

Matthew 5.21-26 - "Anger cannot win, it cannot even think clearly"

Announcements

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Foundations Class today!

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Please consider joining a Community to strengthen the not only your family, but the larger community.

Contact
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for info on where groups meet or to lead/host one.

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V.21-22 You have heard... Last week we looked at the fulfillment of the Law by Jesus, in Whom we have the redemption of our sins (Col. 1.14) and the righteousness (2 Cor. 5.21) that exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, which Jesus requires in order to enter/be part of the Kingdom of Heaven. He takes v.20 and expands on the underlying truth, wanting to show them (and us) that **the external act of sin has a root deep in the heart of man.**

What's the big deal about anger you ask? The outpouring of anger, especially within the church, is not only murder, but it has a far-reaching impact because it seeks to dissolve the very bonds of fellowship and community that represents His reconciling work on our behalf on the cross (Romans 5.9). Outside the church, we risk forgetting whom we were when He saved us (Matt. 5.3), and seek to take the place of God in judgment of others for their sins - but we must not *"be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good"* (Rom. 12.19-21). At its core anger does two things:

- 1) It seeks *self* above all else, and when we seek *only* self, we end up squarely at the source of the Fall - we are the definer of all things, our own god or idol.
- 2) It places the object of our anger on the sinner, not the sin.

Physical murder is punished at the court of man - with the weight and severity ultimately decided by man and punishment exacted on our temporary and passing away flesh. Anger - the root of murder - is punished ultimately before the throne of God Himself (Luke 12.5) and this price is paid for eternity (by someone - ourselves or Christ). This is why the heart is the focus of this and other passages in Matthew, like 15.15-20.

"When we react with anger we may deceive ourselves into thinking we are defending the truth and the right, when deep down we are more concerned with defending ourselves" -D.A. Carson

V.23 Therefore before presenting your offering... God desires devoted, purified and obedient hearts more than external offerings and signs (1 Sam. 15.22, 16.7, Titus 2.11-14). This means that we not only turn from anger, but also look to the root of why we are angry and, *"...reach the stage in which there shall be nothing wrong even in spirit between our brother and ourselves."* -Martyn Lloyd-Jones

V.24 First be reconciled to your brother... The concept of reconciliation is a difficult one, primarily because we are afraid of the loss of reputation before men or because we stubbornly refuse to admit our part in the broken relationship. We desperately seek to be vindicated. But if we have sinned against another brother or sister, we must make it right (Romans 12.17-18) so that our relationship before God is unbroken (Prov. 28.9; Is. 59.2; 1 Pt 3.12), *regardless of their reaction.*

If our concern is the Kingdom of Heaven, and we are about His work, then we have no rights or desires to hold dear, finding them wholly untrustworthy in regard to seeing Him glorified before and by all men (see Acts 7 - who would have picked that as a way to see the Gospel go forward??). And in living in an unreconciled life, we stand in the way of the fulfillment of righteousness in our own lives - for we were saved out of our deep wrong against Him (Eph 4.17-32). Yet here we stand, opposed to the pervasive work of the Holy Spirit into the corners of our life.