

160302w Living Righteous: Life Beyond Anger

Introduction:

- “Sermon on the Mount!” Was a game the boys played for a while. You heard those word any-time the principle was being violated.
- In the sermon on the mount Jesus 6 times uses the phrase: “You have heard...but I say.” Each time he introduces a new topic with the same theme: This is what the ‘law’ says but here is the depth of applications that applies. So each time he introduces us to a new topic we have to look at that topic but to also understand that overall principal that He is driving home is accuracy in Kingdom living when one’s obedience and heart align. The whole law was being directed back to the heart.
- Interestingly, All six have to do with relationships with people.
- *““But I warn you—unless your righteousness is better than the righteousness of the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven!”* (Matthew 5:20, NLT) 1 Cor 6:9 The unrighteous will not insert the Kingdom of God.
- Mt 5:21-26 *You have heard do not murder... but I say, “Don’t be angry.”*

I. Progressing Anger Same Point

- A. Jesus stresses the seriousness of harboring a heart of anger. “This paradox whereby apparently harmless words are put on a par with murder shows how very serious sins of the tongue are in God’s eyes, and it carries a warning against ill feelings that may seem innocuous but poison relationships.” Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1985). *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (p. 984). Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans.
- B. If you are angry...you are subject to judgment.
 1. It is not enough to just talk about murdering people. The solution must go deeper than just stopping the murder it must deal with the heart that becomes the breeding ground for murder.
 2. Murder begins as an attitude in the heart. From Sunday: “Tantrum terrorist, texting terrorist etc.”
 - a) Jesus is affirming murder is wrong but that there is a deeper underlying issue in the heart. The old righteousness said, “we keep the rules” the new righteousness says, “We keep the new heart”. We see his teaching come out also in Mt 15...
 - b) *““Anything you eat passes through the stomach and then goes into the sewer. But the words you speak come from the heart—that’s what defiles you. For from the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, all sexual immorality, theft, lying, and slander. These are what defile you...”* (Matthew 15:17-20, NLT)
 - c) *“...The Lord doesn’t see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”* (1 Samuel 16:7, NLT)
 - d) Many people can control their outward actions enough to fool the people around them, but if you saw into their heart you might see something quite different.

160302w Living Righteous: Life Beyond Anger

3. In the word 'judgment' God is interested in restoration of relationship that is what this word judgment is about. In our passage has to do with relationship b/w God and man and man and man.
- C. If you call someone an 'idiot'...you can be brought to court.
 1. Ps 14:1 Only a fool says there is no God. To make that statement as a Hebrew could have you brought into court and tried.
 2. *"A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. What you say flows from what is in your heart."* (Luke 6:45, NLT) "Don't say, He is an idiot."
- D. If you curse someone...you are in danger of hell. Gehenna was the valley of Hinnom where Ahaz sacrificed children (he devalued life). Josiah the reformer, made a city dump whose fire never went out. That is why it became a picture of the worthless to be thrown out and burned. God's destroying power.
- E. Why are these considered sins? Because at the root they are the basic devaluation of the worth of a human being. The devaluing of something God has called precious. **Here is where the value of human life begins – in the heart** – and when human life is devalued in any way it is an affront to the God who created that life. This is what the Pharisees were missing and this is what Jesus wanted the people to "get."

II. Anger Ends Where Reconciliation Begins

- A. Jesus presents the severity of letting anger fester in the heart. And then he shifts his teaching in vs 23 and following to restoration of relationship.
- B. First he talks about, if you come to worship and are about to lay your sacrifice on the altar and remember that someone has something against you. Set it in front of the altar and go attempt to repair this relationship. Why in front of the altar and not on? Stop your worship!
 1. Why is this so important in the teaching of Jesus? Because a right relationship with God can never be separated from right relationships with other people. They are inextricably linked. Love God and love each other.
 2. A bad relationship with another person can interfere with your relationship with God.
 3. *'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.'* *Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good"* Ro 12:19-21. We are not to be passive about ruined relationships. We are to be intentionally proactive – even if we believe it will do not good.
- C. Second he talks about, if you are on your way to court with your adversary settle your differences quickly.

III. Justified Anger

- A. There is a righteous anger where you hate sin. Ie. Jesus at the temple with money changers.

160302w Living Righteous: Life Beyond Anger

- B. The Bible says, *"In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold"* (Eph 4:26-27).
1. Anger which is allowed to linger allows the devil to get a foothold in your life. That foothold is what leads to bad choice for many people.
 2. The thought behind the word 'sin' in this passage is retribution. Leave the vengeance to God.
 3. And when you give him control by permitting anger in your life you will be in a prison that you may never get out of. Learning to forgive can be the most freeing thing that will ever happen to you. You know you have forgiven when you can remember with peace.

Conclusion:

- **ILLUSTRATION:** One defining moment in John Grisham's spiritual journey came several years after graduating from Mississippi State University, when one of his classmates in law school told John he was terminally ill. Grisham asked him: "What do you do when you realize you are about to die?" The friend replied, "It's real simple. You get things right with God, and you spend as much time with those you love as you can. Then you settle up with everybody else."