

Sermon On The Mount:

True Righteousness Of The Kingdom

INTRODUCTION:

The scribes & Pharisees had the wrong attitude towards the Old Law as God gave it. How did they do it? Making loopholes, excuses, and justifying breaking of those laws. Taught other to do likewise. Although highly esteemed among themselves, the Lord rebukes their conduct here. Jesus is trying to teach the need of respect for God's law. In the new kingdom, the "appearance" of being religious isn't going to cut it! Those who will not be obedient to this law cannot enter in. Jesus is going to clearly show what true discipleship is all about. Obedience to God had come to be regarded as a thing of mere outward constraint or mechanical conformity. Jesus shows the fatal flaw in that way of thinking. How? Showing the true nature of the law.

Verse 20 is a pivotal verse in this discourse. Here is a new call to holiness--one which would require a great change on a man's temper & conduct, a righteous heart and life far exceeding that of the scribes & Pharisees. "FOR I SAY", Jesus emphatically and authoritatively declares His right to command. Jesus is going to use six examples from the two covenants, a comparisons & contrasts, between the two. A test to see if men are qualified to enter this kingdom. Those who justify breaking the Old Law, would never be fit for the new and would not obey Christ.

Old Law introduced, *"You have heard that it was said", or "Said of old"*. Background. Law given to the Father and read to the people. **Heb.1:1,2**. God spoke the law to "the fathers", then later Moses. **2 Pet.1:21. Exo.24:12**, (Law given in **Exodus 20**), *"teach them the law"*, which was given. **Jno.12:34**, *"heard from the law"*. **Acts 15:21**, *"read in the synagogues every Sabbath"*. Some say that Jesus is just giving some summary remarks about the law and the false traditions of men. Not so! Did at times, **Matt.15:2**. He is discussing the Law which was given to them. New Law introduced, *"But I say unto you"*. Jesus teaches with greater authority than Moses. Does he use the phrase, "Thus saith the Lord"? Rather speaking as God Himself! Like God speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai. Jesus takes the Old Law to a higher plane, taking to the heart! One is physical and the other is spiritual! Both sustains those type of relationships within that law.

Christ law is molding our character to be what God would have us to be. Is obedience based on strict adherence to the law? **Matt.19:16ff**. NO! (Illus.- why come to church. To fill a square? Than it is worthless!)

#1. LAW ON MURDER—Matt. 5:21,22

a. Murder in Old Law. **Exo.20:13; 21:1,12-14; Deut.16:18; Num.35:30,31.**

Comparing the law of murder in both covenants. Jesus is also against murder. Capital punishment under Old Law to try to curb murder. (Still endorses capital punishment by the civil government). Man who sheds blood--no mercy! Stern & Just judgment. God desires respect for human life.

b. Law of Christ. In the kingdom capital punishment is not carried out like those of old. Yet, murder is still eliminated. How? By getting to the cause (root) of all murder--hatred-anger-malice. "Raca", angry abuse, morally empty. "Fool", absolute wickedness and ungodliness. Losing control of temper--pouring out damnation. No control of temper or tongue is exhibited. In His kingdom a new system. Is a literal council and judgment? No by adding "hell fire". Figurative way of saying God takes us to court when we allow anger to enter our hearts! Not at the point of murder, but at the point of uncontrolled anger. In other words, before the fact! Goes to the root of the matter! Law of Christ takes the ax to that root.! This could be called "indirect murder". How easy is this law to break? **1 Jno.3:15.**

#2. RECONCILIATION & WORSHIP--Matt.5:23-26.

a.The word "worship" occurs 191 times in the Bible. 113 in the old and 78 in the new. Worship suggests reverential adoration, praise, honor, and the participant feels his unworthiness and littleness before the God he serves. Awe and respect. Worship is an individual matter. We do join in worship as in an assembly(singing, praying) but it is accepted or rejected on an individual basis. **Jno.4:24.** All worship must be directed towards God. To follow men's way to worship Him, is vain. **Matt.15:8,9.** Closeness

to God is needed. Fellowship with Him is needed. Sin destroys both!
Isa.59:1,2; 1 Jno.1:7-10.Psa.66:18.

