

A black and white photograph of a city skyline, including skyscrapers and a bridge, is shown upside down at the top of the page. The background of the main text area is a light, textured grey.

MATTHEW

The Upside umog Kingdom

Week 21: Matthew 18:1–14

In this Upside-Down Kingdom, Humility is Greatness



Verses 1–4

The greatest in God's kingdom are those who take the lowliest positions



- The disciple’s question “who is the greatest” and this narrative is directly connected in time to Matthew 17:24-27 (“at that time” [Εν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ὥρᾳ]).
- The disciples were becoming more aware that Jesus was the Messiah and felt like the top places in the kingdom were up for grabs.

Transfiguration of
Jesus with Elijah
and Moses
(Matt 17:1-7)





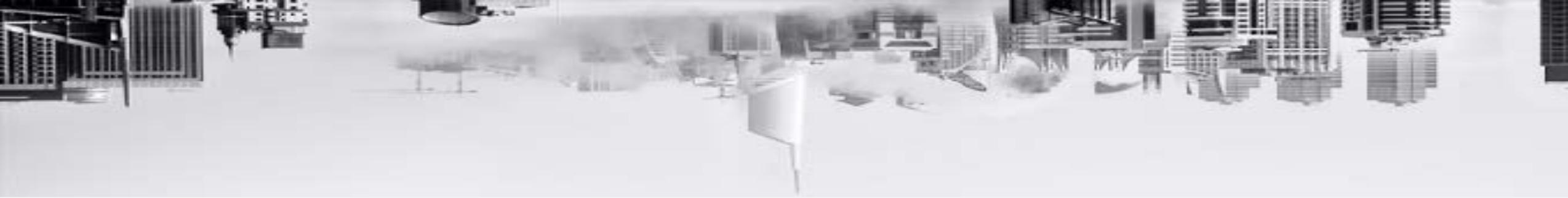
An object lesson for the upside down kingdom

- Jesus transmutes the disciple's question and **called** [προσκαλέω] a small child unto to Him and set him in their midst - a dramatic visual to His lesson. Children were not esteemed in that culture.
- “**Truly**, I say to you, unless you **turn** and become like children, you will **never** [οὐ μὴ] enter the kingdom of heaven.”



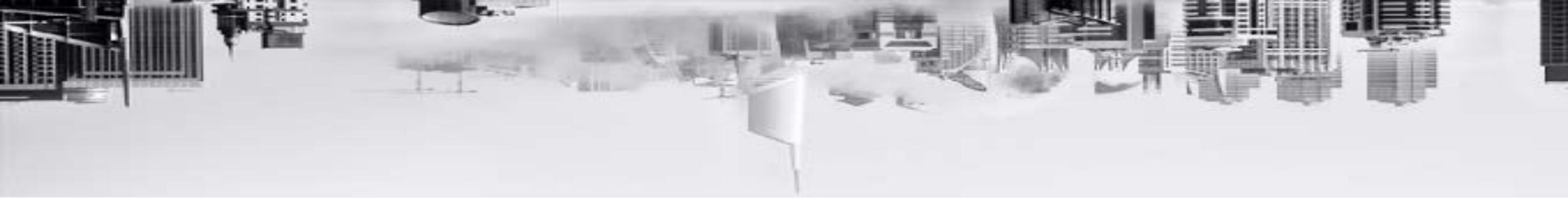
στρέφω [*strophō*]

- *to change one's direction*
- *to turn elsewhere*
- *to change one's course of principle and conduct*
- *to be converted*



Humility: total dependence on God

“Whoever **humbles** [ταπεινῶ – 14X] himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”



