

The Sermon on the Mount
Class Notes
Session 6

Matthew 5.20 As Jesus will illustrate in His sermon...Kingdom righteousness flows from the *inside out*...not the *outside in*!

What more “righteousness” is required? To follow Jesus in discipleship and heart transformation.

“The scribes and Pharisees read and study the Law and the Prophets. They accept the fact that “Scripture cannot be broken” (Jn 10:35), but they do not believe that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Scriptures (cf Jn 5:39). They seek to achieve righteousness by keeping the Law, for which they have a high regard. But Jesus goes on to point out just how defective their righteousness really is (vv 21–48)...When judged by the true intent of God’s Law, our righteousness is likewise defective. Only in Christ do we have true righteousness.” (*The Lutheran Study Bible*, Concordia Publishing).

Matthew 5.21-26 “You have heard that it was said to those of old...”

Jesus is not criticizing the OT but the understanding of the OT many of his hearers adopted.

Jesus’ “I” is emphatic in each of His six antitheses...With each, Jesus contrasts what was said in the Torah and in its traditional interpretations with His *deeper* requirements.

This is the greater righteousness Jesus demands of His disciples. Jesus begins with Murder. Jesus wants to get to the Source of why people murder. Which is often Anger!

ὀργίζομαι (*orgizomai*)... “To enrage” (Wrath)

Reconciliation with others is paramount. No sense for religious rituals if we hate deep down... (*Genesis 4*, Cain and Able).

Problem...Is Jesus using hyperbole here? Was Jesus’ statement intended to cover all circumstances?

Ephesians 4.26

Christian tradition generally did not teach elimination of all anger. In the scripture we find that both views (anger/watch your anger) are held.

Again, the sermon inspires the moral imagination.

Anger is a part of us *and* it should not control us. Anger can be dangerous and harmful.

(vs.22): “Insults” ...ῥακά (*rhaka*) (Semitic idiom): “Worthless” “Empty Headed” (Idiot) “You fool” μωρός (*mōros*): “Dull” (Stupid/Foolish)

Jesus pictures the judgments in this case in the strongest terms! “Hell of fire” γέεννα (*geenna*)...A Greek transliteration of the Hebrew, “Hinnom Valley”.

What are the alternatives to being angry? (Look at *verses 23-24, 25-26*). Both illustrate the self-discipline of reconciliation. The prohibition in *v.22* is overcome in *vs. 23-26* by making peace.

The picture here is the disciple going about the awkward task of trying to right wrongs. In other words, the anger is dealt with!

Matthew 5.27-30 The prohibition against adultery was one of the most significant commandments, allowing no exceptions (*Exodus 20:14; Deuteronomy 5:18*).

Lust and Adultery. Here, and throughout the sermon, what we will hear from Jesus is the Heart is the Issue!

Jesus identified the sinful heart as the source of all evil (Matthew 15:19). Following Jesus and living in the Kingdom of God is about the transformation (healing) of our hearts.

Do not commit adultery...even more...Do not WANT to want to commit adultery!

The sin lies not in the entrance of the thought but letting it incite us to wrongful passions/intentions.

“...who looks at...” βλέπω (*blepo*): “To watch for” “Pay attention” A continuous “looking” with intention.

(vs.29-30): Jesus uses Hyperbole—(Rhetorical overstatement) to underline the moral intensity of His command...Do whatever is necessary to separate one’s self from the sin.

Eyes and hands are primary offenders in sexual sin. Jesus probably mentions the eye first because of the sin just mentioned

The “right” side in antiquity was considered the valuable, honorable side. The eye reflects the lustful perspective/focus. The hand reflects the action (doing).

“Jesus uses hyperbole (deliberate exaggeration) for the sake of emphasizing the seriousness of single-minded, single-eyed, single-handed spouse commitment.” (C.E. Arnold. *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary*).

“...better maimed in heaven than whole in hell.” (Craig Evans)

“This stern preaching of the Law causes us to take stock of our own behavior and to confess that we often, through sinful anger, fall. Our only hope for salvation is to trust the reconciliation that Christ accomplished by His sacrificial death (cf 2Co 5:19). Having been reconciled to God, we may be reconciled with one another.” (*The Lutheran Study Bible*)

Going Forward: “[Jesus] contravenes the letter of several of the Old Testament laws, not because he is abolishing them but because he is establishing a new covenant in which God’s law is internalized in a way that prevents it from being fully encapsulated in a list of rules and that precludes perfect obedience...” (Craig Blomberg, *Matthen*).