b.Furthermore, we see in order to be right with God, our worship being acceptable unto Him, we must be right with our brethren. **1 Jno.4:20.** God is concerned about how we treat one another (**Matt.25:37-40**). Included in this is a self-examination of self (**2 Cor.13:5**). What did the publican do in **Lk.18**? If I have aught against him, go and reconcile first! Our heart must be right for our worship to be right! It plainly teaches we must remove any enmity to absolve any matter of difference with a brother, before we make an effort to worship God. Who is my brother? Lk.10:30-37. Neighbors, family, friends, and brethren. Should I wait for the offender to come to me? **Matt.18:15-20; Lk.17:4.** Both have responsibility. Settle the difficulty--then make the offering unto God. Try! **Rom.12:18.**

c. "*Agree with thy adversary quickly...*" By doing we avoid living, and allowing to fester, an attitude of ill will or hatred. How can our lives be happy if malice is in our hearts. How do we overcome evil? **Rom.12:19-21.** Emphasis on the heart. Punishment--our worship is unacceptable! Can I fight and have ill will in our heart -- then go and worship God? **vv.25,26,** reference to the literal court of the Jews. Is this a literal court? The old Jewish court is a shadow of what is being considered. No, you are in God's court. You will stand before His judgment seat. We are in point of His wrath at the point of our anger. God looks at the heart long before the deed is committed. Civil & national laws cannot look into the heart--but God can and does! See the difference?

#3. LAW ON ADULTERY — Matt. 5:27-32.

a.**Exo.20:14; Deut.22:22.** Law of Moses on adultery-Death penalty to both. Put away evil from Israel. Tried, convicted then put to death. This was strictly followed (**Jno.8:4-11**).

b. Law of Christ also forbids adultery, but in a different way. Again, getting to the root of the problem. (Before the act is committed). Eliminate

adultery by getting to the cause of--evil in heart--caused by lust! "Whoever looks at a woman to lust after her...". A type of looking leads to forbidden lust, **1 Jno.2:16; Psal.101:3. Rom.6:12; 1 Pet.2:11; Col.3:5**. This strong desire is = to adultery in the sight of God. No physical contact or expression. Takes place in one's heart. Lust = purpose of the heart -- just lacks the opportunity. My desire. Old Law forbids also. **Exo.20:17** Civil Law could pass no such measure--but the spiritual law of Christ can (**1 Sam.16:7**). Punishment? Spiritual capital punishment -- just as guilty of committing the act!

c. What proceeds the physical act? "*Sight & touch*". Now read verses **29,30** "*Eye offend thee*", used to feed this lust. "*Hand*", used to feed the sin! Is this a literal command? No, but a sincere application of these truths would stop anything that feeds the desire! What about dancing? By looking and touching one another? Does it fuel the flame? Pornography. Pictures feed our eyes. Dirty Jokes, sexual suggestions, filthy TV or movies. Stop the "feeding" ground! Do we just go with the flow? Surrounded by suggestions. Billboards, TV ads, newspaper, etc. Discipline ourselves. Can I cause this sin? Immodest dress? Swimming? **Gen.3:7**, naked fig leaves (shorts?) Garments with sleeves, coats of skins, **Gen.3:21**. Sexual makeup is different. Man more sensitive to sight and touch. *Survey, Sociology Today*, 69% men, 7%, women to see opposite sex in swimwear. 10x greater temptations for men. Dress can be the cause. Be careful.

#4. Law On Marriage, Divorce, & Remarriage. Matt.5:31,32

a. Marriage between two eligible marriage partners is binding by God until death or fornication separates them. God's law is paramount and supreme. Law of Moses, **Deut.24:1-4**. Restrained easy and divorces on men's whims. Stubbornness of the Jews caused this law to be given. Trying to lessen abuse to men. THINK ABOUT IT TWICE. Some conduct is unclean, short of adultery. Shameful. V.2--discouraging divorce. If you send her away -- give her a bill of divorcement -- can remarry her. Former husband cannot have her back after she leaves, under no circumstances! If so, an abomination to the Lord. Tolerate the divorce, no agreeing with them! Also tolerated polygamy. But did not like it! **Exo.21:10-12**, strict rules to discourage them. 1st wife receives all blessings and nothing is diminish. No matter how he felt for 2nd wife. **Deut.21:15-17**. To make sure no one is mistreated or favored. 1st wife son--get inheritance, no matter how he felt about her.

b. Law of Christ strengthen the marriage relationship--going back to the original concept. One man--one woman--FOR LIFE! **Gen.2:24**. If the mate is put away, for another cause other than adultery, he CAUSES her to commit adultery. Both parties in the bed of adultery--but God holds him accountable. **Heb.13:4** Marriage bed of adultery. In **Deut.24:1-4**, give her

bill of divorcement, Jesus rescinds that law. God holds that person who puts one in that circumstance accountable. Innocent party -- **Matt.19:9** In this relationship, the adultery of the put away is her alone.