Matt. 23:12 Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

James 4:10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

1Pet. 5:6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you



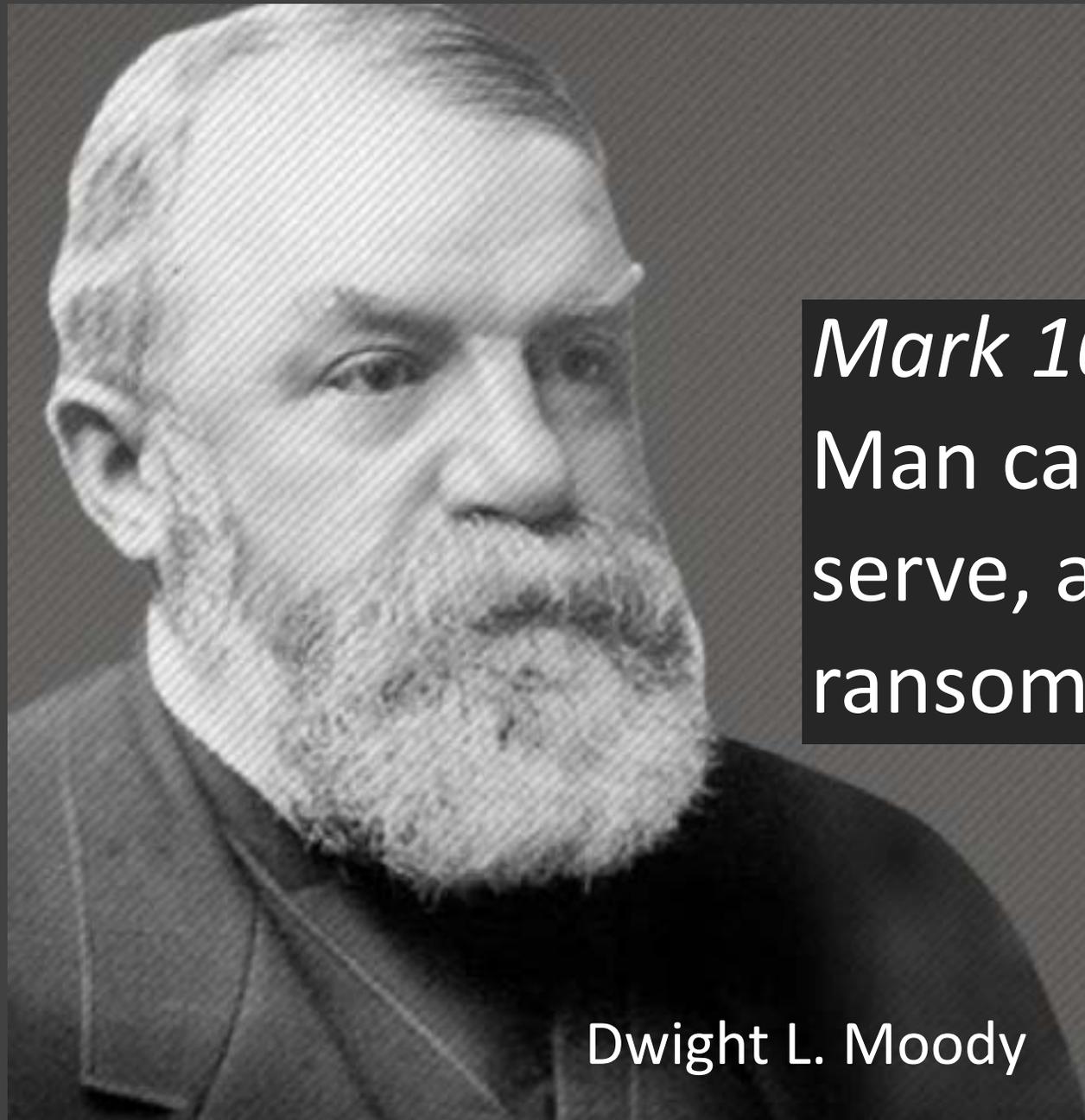
Examples From Scripture

Luke 18:14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.

Phil. 4:12 I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.

2Cor. 11:7 Or did I commit a sin in humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because I preached God's gospel to you free of charge?

Phil. 2:8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.



Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many

Dwight L. Moody



Verse 5: “Whoever receives one such child (believer in Christ) in my name receives me”

Acts 10:28 “but God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean”

James 2:1 “My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ”



Verses 6-9

A sober warning to those who may cause a believer in Jesus to stumble!



