**Week of July 14, 2019**

**Matthew 5:21-32**

21 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: 22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. 23 Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; 24 Leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. 25 Agree\* with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. 26 Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing. 27 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: 28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. 29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. 30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. 31 It hath been said\*, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: 32 But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

**Understanding the Scriptures**

In today’s lesson is a continued extension of Jesus’ Sermon the Mount in which Jesus emphasized matters of the heart, challenging His Listeners to consider all they can do to please God – inwardly and outwardly. Jesus began by addressing the effects of human anger, which typically involves a desire to hurt the other person with cruel words and uncontrolled outbursts. Jesus is not talking about righteous anger a God displays in his wrath. The type of anger Jesus referred to is malicious, prideful, vengeful, and full of hate. Jesus was so serious about this issue of anger that He made anger an equivalent to murder.

In verses 27-30, Jesus also taught that Christians must guard their hearts from anything sexually impure. The phrase “Looks at a woman lustfully” refers to a look that makes someone the object of another’s strong, impure sexual desire. Jesus used the “eye” as illustration that the eye can be a tool of entrapping one’s heart into sin. Knowing how destructive and far-reaching the impact of sin can be, we should deal with sin a quickly and drastically as necessary. Deal with every impure, ungodly thought early, before it goes too far, or intensifies into a sin that is unmanageable.

On the issue of divorce, Jesus looked at the Old Testament teaching and recalled God’s original purpose when He instituted marriage. When God instituted marriage, He intended for couples to remain married, but because of the divorce issue, God allowed Moses to institute divorce laws.

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