There is lots of depth in information and questions about the principle passage of the weekend message. This study is designed to be done in 30 to 60 minutes.

The Main Idea

God is loving and he is condemning. Chapter 21 of Matthew tells us that. That he would ride through a crowd on a donkey but also condemn the religious leaders by telling tales about them, to their faces. Our important task is to realize who we are and to “produce fruits of the kingdom.”

Warm Up Questions (choose 2 or 3)

Q1: Do you like olives? What other kinds of food (or special food) is unique to you?

Q2: Have you ever ridden a donkey? A horse? Something stranger?

Q3: What is the strangest food you have eaten?

Dig a Little Deeper

Let's take a look at Matthew chapter 21. There are really 2 sections to this chapter: the triumphal entry (vss. 1-17) and the talk that Jesus does (vss. 18-45).

Read Matthew 21:1-17

In this section, Jesus moves from the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem, and we are faced with his entry into Jerusalem. Jesus begins by simply entering Jerusalem, that followed by a visit to the moneychangers and dove-sellers.

Q1: Who do the crowds see Jesus to be?

Q2: Is their view of who Jesus is an accurate one? That is, is he really who they claim he is? Talk about this and the answer to the first question.

From there we see the second part of the story.

Read Matthew 21:18-45

Jesus is beginning a transition into a new role: away from simply being a wise man to being something more.

In this second section, Jesus either shows us or tells us of four different things:

- a) Cursing a tree and explaining how the disciples can do the same;
- b) Facing the chief priests and having them back down on their queries;
- c) Telling a story about one son who says he will go to the vineyard and one who says he will not;
- d) Telling a story about a vineyard master who rids himself of corrupt leasers.

Q3: Jesus uses an unremarkable event in his life (the cursing of a tree) to tell a remarkable story. What is that story?

Jesus moves us from the simple act of cursing a fig tree through to the final act (in this passage) of talking about those who are to fall away and those who will pick up the pieces of the kingdom.

Q4: How does Jesus move them (or rather, how does Matthew move them) from Jesus the hungry to Jesus the cursing, or at least the replacing? Spend some time here talking about what Jesus is doing as he moves from situation to situation and story to story.

Q5: In verses 45-46 we see the final end of this chapter. Why are the chief priests and Pharisees angry with Jesus?

Next Steps

We see in this story of Jesus his first two days in Jerusalem. On the first he enters triumphally proclaiming the kingdom of God and then he moves to healing the blind and the lame in the temple. Then, on the second, he curses a tree, confronts the chief priests, and then tells stories. But all of these to a purpose: he is preparing himself and the people around him for his final confrontation with his accusers.

He begins as everyone expects, with a parade and a recognition of who he is. But he takes a side path, rather than going to the place of the king, he instead goes to the temple, knocks over those who are buying and selling and then he heals the blind and the lame.

Q1: What was expected in the entry of Jesus to the city (expected by the people). What did he do which was unexpected?

On the next day he starts with a fig tree but moves to talking about the fruits of the kingdom.

Jesus teaches about the kingdom, but the answers he gives are not what people are expecting.

Q2: What was Jesus teaching about us? What does “the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom” (vs. 43) mean?

Pray together that God would make us the people who produce the fruit of the kingdom.

Reading Coming Up

Riverwood has embarked on a quest together: to become intimate with Scripture—and with the Good News story that started In the Garden of Eden and continues to this day—by **reading** Scripture. This quest will be 1000 days long so if you miss a day you can catch up and if you start late you can just keep going from where everyone else is. The reading list is available on the Riverwood app but you can also get the monthly bookmark at any of the Welcome Centres in our various worshipping communities. It is recommended that you read from a modern Bible translation. If you do not have a Bible and cannot afford to buy one, stop by the Welcome Centre in your worshipping community and they can help you get one.

Here are the readings for the coming week:

Monday September 23, 2019: Matthew 23
Tuesday September 24, 2019: Matthew 24
Wednesday September 25, 2019: Matthew 25
Thursday September 26, 2019: Matthew 26
Friday September 27, 2019: Matthew 27
Saturday September 28, 2019: Matthew 28
Sunday September 29, 2019: Matthew 29