

Sermon of the New Kingdom
“God Wants to Change you, Not Control You”
Sunday, October 3, 2021

Matthew 5:17

17 "Don't misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose.

- * The Law was about controlling behavior!
- * The work of Christ is about changing your heart!
- * Remember the words of the prophet:

Ezekiel 36:26

26 And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart.

- * Right after Jesus talks about removing your eye and hand if they cause you to stumble, He continues His explanation of the CHANGE IN OUR HEARTS!

Matthew 5:31-48

31 “You have heard the law that says, ‘A man can divorce his wife by merely giving her a written notice of divorce.’ 32 But I say that a man who divorces his wife, unless she has been unfaithful, causes her to commit adultery. And anyone who marries a divorced woman also commits adultery. 33 “You have also heard that our ancestors were told, ‘You must not break your vows; you must carry out the vows you make to the Lord.’ 34 But I say, do not make any vows! Do not say, ‘By heaven!’

because heaven is God's throne. 35 And do not say, 'By the earth!' because the earth is his footstool. And do not say, 'By Jerusalem!' for Jerusalem is the city of the great King. 36 Do not even say, 'By my head!' for you can't turn one hair white or black.

37 Just say a simple, 'Yes, I will,' or 'No, I won't.' Anything beyond this is from the evil one. 38 "You have heard the law that says the punishment must match the injury: 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' 39 But I say, do not resist an evil person! If someone slaps you on the right cheek, offer the other cheek also. 40 If you are sued in court and your shirt is taken from you, give your coat, too. 41 If a soldier demands that you carry his gear for a mile, carry it two miles. 42 Give to those who ask, and don't turn away from those who want to borrow. 43 "You have heard the law that says, 'Love your neighbor' and hate your enemy. 44 But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! 45 In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. 46 If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. 47 If you are kind only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that. 48 But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.

- I. The important point to know and remember throughout this part of the Sermon on the Mount is that Jesus is speaking of embracing the ways of this New Kingdom Life!
 - A. The Beatitudes show the new character of God that is in us all and part of this new kingdom way of living!
 - 1. Then He says as we live this we will be the "salt of the earth" and our lives will be "the light of the

world.”

2. He then explains how His coming “fulfilled the PURPOSE of the law”! Not to just control people but literally to change the very heart of Man!
3. His statement of emphasis was when He explains that His Kingdom requires a righteousness beyond the controlling life of the Pharisees!

B. Let’s notice how Jesus uses these statements to show the fulfilling of this New Life and standards of His Kingdom!

1. It’s not about murder, it’s about hate!
2. It’s not about adultery, it’s about lust!
3. It’s not about divorce, it’s about relationship!
4. It’s not about swearing an oath, it’s about doing what you say!
5. It’s not about getting even, it’s about forgiving!
6. It’s not about destroying your enemy, it’s about loving them!

C. It’s all about NOT ALLOWING anything in life to cause you to live BELOW God’s righteous standard of Christ!

1. Notice how Jesus explains that by doing all of this

you are actually “being like God” in all your ways!
Something we are told constantly to do!

Matthew 5:45

45 In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike.

2. God response to His creation in grace and mercy!
3. Even though we are constantly saying He is about to “JUDGE” every little thing!

II. Four times Jesus says, “You have heard the law says...”

A. I am sure this very statement is what caused the teachers of the Law to have heart burn!!

1. When they heard it they immediately thought Jesus was destroying the Law and teaching something NEW!
2. No, He was merely stating the very original purpose of the Law in the first place!
3. This is what Paul says about the Law!

Galatians 3:24

24 Let me put it another way. The law was our guardian until Christ came; it protected us until we could be made right with God through faith.

- B. So, it would seem that Jesus is saying is that life is not about all of these religious standards and behaviors we love to point out and accuse people of!
1. It is about us identifying with Him and receiving His righteousness!
 2. It's about a totally contrary way of life according to the world!
 3. Following Christ is not about "The Doctrine" of:
 - a) Divorce
 - b) Taking oaths
 - c) When is it okay to take a life
 - d) All many other "issues" Christians ask about
- C. Following Christ is about a completely different approach to life that starts with a radical change IN OUR HEARTS!