

# Sermon on the Mount Part IX

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Date: 05 May 2013

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ] We're dealing with Christ and the law of murder. I would like you to please turn to the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 5, and we'll be looking at verses 21 through 26.
- You have heard that the ancients were told, You shall not commit murder, and whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.
- But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court.
- And whoever says to his brother, You good for nothing, shall be guilty before the supreme court. And whoever says, You fool, shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell.
- Therefore, if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go.
- [ 1 : 3 8 ] First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.
- Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way, so that your opponent may not hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you be thrown into prison.
- Truly I say to you, you will not come out of there until you have paid up the last cent.
- Well, there is a lot in that passage that was just read that is very understandable and makes perfectly good sense.
- There are other things in this passage that don't make any sense at all, that just do not explain what this is really all about. And needless to say, there is a huge divide that separates our present culture from the biblical culture in the Mideast in which this was given about 2,000 years ago.
- [ 3 : 0 0 ] So, we are in the process of engaging the Sermon on the Mount, these three chapters, and we will be picking up speed later on, trust me, but right now it's a little slow going because so much of this is introducing not only doctrinal but cultural differences as well.
- So, we have barely engaged the earthly life of Christ and already we find him to be very controversial.
- No sooner had he been baptized by John and introduced publicly to the nation of Israel until serious conflicts began to arise with the establishment.
- The controversy was predictable. The clash between Christ and the culture to which he came had to be as it was.
- What I'm giving you now is just a series of propositions, but I want you to get these things fixed firmly in your mind, if you will, because everything that comes after is going to be built on these propositions.
- [ 4 : 1 3 ] So, I trust you will be with me as we just share these things. And much as I detest the idea, I want to read them because I'm afraid if I don't, I will omit something of importance.
- So, the clash between Christ and the culture to which he came had to be as it was. Why was this?

It was because the culture was so wrong and Christ was so right. Hence, that's why I say the clash was inevitable.

Christ was the personification of righteousness. The culture was a compilation of corruption and chaos.

Nothing has changed to the present. Christ is here today in the person of his body, which is the church.

[ 5 : 16 ] The Western culture, though 2,000 years later and continents removed geographically, is an extended compilation of corruption and chaos, morally and spiritually.

Let me repeat that. The Western culture, I'm talking about Europe and North America, including Canada as well as the United States and South America. That is the Western culture and even though it is 2,000 years later from the culture that Christ addressed and it is continents removed geographically, this Western culture is nothing more than an extended compilation of corruption and chaos, morally and spiritually.

In ancient Israel, to which Christ came, the moral rot was in the religious slash political establishment consisting of the Jewish priesthood, which filtered down to the lower classes as well as was illustrated in Christ cleansing the temple when he excoriated the merchants who corrupted his father's house by ripping off the innocents who came there from afar.

The principle is that that moral rot and decay, the lying and deceiving and duping of the masses, always begins at the top, at the leadership, and it filters down to further corrupt the populace.

It was so in ancient Israel with the Jews, it was so in ancient Rome with the pagans and the Caesars and the Senate, and it is so today with our government comprised of the executive, the legislative, and the judicial branches.

[ 7 : 23 ] None have escaped. In whatever government, in whatever part of the world, at whatever time in human history, the scene is always the same.

Why is it this way? It is this way because it has to be this way. Do you not know that this corruption is systemic to humanity?

Do you not know that mankind from presidents to peons is merely behaving in accordance with how his fallenness has programmed him to be?

What then could you possibly expect when a set of God-honoring, God-serving morals and standards arrive on the scene?

What do you expect? Conflict, clashes, and controversy. That's the only thing you will ever get because it is righteousness confronting unrighteousness.

[ 8 : 42 ] And unrighteousness never takes a punch lying down. In our present day, the hot-button items of controversy are abortion on demand, homosexuality, same-sex marriage, absolutism versus moral relativity, political correctness versus reality, and religious pluralism versus the very truth of God as embodied in the person of his son.

And there, of course, are numerous other areas of controversy that are present but that are not as front and center as those I've mentioned. And I ask you, how many times a day do you hear about these things in one fashion or another?

Ad nauseum, ad infinitum. It just goes on and on and on. You can't turn on and get five minutes worth of news without something about these issues. And the nation is deeply divided over them.

We are polarized in a way that we have not been polarized perhaps since the Civil War. Not even the polarization that existed over Vietnam, which was significant, is as great or as pervasive as the polarization that exists now regarding these issues.

In our Lord's Day, when He arrived on the scene, the hot-button issues became, number one, the law of murder.

[ 10 : 21 ] That's the first one we'll be looking at in the Sermon on the Mount. Number two, the law of adultery. Three, the law of divorce. Four, the law of oaths.