c. Root of the problem? Destroys homes & souls! Man believes he can dissolved his marriage at will and remarry at will. Uses his own discretion therefore this makes it acceptable. Jesus spoke -- defy this type of thinking! Can free yourselves from the law of the land -- but still bound the laws of God! God does not join them together. Legal, but not approved by God! Is there a civil penalty if a man does such? No! But God does make him accountable to the highest court -- His court, the God of heaven. Legal wrangling does not change fact. In so doing, we put ourselves in trouble with God! Bad trouble! Men seek to "loosen these restraints". Is He?

d. Some say, Christ is not giving a new law? Explaining proper application of the Law of Moses, and later that law was brought into the law of Christ without any change. Can this be so? No according to the flow of this text? Showing the differences in the two laws. **Deut.24**, no even allowed in the New Law. Jerry Bassett (Don) -- Deut.24 allowed for fornication, both parties remarried. Matt.5:32, the true understanding of the Law of Moses. Sam Dawson, Series in 1992. "MDR, The Uniform Testing of Moses, Jesus, and Paul". Are they the same? Jim Putterbaugh -- What Moses taught -- Jesus taught. What is his point? No matter what a divorce is for, it is a divorce. Man or woman does not have a mate. Therefore, they are freed to remarried - both! Why are folks blending the laws together on this one subject, and excluding other teachings of that Law?

e. Are Christ's law and Moses law the same on marriage? If so, what about the death penalty under that Old economy? Think about this soberly.

#5. LAW ON OATHS—Matt. 5:33-37.

Note: Our parents have always told us that it was wrong to swear. For years I was instructed it was wrong to take an oath in a court of law. To give scriptures for such, **Matt.5:34,35** was the proof text. Other say that this does not include oath taken in a court of law. Who is right? What did Jesus teach concerning these things? We will endeavor to answer these questions.

a. Define "swear". *"Is to invoke the name of Deity or other sacred persons or things; to utter an oath."* Oath, *"as a solemn appeal to God, or to a sacred or revered person or sanction (temple, Bible, altar) by way of attesting the truth of one's word, the inviolability of a promise, etc; also, the affirmation or promise supported by an oath, or its form of expression."* {**Webster's Collegiate Dict.**}
Everyday language = Means of verifying one's words as being true by calling upon God as proof of honesty.

b. Mosaic Law. **Exo.20:7; Lev.19:12; Num.30:2; Deut.23:21; Eccl.5:2-5.**
Prohibition of making false swearing, or making vow and breaking it.
God did not approve of those who took vows in a trivial way.
Encouraged to make few, and those made - keep! All oaths made to God or in His name, were to be strictly kept!

c. Was the Lord rescinding this law? No! Say what you mean -- be truthful. Say what you mean, mean what you say. Word to be faithful! Oaths should not be necessary for one's word to be respected. Our word is our bond! A Christians should be known to tell the truth. Whatever they promise to do--do it!

d. "Swear not at all." Is Jesus forbidding taking an oath? Abraham did. **Gen.14:22-24; 21:23,24;** Jesus did, **Matt.26:63,64;** God did, **Heb.6:13-18;** Paul did, **2 Cor.1:23; 11:31.** We do in marriage. Do not practice profane swearing. Making an oath you have no plans of fulfilling. Mental reservation oath. Avoided any direction towards God -- therefore ease the conscience if not kept! **Matt.23:16-22.** The Pharisees interpretation limited the keeping of vows to those made unto the Lord or by His name; others vows needed not to be so carefully kept.. Jesus is showing the evil in this type of thinking. God does not recognize these diminishing oaths! **Ja.5:12.** Truthful in character at all time. **Rom.1:9** -- God as His witness. **Gal.1:20,** did not lie before God! Could one make an oath in a court to promise to tell the truth, before God? Yes! This would not violate the commandment given here. What is His point? Under the Old Law one who made a vow or oath before God, or by His name, was required to keep it. Under the Law of Christ, He is showing that my truthful character should be in all my dealing. We cannot mislead people. We must be people that our word means something to people! Can they depend on our words?
Matt.5:37.

CONCLUSION:

In these examples Jesus is getting to the root of all these matters, the heart & mind of men. Our relationship with God in this new kingdom is based upon the condition of one's heart. If our heart is not right our conduct is not accepted. Jesus is clearly showing that the outward appearance of righteousness, as the Pharisees were so proud, would mean nothing in the new spiritual kingdom. Obedience and adherence to law is still required and a must. Yet, the motive and desire which moves us must also be in accordance with His will. See the difference?

Outline by: *Keith M. Greer*