

# Expository Thoughts On Matthew - Matthew

## 20:24-28

by J.C. Ryle

### Transcript

These verses are few in number, but they contain lessons of great importance to all professing Christians. Let us see what they are. In the first place we learn that there may be pride, jealousy and love of preeminence even among true disciples of Christ. What sayeth the Scripture? When the ten heard what James and John had asked, "they were moved with indignation against the two brethren." Pride is one of the oldest and most mischievous of sins: by it the angels fell, for they kept not their first estate. (i) Jude 6 ). Through pride Adam and Eve were seduced into eating the forbidden fruit: they were not content with their lot, and thought they would be as gods. From pride the saints of God receive their greatest injuries after their conversion. Well says Hooker, "Pride is a vice which cleaveth so fast unto the hearts of men that if we were to strip ourselves of all faults one by one, we should undoubtedly find it the very last and hardest to put off." It is a quaint but true saying of Bishop Hall, that "pride is the inmost coat, which we put off last, and which we put on first." In the second place we learn that a life of self-denying kindness to others is the true secret of greatness in the kingdom of Christ. What sayeth the Scripture? "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister whoever will be chief among you let him be your servant." The standard of the world and the standard of the Lord Jesus are widely different. They are more than different: they are flatly contradictory one to the other. Among the children of this world he is thought the greatest man who has most land, most money, most servants, most rank and most earthly power; among the children of God he is reckoned the greatest who does most to promote the spiritual and temporal happiness of his fellow-creatures. True greatness consists not in receiving but in giving; not in selfish absorption of good things but in imparting good to others; not in being served but in serving; not in sitting still and being ministered to but in going about and ministering to others. The angels of God see far more beauty in the work of the missionary than in the work of the Australian digger for gold. They take far more interest in the labors of men like Howard and Judson than in the victories of generals, the political speeches of statesmen, or the council-chambers of kings. Let us remember these things. Let us beware of seeking false greatness; let us aim at that greatness which alone is true. There is a mine of profound wisdom in that saying of our Lord "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (i) Acts In the third place we learn that the Lord Jesus Christ is intended to be the example for all true Christians. What sayeth the Scripture? We ought to serve one another even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. The Lord God has mercifully provided his people with everything necessary to their sanctification. He has given those who follow after holiness the clearest of precepts, the best of motives, and the most encouraging of promises. But this is not all. He has

furthermore supplied them with the most perfect pattern and example, even the life of his own Son. By that life he bids us frame our own; in the steps of that life he bids us walk (i» ç 1 Peter 2:21 ). It is the model after which we must strive to mold our tempers, our words and our works in this evil world. â€œï» ç Would my Master have spoken in this manner? Would my Master have behaved in this way?ï» ç â€■ These are the questions by which we ought daily to try ourselves. How humbling this truth is! What searchings of heart it ought to raise within us! What a loud call it is to lay aside every weight and the sin which most easily besets usâ€■ (ï» ç Hebrews 12:1 ). What manner of persons ought they to be who profess to copy Christ! What poor unprofitable religion is that which makes a man content with talk and empty profession, while his life is unholy and unclean! Alas, those who know nothing of Christ as an example will find at last that he knows nothing of them as his saved people. â€œï» ç He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walkï» ç, even as he walked.â€■ (ï» ç 1 John 2:6 ). Finally let us learn from these verses that Christâ€™s death was an atonement for sin. What saith the Scripture? â€œï» ç The Son of Manï» ç â€■ came â€œï» ç to give his life a ransom for many.ï» ç â€■ This is the mightiest truth in the Bible. Let us take care that we grasp it firmly, and never let it go. Our Lord Jesus Christ did not die merely as a martyr, or as a splendid example of self-sacrifice and self-denial. Those who can see no more than that in his death fall infinitely short of the truth; they lose sight of the very foundation-stone of Christianity, and miss the whole comfort of the Gospel. Christ died as a sacrifice for manâ€™s sin; he died to make reconciliation for manâ€™s iniquity; he died to purge our sins by the offering of himself, He died to redeem us from the curse which we all deserved, and to make satisfaction to the justice of God, which must otherwise have condemned us. Never let us forget this! We are all by nature debtors. We owe to our holy Maker ten thousand talents, and are not able to pay. We cannot atone for our own transgressions, for we are weak and frail, and only adding to our debts every day. But, blessed be God, what we could not do, Christ came into the world to do for us; what we could not pay, he undertook to pay for us. To pay it, he died for us upon the cross. He â€œï» ç offered himself to Godï» ç â€■ (ï» ç Hebrews 9:14 ). He â€œï» ç suffered for sin, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to Godï» ç â€■ (ï» ç 1 Peter Let us not leave these verses without asking ourselves, where is our humility? What is our idea of true greatness? What is our example? What is our hope? Life, eternal life, depends on the answer we give to these questions. Happy is that man who is truly humble, strives to do good in his day, walks in the steps of Jesus, and rests all his hopes on the ransom paid for him by Christâ€™s blood. Such a man is a true Christian!

---

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jc-ryle/expository-thoughts-on-matthew-matthew-2024-28/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**