Five, the law of non-retaliation. And lastly, the law of love. These are all areas that Christ is going to confront the culture about. When He arrived here, the culture already had a position regarding these things.

And when He came on the scene, He confronted their positions head-on and it upset everything. Eventually, it cost Him His life. Because those He took on was the religious political establishment.

And you must understand that even though Israel was under the heel of Rome, and Rome was the real political military power in occupied Israel, nonetheless, the religious Sanhedrin, the scribes and Pharisees, the high priests, the priestly craft, and all the rest of it, still had a great deal of influence with the people.

And the Romans were wise enough to give the Jews free reign regarding their religious principles, their worship, etc. etc. So, under Judaism, and as the law was established under Moses, etc., there was no such thing as church and state.

[ 11 : 44 ] The church was the state, the state was the church. Now, you're just talking about actual Israel. Because they did not make a difference between their politics and their religion.

They were intertwined in such a way that they were inseparable. Much the same is true today of Islam in countries where Islam is the dominant force and where Islamic governments are in power.

You have no separation between the religion of Islam and the political entities of what we would call the secular part. It's all intertwined.

Islam is the law, religiously and politically, and every other way where it dominates. And it was much the same in Israel when our Lord was there. These issues that we mention, the six that Christ will combat, murder, adultery, divorce, oaths, non-retaliation and love, these are all treated individually by Christ in the Sermon on the Mount and they were all the core issues in the day of our Lord and in regard to the law of Moses.

In each of these issues, Christ emphasizes that the violation of these laws all stems from the condition of men's hearts.

[ 13 : 07 ] Let me repeat that because that is really, really important. In each of these six issues, Christ emphasizes that the violation of these laws all stem from the condition of men's hearts.

they violate these laws outwardly because they are corrupt inwardly. There's nothing else they can do.

The fallenness of their nature programs them to violate these laws. man does not suffer from an outward behavior problem as much as from an inner attitude problem.

He is wrong on the inside and that telescopes to his outside. Man does wrong because he is wrong.

This is what so many in positions of power and influence never seem to understand beginning with Washington, D.C.

[ 14 : 23 ] They didn't in Christ's day and they do not today. He does wrong outwardly because he is wrong inwardly.

Man attempts to make laws to govern himself. But he cannot construct a law that makes man want to obey.

Our very own laws and their inadequacy ought to convince us that it's not working. We today have laws that in many ways are predicated upon the biblical law of Moses set forth in the Old Testament.

It's obvious and many of these are engraved in granite and marble all over government facilities in Washington. Law does not set forth man's righteousness.

It sets forth man's unrighteousness. Now this is very basic and so simple it is almost ho-hum stuff.

[ 15 : 33 ] but it's amazing how lost it is on so many people. Law does not set forth man's righteousness.

It sets forth man's unrighteousness. We have to have laws against thievery.

Have you ever contemplated how much more convenient life would be if you didn't have to lock up anything?

I would never have to worry again about misplacing my keys to whatever. Think of it. You can just walk out.

You don't unlock your car. You just open the door and get in. And you don't have a key to put in the ignition. You just push a little starter button and you're off and going. You can't do that.

[ 16 : 35 ] Why? Because somebody will steal your car. Next time you're in a bank take a look at the size of that vault. How thick that door is.

And when that thing closes it's wham! They put all your valuables and your safety deposit boxes behind that stuff because we all know people are basically honest, right?

Yeah, right. So we have to have laws not because we're all honest and decent and upstanding citizens, but we have to have laws to protect us from each other.

Isn't that amazing? And we're all supposed to be on the same side. We're all human beings and we're all in this thing together. And yet, well, you know, the law reveals what man really is and it is not pretty.

He is a law breaker. There's a key passage. Keep your place here in Matthew. Yeah, we'll get there eventually. But come back to Romans chapter eight. I want you to see a very, very important principle.

[ 17 : 48 ] And if you understand this, it will forever color and enhance your appreciation as to why people are the way they are. Romans chapter eight.

This is a wonderful passage. I'll begin reading with verse one. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. And what law was that? Well, of course, that was the law of Moses.

And God gave the law of Moses to reveal two things. Reveal his character in nature and reveal man's character in nature.

And indeed, it does that. And then Paul continues in verse three by saying, for what the law could not do. Notice that.

[ 18 : 50 ] Understand that. The law has limitations. There are things that the law can't do. Even though the law came directly from God, the law came with built-in deficiencies.

Not because God is deficient, but because those to whom the law would be given would be deficient. So, let's read.

Verse three. For what the law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh. Whose flesh? Yours.

Mine. Everybody else's. It's speaking of the whole human race. The reason the law has its limitations is because the law is provided reflecting the character and nature of God, reflecting the character and nature of man, but the law is given to govern human beings who have a volition.

