# Gospel of Matthew Weekly Talk Ideas | Sean McGever

## Matthew Chapter 17

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| Scripture suggestion, basic overview, and background:Chapter 17 of Matthew contains four stories and in the bigger picture of Matthew’s gospel things are ramping up toward the seven chapters of the seven days of Jesus’ passion week (Matt. 21-27). Though ch. 17 is just a little over halfway through Matthew’s gospel, it is near the end of Jesus’ life. He is a snapshot of ch. 17: 1. The Transfiguration (17:1-8)
2. Elijah and John the Baptist (17:9-13)
3. Healing a Boy with a Demon and the Disciples’ Lack of Faith (17:14-23)
4. Temple Tax (17:24-27)

Of these stories I think the Transfiguration is the best fit for most club talks. Initially, I wanted to speak on Jesus healing the boy with a demon but after studying it I realized the main point of the story was about the disciples’ lack of faith and the healing of the boy really needed to be understood in that context, and I didn’t feel drawn to speak about the disciples’ lack of faith for my club talk. I decided to speak on the transfiguration (17:1-8): 1. Jesus’ and his three closest friends go up a mountain (17:1)
2. Jesus transfigures (17:2)
3. Jesus is with Moses and Elijah / Peter speaks too soon (17:3-4)
4. Voice from heaven (17:5)
	1. *\*\*This is my son [focus #1*]
	2. Whom I love / I am pleased with him
	3. *\*\*Listen to him [focus #2]*
5. Disciples: facedown and afraid / Jesus: get up and don’t be afraid (17:6-8)
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| Possible main point(s):* Who do you listen to about life? Why?
* What might Jesus say to you right now if you were to listen to him? (give a moment of silence)
* What do you expect to happen to you after you die? What do you think Moses and Elijah expected? Do you think they were surprised to be standing next to Jesus one day?
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| What this shows us about Jesus:* Jesus is God’s son
* God tells us to listen to Jesus
* Jesus is loved by God and God is pleased with him
* Jesus’ presence with Moses and Elijah signifies his importance to Jewish people and God’s work in history.
* God is reminding everyone that Jesus, who is will be crucified shortly after this, is God’s son. God gave his son.
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| What this has to do with our life:* This story begs two questions
	+ 1) What do we think of Jesus? God’s son? Then what does that mean for us now?
	+ 2) Who do we listen to? Who tells us who we are, who gives us vision, advice, truth?
* This shows that Moses and Elijah have a life after death that is connected to Jesus.
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| Relevant technical details:* Peter, James, John = These three appear to be Jesus’ inner circle, they are also the ones Jesus brings with him to the garden of Gethsemane to pray right before Jesus is arrested (Mt. 26:37), and also when Jesus raised Jairus’ daughter from the dead (Mk. 5:37). Peter later referenced being at the Transfiguration (2 Pet. 1:16-18).
* “Transfigured” (v.2) = Transformed (same word from Rom. 12:2). The context speaks of Jesus’ face shining and clothes being white as light, the idea is that Jesus transformed into a shining/lighted/glowing version of himself.
* Moses, Elijah (v.3) = Two of the most famous people from the Old Testament. Some ask: “why Moses and Elijah out of everyone who could be up there?” Some have responded that they are symbolic of the law (Moses) and the prophets (Elijah). In other words, Jesus has authority not unlike the entire Old Testament and its key people.
* Shelters (v.4) = Peter is thinking of either the tabernacle from Exodus 25:9 or the shelters from the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23:42), either way he is basically unaware of what is happening and speaking before thinking.
* “Listen to him” (v.5) = The grammar is significant. It does *not*  say “Listen to me” or “listen to us”, it says listen to “him” (third-person singular). God wants us to listen to Jesus. Listening to Jesus is our guide.
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| Possible illustrations:* Use a flashlight to light up your face when you speak from the Bible (!) Maybe turn other lights off.
* Megaphone (voice from heaven)
* Moment of silence
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*For more details see ylhelp.com*

Matthew 17 (NIV84)

*The Transfiguration*

**17** After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. 2 There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. 3 Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.

4 Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”

5 While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”

6 When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. 7 But Jesus came and touched them. “Get up,” he said. “Don’t be afraid.” 8 When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

9 As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, “Don’t tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.”

10 The disciples asked him, “Why then do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first?”

11 Jesus replied, “To be sure, Elijah comes and will restore all things. 12 But I tell you, Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but have done to him everything they wished. In the same way the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.” 13 Then the disciples understood that he was talking to them about John the Baptist.

*The Healing of a Boy With a Demon*

14 When they came to the crowd, a man approached Jesus and knelt before him. 15 “Lord, have mercy on my son,” he said. “He has seizures and is suffering greatly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. 16 I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him.”

17 “O unbelieving and perverse generation,” Jesus replied, “how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me.” 18 Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy, and he was healed from that moment.

19 Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, “Why couldn’t we drive it out?”

20 He replied, “Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”

22 When they came together in Galilee, he said to them, “The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. 23 They will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised to life.” And the disciples were filled with grief.

*The Temple Tax*

24 After Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma tax came to Peter and asked, “Doesn’t your teacher pay the temple tax?”

25 “Yes, he does,” he replied.

When Peter came into the house, Jesus was the first to speak. “What do you think, Simon?” he asked. “From whom do the kings of the earth collect duty and taxes—from their own sons or from others?”

26 “From others,” Peter answered.

“Then the sons are exempt,” Jesus said to him. 27 “But so that we may not offend them, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours.”