

Sermon on the Mount – Week 5

“Surpassing Righteousness, Part 2”

Matthew 5:31-48

In the remainder of Matthew 5, Jesus continues with 4 more contrasts between the traditional righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees and the surpassing righteousness of kingdom citizens. He is calling us to “mind the gap” between what we think we know about righteousness and how we actually live our lives. Righteousness is not a line we must not cross, but a direction we must radically pursue.

I. The righteous-of-heart flee _____ and pursue _____ . (vv. 31, 32)

- a. Deuteronomy 24:1-4 and the current controversy

- b. Matthew 19:3-10

- c. Jesus took marriage so seriously that, with only one exception, he called remarriage after divorce _____.

II. The righteous-of-heart flee _____ and pursue _____ . (vv. 33-37)

- a. “vow” – an oath in which the speaker calls upon God to witness his vow and punish him if he breaks it

- b. Vows in Christ’s day (Matthew 23:16-22)

III. The righteous-of-heart flee personal _____ and pursue sacrificial _____ . (vv. 38-42)

- a. The law of retaliation (Ex. 21:24, Lev. 24:20)

- b. 4 illustrations of what Jesus means by “do not resist an evil person”

- i. Personal insult
- ii. Violation of rights
- iii. Forced labor
- iv. Request for a loan
- v. Note that each illustration is one of _____, not illegal activity for which retaliation by civil/government authorities would be appropriate (Romans 13:1-7)

c. Romans 12:14, 17-21

IV. The righteous-of-heart flee _____ and pursue _____. (vv. 43-48)

- a. Definition of “neighbor”
 - i. To the Jews neighbor = _____
 - ii. The Jesus neighbor = any human being you are in the position to help and therefore includes your _____ (see Luke 10)

b. Why love?

- i. To be like _____
- ii. To be unlike the _____

c. Alfred Plummer: “To return evil for good is devilish, to return good for good is human, to return good for evil is divine.”

Time to MARINATE...

- 1) What is the connection between the Beatitudes and the success of Christian marriages? If needed, skim back through Matthew 5:3-10.
- 2) How are you tempted to lie, fudge the truth, or resort to exaggeration?
- 3) Does Jesus’ command to “resist an evil person” hit home for you personally in any way? Is there someone you are tempted to get back at? How has this passage spoken into that situation?
- 4) Is biblical love a choice or a feeling? Defend your answer using truths from Matthew 5 and other Scripture that comes to mind.
- 5) What do you learn about God from these 6 contrasts presented in Matthew 5?