

Masaccio, "Payment of the Tribute Money" (1425-27)



Do you see the small mistake in this representation that impacts the meaning?

R. T. France:

*“The theme of this discourse [Chapter 18] is not so much individual discipleship ...as the **corporate life** of those who are joined by their common commitment as disciples, with special attention being given to the strain and tensions to which such a life is exposed*

- through self-concern and lack of care for fellow disciples,*
- through bad examples and errant behavior,*
- and through an unwillingness to forgive as we have been forgiven.”*

The progression of ideas in Chapter 18

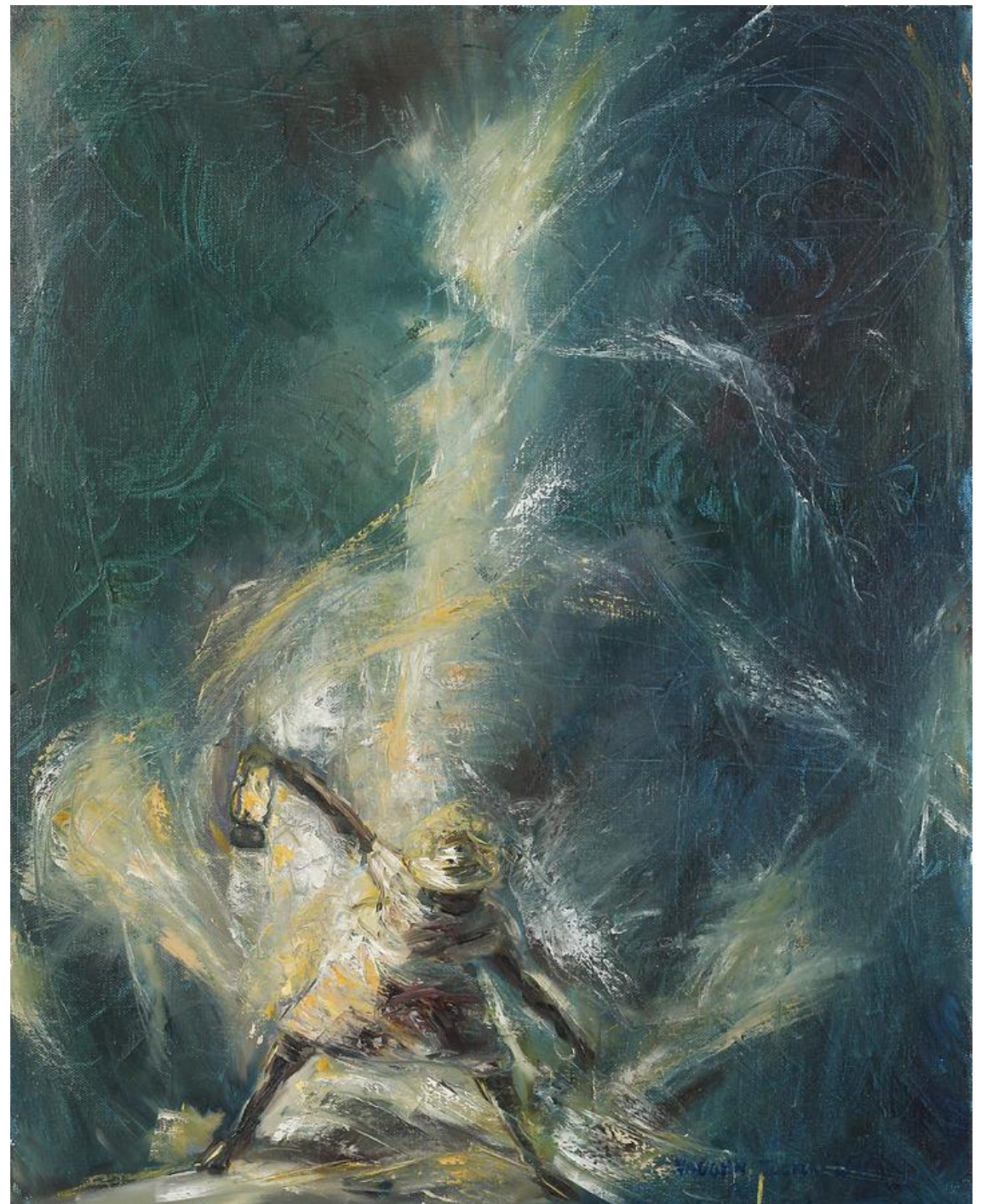
Within the family of God:

The greatest vs the least → caring → pursuing → discipling/disciplining → forgiving

Question for contemplation:

How should the Parable of the Lost Sheep inform our view of church life, of church discipleship, of church discipline?

Vaughn Tucker, "The Search", 2012



Fred Greco:

- We must view discipline through a biblical lens rather than through individual experiences.
- Biblical discipline is more closely related to another well-known Biblical word, disciple.
 - A disciple is one who is taught (Matt. 10:24).
- In a similar way, discipline is learning the ways of the Lord.
 - Ephesians 6:4: “Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”
- In fact, the New Testament word for discipline is the same Greek word that is used for education or instruction (especially of children) in a broader sense.
 - To discipline someone is to train them up in the way that they should go (Prov. 22:6), and to build up one who is dear (Heb. 12:5–11) out of love (Rev. 3:19).

Fred Greco, cont.



Camille Pissarro, "A Shepherd and His Flock of Sheep"

The Lord has given under-shepherds to His church for the purpose of building up and equipping the flock, and He uses these shepherds to discipline His people (Eph. 4:11–16).

Discipline starts with instruction from the Word of God...It begins with the leaders of the church giving guidance, instruction, and admonition from the Bible.

D.A. Carson:

“The aim [of church discipline] is not to score points over the brother in sin but to win him over because all discipline, even this private kind, must begin with redemptive purposes.”

cf Luke 17:3-4, II Thess 3:14-15, James 5:19-20, Exodus 19:13-17



Carol Schiff, "The Safe Place"

In this passage, Jesus gives His church a clear process for loving one another redemptively. When a professed brother/sister is “caught in a trespass,” our response should be:

1. We are to go to him in private with the humility of clarification and the heartfelt intention of winning the brother by God’s grace to repent.
2. If this step fails, we are to bring along with us one or two others who share the same desired objective (see also Gal. 6:1–2).
3. If this effort fails, we are to “tell it to the church.” This does not necessarily mean exposing the individual in a public assembly of the church. It does mean bringing it to the elders of the church.
4. At this point, the elders are to shepherd the effort to win the brother through “special discipline”.

According to special discipline, the elders would prayerfully repeat the first three steps and then, if necessary, implement the following:

- admonition, which is the formal and informal identification of the sin with warning of its consequences if there is no confession and repentance;
- suspension from the Lord’s Table;
- and excommunication, whereby the impenitent sinner is identified as a “gentile” and a “tax gatherer.”

These steps are designed to deliver the impenitent sinner over to Satan and to the consequences of the sin in hopes of stimulating godly repentance and restoration.

David Platt, et al:

“As followers of Christ, we don’t have the option of ignoring these issues.

Why not?

Because of how we have been loved: the Father has protected us, pursued us, restored us, and forgiven us.”

Breakout Room Question



How does Matthew 18 shape your view of church membership?

Jerry Lynn, "Dinner on the Grounds"

Questions for contemplation:

As a follower of Jesus:

- *Am I causing, leading or enabling a brother or sister to sin?*
- *Am I guarding, protecting and nurturing my own personal holiness?*
- *Am I harboring any bitterness or unforgiveness towards a brother Or sister in Christ?*
- *How can I more clearly express the love of the Father to the members of my church?*

