

Matthew chapter 5

Continuation of True righteousness in relation to the Word of God

Jesus's interpretation of Exodus 20:14; Deuteronomy 5:18.

Matthew 5:27 and 28

"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery. 28 "But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

- Lust: A strong desire driven especially by sexual arousal.
- The Rabbis in Jesus day looked at adultery as stealing another man's woman. It was an external act. Jesus however chose to look at it internally because it made the individual impure morally.
- Fantasized immorality is just as sinful to God as physical immorality.
- A man who gazes at a woman with the purpose of wanting her sexually has mentally committed adultery.
- If you deliberately use your eyes to awaken lust then you are condemned as an adulterer.

Matthew 5:29 "If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. Matthew 5:30 "And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

- Back in the day, your right eye or hand or foot was considered your best. Jesus was speaking from the Jewish point of view.
- The eye is considered as the part of the body that initially lures us to act immorally through thought or deed.

This is what is considered as a hyperbole statement. An extreme overstatement.

Proverbs 23:1 and 2 When you sit down to eat with a ruler, Consider carefully what is before you; and put a knife to your throat if you are a man given to appetite.

- The right hand was seen also as the instrument that was used to steal another's wife. Since Jesus was talking to His disciples (believers), hell was a metaphor for being in a very bad destiny. This was also hyperbole.
- There was a church father in the early days called Origen who took it literally and castrated himself.
- Jesus' point was that His disciples must deal radically with sin. We must avoid temptation at all costs.

- Our imagination is a gift from God. However, if we feed it dirt, we will get dirty things from it. Therefore it is very important to filter what we feed it in our pursuit of the righteousness of God. ***Read Philipians 4:8.***

God's will concerning divorce.

Matthew 5:31 "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.

- Not only is lust compared to adultery but so is divorce. This verse ties in with 29 and 30.
- According to Deuteronomy 24:1-4 a man in Israel divorced his wife simply by giving her a written statement indicating that he divorced her. It was a domestic matter, not something that went through the courts, and it was quite common.
- In most cases, a divorced woman would remarry, to another man, often for her own security. Jesus said that divorcing a woman virtually amounted to causing her to commit adultery since she would normally remarry.
- Likewise, any man who married a divorced woman committed adultery with her, because in God's eyes she was still married to her first husband. Jesus' explanation would have helped His hearers realize the ramifications of a decision that many of them viewed as insignificant, namely, divorcing one's wife.
- Jesus did not repeat nor focus on the exceptional case because He wanted to focus on the seriousness of a man divorcing his wife. Jewish women did not have the right to divorce their husbands.

God's will concerning oaths 5:33-37

Matthew 5:33

"Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'you shall not swear (take an oath) 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.

- Jesus gives another condensed version of (*Exodus 20:7, Exodus 20:7 "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain; Leviticus 19:12; Numbers 30:2; Deuteronomy 5:11; 6:3; 23:21-23*).
- **Verse 33.** God has always intended for simple truthfulness to exist in our speech and in lifelong marriages. But the rabbis had created their own types of oaths.
- They taught that swearing by God's name was binding, but swearing by heaven and earth was not binding. Swearing *toward* Jerusalem was binding, but swearing *by* Jerusalem was not. In some cases they even tried to deceive others by appealing to various authorities in their oaths.
- **Verse 34-36.** Jesus did not want His disciples involved in making oaths that were being used in the name of God for deceit.
- Jesus's point was that neither His disciples nor anyone was ever allowed to tell lies, no matter what the circumstances.
- He was also trying to show His disciples that every time someone makes an oath even if it's on his own head, it is still connected to God. Therefore, any oath made is directed to God, directly or indirectly.
- Some believe that some scriptures show that calling on God's name to be witness to the truth of ones words was an act of worship like in *Jeremiah 12:16 "And it shall be, if they will learn carefully the ways of My people, to swear by My name, 'As the LORD lives,' as they taught My people to swear by Baal, then they shall be established in the midst of My people.*
- Not only did God permit the use of oaths in the law but he commanded that they be used if there was necessity as seen in *Exodus 22:10 "If a man delivers to his neighbour a donkey, an ox, a sheep, or any animal to keep, and it dies, is hurt, or driven away, no one seeing it, 11 "then an oath of the LORD shall be between them both, that he has not put his hand into his neighbour's goods; and the owner of it shall accept that, and he shall not make it good.*
- But in verses 33 to 37 we see Jesus only disapproving of oaths made forbidden by the law. *James 5:12 But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your "Yes," be "Yes," and your "No," "No," lest you fall into judgment.*
- **Verse 37.** Jesus was simply saying that when it was time to say yes, say yes and vice versa. Simply tell the truth.

- Some very vigilant believers have taken Jesus' words literally and have refused to take an oath of any kind, even in court. However, Jesus' point was the importance of truthfulness.
- God Himself made oaths as seen in **Genesis 9:9-11 and Luke 1:73**. Jesus testified under oath (**26:63-64**), as did Paul (**Romans 1:9; 2 Corinthians 1:23; 1 Thessalonians 2:5, 10**).
- "What Jesus is saying is this—the truly good man will never need to take an oath; the truth of his words and the reality of his promises need no such guarantee. But the fact that oaths are still sometimes necessary is the proof that men are not good men and that this is not a good world.

Conclusion

- "So, then, this saying of Jesus leaves two obligations upon us. It leaves upon us the obligation to make ourselves such that men will so see our transparent goodness that they will never ask an oath from us;
- and it leaves upon us the obligation to seek to make this world such a world that falsehood and infidelity will be so eliminated from it that the necessity for oaths will be abolished."