

“Sermon on the mount – Cont”

Matthew 5v31-48

**Scripture Ref: Mark 3:28-29; 1 Cor 6:1-7; Rom 12:17-21; Ps 18:32-24;
Matt 16:26; 2 Cor 3:18; 1 John 3:2**

- 1. Last week we discussed a difficult topic – lust in the heart.**
 - a. After that, it should be smooth sailing from here on out!**

Marriage: A Sacred Trust

31 "Furthermore it has been said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' 32 But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.

- 2. We will do a more in-depth review of Jesus teaching on marriage and divorce in Matthew 19, but today we'll look at Jesus words briefly.**
- 3. In Jesus' day, there was a theological debate about divorce, originated from two Rabbi's: Rabbi Shammai and Rabbi Hillel**
 - a. Shammai took the conservative view, and taught that Moses was meant that only sexual sin could justify a divorce.**
 - b. Hillel took the liberal view and taught that if a wife displeased her husband in any way, a divorce was justified**
 - i. If she burnt his breakfast, and he got angry, he could divorce his wife because she made him sin.**
 - ii. If a man saw a woman more righteous than his wife, he could divorce his wife because in comparison, she was unclean.**
 - c. Because of this liberal view, just like today, divorce was too common in Judea.**
- 4. What Jesus is telling us very plainly is this: The only cause for divorce is sexual immorality (which included all sexual activity outside of marriage)**
- 5. In our society we can get a divorce for any reason – or no reason at all.**
 - a. But God does not look at it that way - if a person divorces from their spouse – it has long-term implications**
 - b. If that person goes on to marry someone else, God considers that relationship adultery because He sees them as still married.**
 - c. IOW – God holds the institution of marriage to be a sacred trust, not to be broken.**
- 6. But what if you are here today and you have been divorced – for whatever reason... are you living in a permanent state of adultery?**
 - a. Well, the bible does not teach “whoever divorces, they are not forgiven.”**

b. It does teach:

Mark 3:28-29

"Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; 29 but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation"

- c. We all are sinners – just as Jesus taught, all of us have gotten angry – murder in our heart Lust – covetousness...**
 - d. IOW: We all have sins that we need the cleansing blood of Jesus!**
- 7. But what about divorce? We'll cover in more detail in chapter 19, but Jesus said that it was "due to the hardness of their hearts" that Moses allowed divorce.**
- a. Interesting that God made Hosea take a harlot for a wife, and keep taking her back after she went back into harlotry – an example of how God will never toss us aside!**
 - b. IOW – no matter what, God would have us stay together.**

Mean What you Say

33 "Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.' 34 But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; 35 nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. 36 Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. 37 But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.

- 8. Ever have someone try and convince you of something, and they add on: "I swear"? Beware!**
- 9. The religious rulers had become experts at parsing the truth (they would have made good politicians!)**
 - a. They would never swear by God's name – that would be sin**
 - b. But they would swear by anything else; heaven, Jerusalem, to add weight to a statement.**
- 10. Tip for the day – when someone uses oaths or many words to convince you of something, then they probably have a character issue – (IOW they lie!) beware!**
- 11. Jesus is telling us that our character – what people see day-in and day-out, should be such that our "yes" means yes, and our "no" means no.**

Above and Beyond the Call

38 "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'

12. Mosaic law spelled this out (Ex 21, Lev 24, Deut 19) if you disfigured someone, and it was intentional, then the law limited the retribution to be the same as the offence – no more.

39 But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.

13. This is so very unlike what the world would consider.

- a. Slap someone – they slap you back! (*This does not mean that if someone comes at you with a baseball bat, stand there! Run Forest run!*)**

14. In the early 1900's Ghandi used this principle to gain independence for the continent of India

- a. Even though he was not a Christian, he read this verse and followed it**

40 If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also.

15. This does not mean that if you have a disagreement, that the disagreement cannot be settled in a fair manner...

1 Cor 6:1-7

Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? ...5 I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one, who will be able to judge between his brethren? 6 But brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers!

7 Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather let yourselves be cheated?

- a. Jesus is telling us if someone comes at us – don't jump into the legal fray and try to hurt them back... listen to Paul...**

Rom 12:17-21

17 Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. 18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. 19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. 20 Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

16.IOW – take the high road:

- a. **FACT: The person that resorts to violence, is quick to sue, that is the weaker person.**
- b. **Aggression is born of weakness. It is the weak person who can only lash out –**
- c. **They are trying to protect themselves – or their wealth – or their ego.**
- d. **The strong person can love and suffer. But from where does out strength originate?**

Ps 18:32-34

*32 It is God who arms me with strength,
And makes my way perfect.*

*33 He makes my feet like the feet of deer,
And sets me on my high places.*

*34 He teaches my hands to make war,
So that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.*

- e. **So in reality – it is the spiritual person who has been armed with strength by the Lord.**

17.The aggressor may win the fight, or the court case,...

- a. **But the Christian who follows Jesus will sleep better**
- b. **Jesus taught:**

Matt 16:26 *For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?*

41 And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.

18.In Jesus time, under Roman rule, a Roman soldier could walk up to you, tap you with his spear, and you were required to carry his pack for one mile – but only one mile.

- a. **Remember being a light? If you made the conscious choice to carry the pack 2 miles, what kind of affect would that have on the soldier?**
- b. **This is taking an attempt to manipulate you, and turning it into a free-will act of love!**

42 Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away. 42 Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.

19.OK I might carry a pack for someone, but GIVE? Yes – GIVE. Be generous.

1 John 3:17 *But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?*

- a. Notice the connection: **“If the love of God abides in you, then you will help those in need”**

20. The only limit to this is the limit of love – if you are addicted to drugs and you ask for money – I can't give it because I love you.

- a. I would buy you lunch – or food.

21. It's not a “I should do this because I am a Christian”

- a. It's the life of Christ that resides in us coming out in action towards those around us.

Love Your Enemies

43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,

22. Think of the person you “dislike the most” – maybe in your past, maybe today.

- a. And now I want you to say a quick prayer for that person.
- b. “But wait, I don't want to bless them – I want to (bleep) them!”

23. I know – but here is the thing – if you will begin to pray for the person(s) that bug you the most, two things will happen – THEY change, and YOU change.

They Change

24. When you repay evil with good – cursings with blessings – hatred with love – I guarantee it will change the dynamic of the relationship.

- a. At the very least, they will eventually leave you alone. It's just too weird to be mean to someone who says “I love you, and I am praying for you”
- b. At best, God will begin to use it as a testimony for His love.

You Change

25. As you pray for that person, God changes your heart towards them.

- a. Instead of seeing an evil person, God begins to help you see them with His eyes – a person who needs to be touched by God.

26. What does it matter? It matters because there is a larger purpose..

Be Perfect!

45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? 48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

27. My kids are sometimes under the microscope, just because they are pastor's kids.

- a. **One the one hand, I don't agree that they should be held under the microscope for any flaw – who could live under that? They're kids, they are gonna make mistakes (just like we all do)**
- b. **But on the other hand, I do tell them that because of who I am, they have to be respectful of our family reputation and the work of the Lord that we are involved in. That's just the way it is.**
- c. **Further, I believe all Christians should have that perspective...**
- d. **We are not just anybody – we are “sons of our Father in heaven!”**
- e. **We represent the Lord.**

28. So Jesus says: “be perfect”. Can we be perfect? Well, the word carries the meaning of “maturity, completeness”

- a. **But the fact is – we are in process – being “made perfect” -**

2 Cor 3:18

18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

29. And one day we will see Him – and we will be perfect “as He is!”

1 John 3:2

2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

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