

09-07-14

Scripture: Matthew 5:21-26

Title: Jesus says...

# God looks at the heart

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## **Matthew 5:20**

God's concern is w/ the internal – not the external

People generally look at the outside

If the outside looks good – everything's OK...

## **1 Samuel 16:7**

Man looks at the outward...

God looks at the heart

The inside

The motives...

The inside reveals more

The inside is more important

God is more concerned w/ what we really are

...not what we look like or appear to be

The righteousness of the Pharisees was

External, ceremonial, ritualistic,

It was hypocritical legalism

The righteousness God demands is internal

Now, God is concerned w/ the external

But only as it comes from the inside  
The outgrowth of internal righteousness  
God evaluates the heart

Think through the Beatitudes again  
Poor in spirit, mourning, meek,  
Hungering and thirsting for righteousness,  
Merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers,  
Are these internal or external attitudes?  
Mostly internal I'd say...  
Elements of character  
The Scribes and Pharisees were purely external

God's standard is higher than ours  
What they thought was righteous is unacceptable  
They had so changed things from God's original  
intention that Jesus had to get back to the  
original

They would have said they followed God's Law  
That wasn't the case  
They had so changed and altered it  
Mixed it up with their own ideas and traditions  
Jesus had to redefine it all over again  
Jesus has already told them – He's not changing  
anything – not even the smallest part will pass  
away

Conformity to God's law is a matter of the heart  
Not simply a matter of the outside

How easily we can justify ourselves...

Everyone else is doing it...I'm not as bad as...

That's how I am...

We've always done it that way...

**Luke 16:15** *"You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God."*

God is not looking for externals

He is looking for changed hearts

The Law isn't just negative – preventing us from doing this and that

It is also positive – it is to lead us to right attitudes

We aren't justified by not doing certain things

We are justified by thinking certain ways

Scribes/Pharisees were concerned w/ their actions...

God is more concerned w/ what we do on the inside

Are we hungering/thirsting for righteousness?

Are we being merciful?

Are we mourning over sin?

Are we pure in heart?

Are we poor in spirit?

This is what God is concerned w/

This is spiritual character  
This is positive not just negative

### **Hebrews 4:12-16**

God sees the heart, knows our heart  
Yet – Jesus understands  
    He knows if we are rotten or not  
    He is ready to show mercy and grace

The standard is so high we cannot reach it  
Jesus met the standard and imputes, gives, us His  
righteousness

As long as we live our lives justifying ourselves by  
outward appearance – we cannot reach out for God's  
gift and accept His gift of righteousness

Jesus is going to define God's Law as it was intended  
    The rest of the Sermon on the Mount, the rest of  
    chapter 5 through 7 will deal with this

In the midst of all their traditions they had lost God's  
law – He's not getting rid of the law, rather it's being  
put back in its proper place – the center

## **You've heard – I say**

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Look at these sets of verses...

**Matthew 5:21-22**

*21 "You have heard that the ancients were told, ... 22*

*"But I say to you*

**Matthew 5:27-28**

*27 "You have heard that it was said, ... 28 but I say to you*

**Matthew 5:31-32**

*31 "It was said, ... 32 but I say to you*

**Matthew 5:33-34**

*33 "Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, ... 34 "But I say to you,*

**Matthew 5:38-39**

*38 "You have heard that it was said, ... 39 "But I say to you*

**Matthew 5:43-44**

*43 "You have heard that it was said, ... "But I say to you,*

Do you see the pattern...

You have heard this...

But this is what I say...

Your religion teaches you this

But this is what I say

This isn't God's Law, the Law of Moses – this is what your traditions have said

This standard is too low

God looks at the heart

You say don't murder

God says don't get angry

Hate (anger) in the heart = murder  
Jesus is getting rid of the traditions that the Jews had  
added on to the Law – He is getting back to the core,  
the heart – the internal

We are children of the kingdom

The standard is raised not lowered

The standards are still there

God hasn't changed

God examines the heart to see the attitudes

You have heard that it was said, the ancients said...

This is not what the OT said, this is not what the Law  
and the Prophets said – *they* said...

Jesus is not saying this is what the Law told them to do

This is what other people said, about the law

This is not contrasting the Old and the New

Testaments – rather what the rabbis have said about  
the OT, the Law

The traditions of the rabbis say...

*...but I say to you*

Think about what that statement says

This is what the traditions of old say

But I am telling you this...

Jesus spoke with authority

Jump to the end of the Sermon on the Mount (quickly)

## **Matthew 7:28-29**

The prophets said – thus saith the Lord...

The rabbis said – there is a teaching that says...