“but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me **to sin** [σκανδαλίζω]”

To cause to stumble or to offend leading to sin



Leviticus 19:14 “You shall not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind, but you shall fear your God: I am the Lord”

1Cor. 8:13 “Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat [sacrificed to an idol], lest I make my brother stumble”





Verses 7-9

Personal responsibility when it comes to temptation



“Getting rid of what causes you to stumble is like cutting a cancerous tumor out of your body or cutting off a limb that has gangrene”



Hard questions to ask ourselves...

- What specific things in your life do you need to “cut out” to keep from being tempted to sin?
- In what ways might you have caused someone to stumble in their faith in the past? How can you prevent yourself from doing that again?
- How can we help keep each other from stumbling or falling into sin?



Verses 10–14

**God does not want any of His people to
perish - He pursues His lost sheep**



Our part in pulling in lost sheep...

Ezekiel 3:21 “But if you warn the righteous person not to sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely live, because he took warning”

Jude 1:22-23 “And have mercy on those who doubt; save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh”

Matt 18:15-17 (next week's lesson)

Changing Gears



Is this statement true?

“evolution occurs, is observable,
and is supported by a vast body
of scientific evidence”

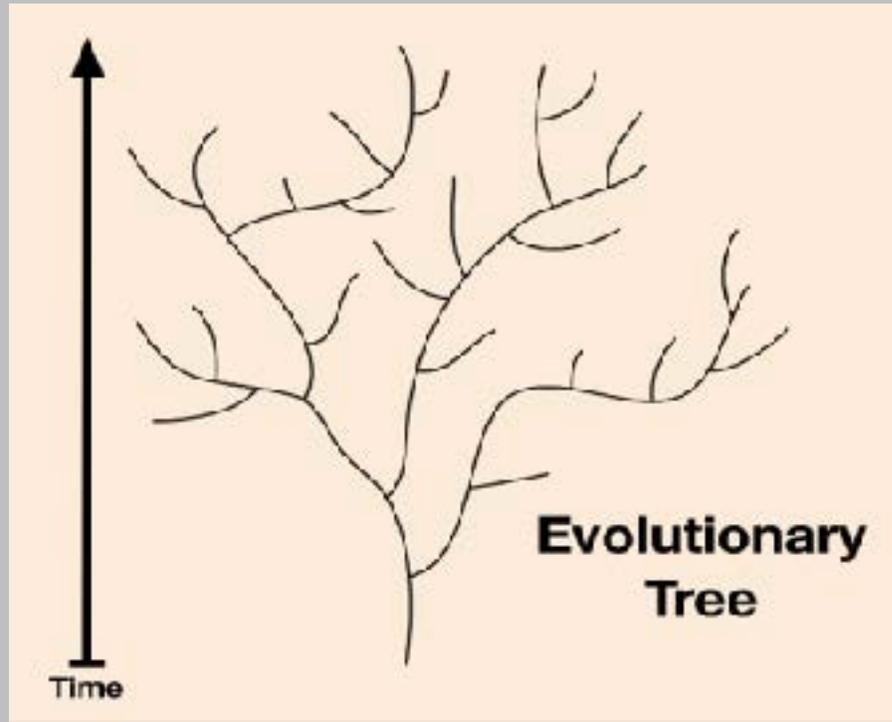


No evolution occurring now



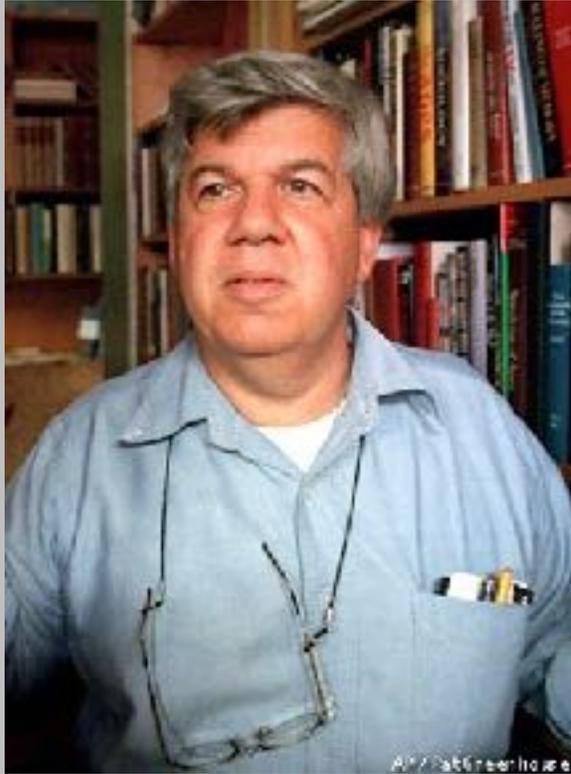
Created after their kind





No evolution in the past

- **Sudden appearance**
- **Stasis: creatures stay the same**
- **No transitional fossils**



“The extreme rarity of transitional forms in the fossil record persists as the trade secret of paleontology, the evolutionary trees that adorn our textbooks have data only at the tips and nodes of their branches; the rest is inference, however reasonable, not the evidence of fossils.”

Stephen J. Gould, *Natural History*, Vol. 86, pgs 22, 30

**Animals don't
change (stasis)**



Shield bug 50 million years old?



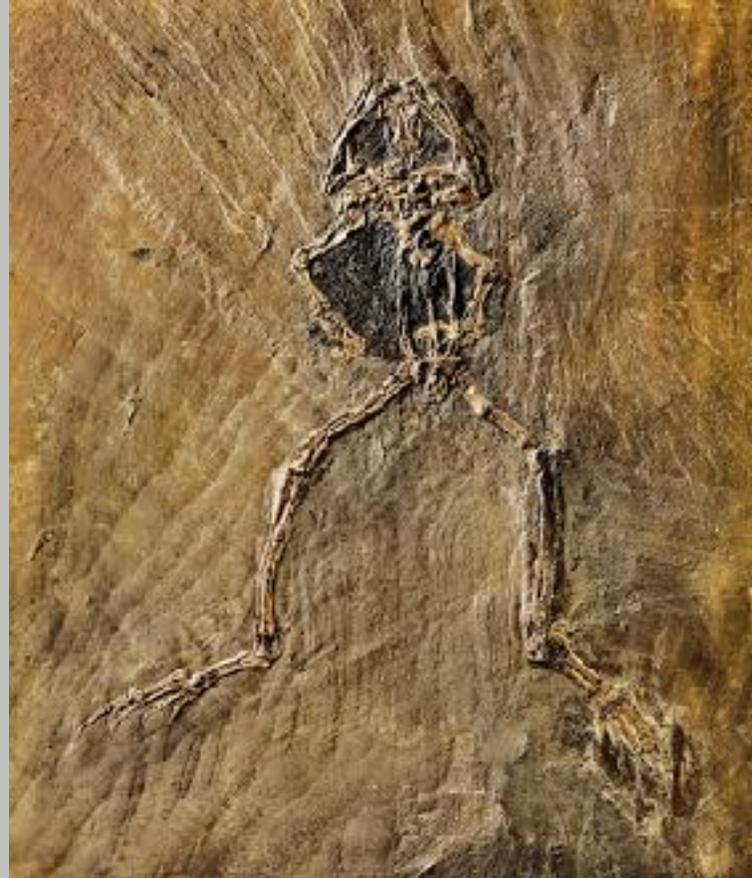
The Coelacanth was thought to have gone extinct with the dinosaurs 65 million years ago



**Lobsters fossils
100+ million
years old?**



Frogs 350 million years old?



**Horseshoe
crab 400+
Million
years old?**





**Brittle stars 450
million years old?**



**Amber
fossils
preserve
fine detail**

**100 Mya cricket
and scorpion?**



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✓ Jupiter is releasing twice as much heat as it receives from the sun.

✓ If Jupiter were billions of years old, it would have lost its magnetic field and cooled by now. Jupiter must be young like the other planets.



Find the objects hidden in Jupiter's belts and zones.



Connect the dots to follow our discovery tour of Jupiter's moons.



Jupiter
Crossword Puzzle



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