That means they can say yes or no to something that is presented to them. They are willful beings. Nothing wrong with the law, but the law is given to people who are flawed.

[ 20 : 09 ] The law, Paul tells us when he writes to Timothy, I believe it is, for the law is just and holy and good. There is nothing wrong with the law. But when it comes to the people who are supposed to keep the law, there is something wrong with them.

And that is why there is a breakdown. What the law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did. How did he do it?

Sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and as an offering for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh.

This is about the substitutionary death of Christ. In order that the requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the spirit.

For those who are according to the flesh, set their minds, on the things of the flesh. The flesh here is humanity.

[ 21 : 17 ] It is limited to humanity. It means human nature. It means the way we are made and constructed and put together in our fallenness. The way that allows us to hurt one another, to lie to one another, to cheat, to kill, all the rest of it.

That's part and parcel of the flesh. flesh. It is the flesh that does these things. And the flesh is talking about your nature, but it is also coupled with our body of flesh, because it is our flesh that we use to do evil things with.

We make the members of our body, arms, legs, fingers, toes, eyes, we make them complicit in our crimes. We use our physical flesh and bone extensions of our body with our arms and legs, etc.

We use those to do evil things with, to do bad things with. So the flesh is both a metaphor for that and a reality for that. Those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the spirit the things of the spirit.

Now look at this. For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

[ 22 : 46 ] Because, and here's why, here's the rationale, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God. That is, in my fallen Adamic nature, in the nature with which I was born, in my fallenness, I resent God.

I resent his authority and I don't want to do what I know he wants me to do. I want to do what I want to do. That's the flesh. We're all like that.

If you think you're not like that, then you've got a double batch. One of them is deception. This is heavy stuff. But this is why the world is the way it is.

And if we don't understand it, we cannot minister to it. The mind set on the flesh is death. The mind set on the spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God, at enmity with God.

for it does not subject itself to the law of God. And you know why it doesn't? It can't.

[ 24 : 08 ] It can't. It's beyond it, above it. It can't do it. It's quite clear. It does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so.

We don't have the stuff that is needed to be responsive to the law of God. This is the natural human condition.

This is the way we all start out. No exceptions. This is why the world is like it is. This is why there are clashes and conflicts over these issues.

This is why because when the salt is sprinkled around or the light shines in darkness, look out. There's going to be fireworks.

Conflict is automatic. It's righteousness combating unrighteousness. It's light combating darkness. It is righteousness combating evil.

[ 25 : 17 ] It is a given. It has been here since Genesis 3. this that I am talking about now is so basic and so elemental and so simple and so obvious everywhere you look.

Nobody should be unconvinced of this. How can you live and function in a world and deny this reality? But we do.

We do. it does not subject itself to the law of God for it is not even able to do so.

That's because of our fallenness. So, human behavior about all of these things ought not to surprise us. It's predictable.

Abortion on demand? Why should you be amazed at that? Why should you be confounded by that? That's what we ought to expect.

[ 26 : 25 ] Homosexuality, same-sex marriage, we raise our eyebrows at that and we say, I'm shocked. I can't believe it. Believe it. Don't be shocked. It goes with the territory of humanity.

That's the way it is. We need to understand that. This is a world of darkness. And the light is a minority light.

And the salt is a minority salt. The odds are against us. The numbers are against us. But it's always been that way.

Why should we expect it to be any different? This is standard operating procedure. This is what our Lord confronted. The problem was the same.

The issues were a little different, but not much different. But the whole principle is the same. It hasn't changed at all. What we are talking about is what so many in positions of power and influence never seem to understand.

[ 27 : 37 ] They didn't understand it in Christ's day, and they do not today. Man is wrong outwardly, because he is wrong inwardly.

Man attempts to make laws to govern himself, but he cannot construct a law that makes man want to obey. We do not need better laws.

We need better hearts. Laws cannot change hearts. laws. The law God gave through Moses was designed to do two things principally.

It was designed to reveal the character and nature of God, and it was designed to reveal the character and nature of man.

Our laws today, whether you're talking about laws in the United States or France or Italy or Mexico or wherever.

[ 28 : 44 ] It's the same the world over because mankind is the same everywhere you go. They just speak different languages, have a little different color, and have a different culture. But the heart of all humanity is the same everywhere.

It is this flesh thing we're talking about. Our laws are designed to harness and control the nature of man.

And they do that, don't they? To a certain extent, they do that. That's what they're intended to do. And that's because we have come to the painful conclusion that we can't really trust each other all that much to do the right thing.

So we have to craft laws that require people to do the right thing. They do that because we have at least understood enough to know that if we don't impose laws on each other, our only recourse is anarchy.