Jesus says – this is what I say

No ordinary person could do this

No ordinary person could claim this

Either he's crazy or He is God

He is speaking w/ the authority of God

# Murder

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## **Matthew 5:21-26**

Talked about since **Genesis 4** – Cain and Abel

**Exodus 20:14** – thou shalt not kill (murder)

## **Genesis 9:6**

*6 "Whoever sheds man's blood,*

*By man his blood shall be shed,*

*For in the image of God*

*He made man.*

Taking a human life is assaulting God's image

This is referring to murder

Not referring to capital punishment, or killing  
under God's allowance or judgment

Times in Israel's history when killing was  
allowed – this is not murder

Doesn't refer to self-defense or accidental death

This is talking about murder, death that is planned,  
plotted to some degree

**John 8:44**

Murder is authored by satan

*In a classic Twilight one episode from 1960, an American on a walking trip through central Europe gets caught in a raging storm. Staggering through the blinding rain, he chances upon an imposing medieval castle. It is a hermitage for a brotherhood of monks. The reclusive monks reluctantly take him in.*

*Later that night, the American discovers a cell with a man locked inside. An ancient wooden staff bolts the door. The prisoner claims he's being held captive by the "insane" head monk, Brother Jerome. He pleads for the American to release him.*

*The prisoner's kindly face and gentle voice win him over. The American confronts Brother Jerome, who declares that the prisoner is actually none other than satan, the father of lies, held captive by the staff of truth, the one barrier he cannot pass.*

*This incredible claim convinces the American that Jerome is indeed mad. As soon as he gets the chance, he releases the prisoner – who immediately transforms into a hideous, horned demon and vanishes in a puff of smoke.*

*The stunned American is horrified at the realization of what he has done. Jerome responds sympathetically, "I'm sorry for you, my son. All your life you will*



*remember this night and whom you have turned loose upon the world.”*

*I didn't believe you, the American replies. I saw him and didn't recognize him – to which Jerome solemnly observes – that is man's weakness...and satan's strength.*

### **Matthew 15:19**

Murder happens b/c of a fallen human heart

### **Proverbs 6:16-17b**

*6 There are six things which the Lord hates,  
Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him:  
...And hands that shed innocent blood,  
God hates murder*

- *21 "You have heard that the ancients were told,  
'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER' and  
'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the  
court.'*

Right here the Scribes and Pharisees would agree w/  
Jesus – and they hadn't killed anyone

Therefore – they were OK – they were righteous  
They would never murder anyone

Unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Scribes  
and Pharisees...

They had convinced themselves they were  
righteous

They'd never killed anyone – therefore they're  
holy

Their religious system said only in killing is there  
judgment

## Anger = Murder

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### **Matthew 5:22**

But, Jesus says...

The rabbinic teaching is right here

However, it doesn't go far enough

They only had a partial interpretation

Falsely justifying themselves

If they killed someone they would be guilty before  
what? Before the court, the law, the human court

What about God?

What about God's holy character?

There was nothing about God, nothing about the heart  
– just stay out of court

They didn't read the rest of the OT

God desires truth in our innermost being

But, Jesus says...

If you're angry w/ your brother you are in  
danger of judgment

This isn't a matter of murder alone  
It is also a matter of anger, of hatred

Oops, they aren't righteous after all  
They're self-righteousness doesn't hold up

We would never murder anyone  
Do we get angry, do we mock them,  
Do we curse them, feel bitter towards them

B/c God looks at the heart – these things are the same  
as murder

Jesus gives us the real definition of a murderer  
Someone who is angry or hates

You may hate more than a murderer hates  
Just don't have to opportunity to kill  
You may not hate them, but you sure are mad at them  
What does God say? What does Jesus say?  
You are a murderer

### **1 John 3:15**

*15 Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer;*

Jesus takes away any cause for self-righteousness here  
– who of us can say we have never been angry or hated  
another?

Will pick up here next week...

### ***Conclusion***

What have we looked at today?

1 – God looks at our hearts

He is more concerned about inside than outside

He knows our hearts

He knows our real motives

That alone should make us run to the Lord Jesus

He knows our thoughts and He understands our weaknesses – we need His forgiveness, we need His righteousness

2 – Consider Jesus authority in what He says – He is God, what He says is truth

3 – Anger is the same as murder

This shows us again our need for God's forgiveness

Our need for His help

Just b/c we haven't murdered anyone

We have no reason to be proud, think ourselves better – God knows our thoughts

### ***Benediction:***

**1 John 3:15a-16** *15 Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; ...16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

Sermon Notes

09-07-14

Jesus says...

God looks at the h\_\_\_\_\_

You've h\_\_\_\_\_ – I s\_\_\_\_\_

M\_\_\_\_\_

A\_\_\_\_\_ = M\_\_\_\_\_