

“JESUS’ KINGDOM MANIFESTO”

BIG IDEA . . . Part 4: Will the Real Murderer Please Stand Up? (5:21-26)

INTRO: We are studying “Jesus’ Kingdom Manifesto” in the SOM (Matt. 5-7). It’s a call from the King to live differently, esp. from the inside out and not only externally, like the Scribes & Pharisees. Jesus is after our heart (thoughts) righteousness first and foremost — actions to follow (else hypocrisy). It’s the attitude (heart, thoughts) behind the act that comes first. Heart is our mind . . .

Matt. 5:21-48 Jesus’ Manifesto on True Righteousness vs. false righteousness based on human effort. According to Jesus true righteousness is never earned but imparted to us by God when we believe in Christ. We receive by faith Christ’s righteousness and when God looks at us He sees us covered in Christ’s perfect righteousness (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Cor. 1:30). Always a gift of grace (Eph. 2:8-9). In vv. 21-48 Jesus explains that true righteousness must be daily lived and practiced, beginning in our heart. God’s way of righteousness “exceeds” that of the Scribes & Pharisees (only concerned with conduct).

To illustrate Jesus addresses six common life issues . . . behind every evil act (murder) is an evil heart (anger) – both will be judged. READ Matt. 5:21-26 . . . Pharisees limited the sin of murder to actual act and limited judgment to earthly court (Sanhedrin).

Ever been really angry at someone? All have. Anger is real struggle for many, even believers (LWF – spouse . . . anger). Ever so angry you thought of killing? Caught yourself thinking, “I can’t. It’s a sin!” Great catch, but Jesus presses the issue to the attitude (anger) behind the act (murder), calling both worthy of judgment. Examine three (3) sides of anger in passage (by the way Scripture has much to say regarding the problem of anger):

I. ANGER CAN BE WRONGFUL (vv. 21-22)

- A. Both murder and anger are evil. Just as murder is a *physical* violation, anger is an *emotional* one. Obviously, they are not the same, but both are worthy of judgment. The Scribes & Pharisees said murder is a sin, (breaking 6th TC) but not anger. (Deut. 5:17; Ex. 20:13). Anger doesn’t just lead to the sin of murder. It IS murder! He gives 3 examples . . .
- B. There is a righteous anger (v. 22 “angry . . . without cause . . .”). Jesus displayed holy anger in cleansing Temple (Jn. 2:13-17; Eph 4:26 . . . “don’t sin”). Aristotle . . . Also, don’t “insult” (slander “Raca” –

brainless idiot) Neither curse another (“fool”-worthless person). Words reveal heart! Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Jn. 3:15

II. ANGER SHOULD BE RECONCILED (vv. 23-24)

- A. Reconciliation with others precedes worship of God (adoration). Goes beyond other believers. If aware there is an issue, you go and try to fix it ASAP. Doing this would heal so much in life (PRIDE!). It’s not always easy – never is to live for God. Note, Jesus says nothing about who is right/wrong. We’re all wrong – all sinners in need of grace. I repeat, Jesus commands reconciliation before Adoration
- B. Worship was a major issue with the Scribe and Pharisees. Their whole life was built around it — alms, sacrifice, etc. Isa. 1:11-17; Jer. 7:9-11! God says, “Go away until you make it right with the other person!”

III. ANGER HAS CONSEQUENCES (vv. 25-26)

- A. Always better and wiser to reconcile than to be judged (by human court or by God). So true practically and spiritually — Anger exacts a high price: slander, deceit, insults, name-calling, bitterness, resentment, financial, relational, . . . spiritual.

ILL: Conflicts at home, work, team etc. Settle or end up in divorce court, boss, coach, etc. to resolve. The longer we wait the worse it will likely become. Act now – urgency.

- B. Anger, like murder, is worthy of judgment. God takes our anger seriously, and so must we. We should deal with our anger before God does. The Pharisees believed as long as they didn’t kill or murder someone, they were good.

IV. ANGER MUST BE MANAGED OR ELSE

- A. Honestly face it and admit it – This is not easy, but living for Jesus isn’t.
- B. Confess it to God (and others)
- C. Go and reconcile, NOW!

FREE TRANSLATION vv. 21-26 . . .

CONC: So, who is a murderer? Ever been: angry? Called someone a name? Cursed someone? Worship with anger in your heart? Who deserves judgment? You do, and I do – we’re all guilty. Please stand with me. Remember, the title of today’s teaching? “Will the real murderer please stand up?” We JUST did. We are! What can we do? That’s the very question Jesus wanted them (wants us) to ask. God seeks heart-righteousness, not self-righteousness. The SOM is harder to live by than the T.C. Intended to drive us to His grace and mercy for forgiveness and for the empowering by His Spirit.