Our laws inflict penalties upon man for violating those laws by fining him, or confining him, or even by executing him.

[ 30 : 18 ] But as well intended as man's laws are, they cannot change the character and nature of his being on the inside. This is a supernatural undertaking capable only by a supernatural activity, and this brings us to the spiritual solution found only in the gospel.

The condition of man's heart can only be overcome by a gracious loving God. It cannot be overcome by man passing a whole bevy of laws.

If laws could change the nature of the human heart, we would have been changed a long time ago. You realize how many laws we have on the book, some of which are so outdated and outmoded?

But, whereas the gospel is the only solution, man does not want the gospel. And do you know why he doesn't want the gospel?

Man will not come to the light, John 1, lest his evil deeds be exposed. We don't want that light shining upon our evil deeds.

[ 31 : 39 ] We reject the gospel, and we reject the light. We repudiate it and ridicule it, and he does so because it is his nature to do so. And the conflict goes on, and that's where we are now.

Jesus Christ presented the remedy. In Mark 3, I believe it is, our Lord was criticized for his disciples eating with unwashed hands, walking through the greenfields, plucked some grain off of a stalk, rubbed it like that so as to winnow it, and then blow the chaff away and eat the tender grains because they're not in that hardened, ripened state yet, and yet they didn't go through the rabbinical ritual of the hand washing almost like a surgeon preps for an operation, and they criticized Jesus for that, and they said, don't your disciples wash their hands before they eat?

They meant in that rabbinical concept. And our Lord set them straight, and he says, don't you understand that it isn't what goes into a man that defiles him.

What defiles him is what comes out, for out of the heart of man come evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, blasphemies, and on and on and on. The list is given there in Mark chapter 3.

That's the stuff that man is really made of. And the thing that consigns us to a godless eternity is not simply our outward behavior, but the inner heart that prompts that outward behavior.

[ 33 : 28 ] Christ presented the remedy, and they killed him for it. Now let's take a look at the law of murder. Matthew chapter 5 and verse 21. You have heard that the ancients were told, you shall not commit murder, and whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.

Well, in the first place, we've got a good translation here in the New American Standard where it does say commit murder. Some of the King James, and particularly in connection with the giving of the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20 and repeated in Deuteronomy 5, it says, thou shalt not kill, and yet the Hebrew makes a very obvious distinction between killing and murdering.

Man is not forbidden to kill. He is forbidden to commit murder, and there is a huge difference. So our Lord, and here in the New American Standard, it's translated correctly when he says, you have heard that the ancients were told, you shall not commit murder, and whoever commits murder shall be unliable to the court.

But I say unto you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court. Now, wait a minute, what does that mean?

Angry with his brother. And by the way, this is not limited to blood brothers. I know some of you live in a family where you don't have a brother. But this is also talking about your next door neighbor.

[ 35 : 11 ] And in the context here in which it is found, it is talking about any fellow Jew. It did not extend to the Gentiles, because the law was never given to the Gentiles.

The law was given to Israel. But in the context of that, and under the context of Judaism in general, every Jewish man's brother was every Jew, whoever he was and wherever he was.

He was also his neighbor. Maybe he lived in a town ten miles down the road, but he was still his neighbor and his brother. We consider neighbors the people who live in our immediate environs.

But that's not the way the Bible reads it. And this is saying whoever is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court. That means brought up on charges, accountable.

Now can you imagine trying to apply something like that in our culture? Wow. How could you do that? How could you go about that? And what is the court here that he is talking about?

[ 36 : 19 ] Is it the kind of court where we have downtown, we've got a common please court, and we've got a probate court, and we've got a juvenile court, and no, no, no, no, it's nothing like that.

Nothing like that. In this context, what he's talking about has to do with the town council, or the elders, or the leaders in a given community. And every town, however small or however large it was, had a sitting body of men who were respected and looked upon as the authority in that area.

Sometimes they are referred to as the elders of the city, and very frequently they convened at the gate. And you read in the Old Testament about the principal men and the community, the elders meeting at the gate, because every city had a wall around it.

They had a wall around it because of protection. And the wall, of course, had numerous gates. You could go through the gate this way, you could go over this way through that gate, or usually four gates leading in each whatever direction.

One of the gates was usually referred to as the main gate. Sometimes it was the largest gate. Sometimes it was more ornate than the other gates. That's where the elders met.

[ 37 : 37 ] They sat there at the gate. And when there were disputes or grievances, they would bring them to the elders. Sometimes they were called judges. There was even a book in the Old Testament called Judges because that was their principal responsibility.

Samuel was a judge. Jephthah was a judge. How many judges were there? Twenty-some judges. Othniel was a judge.

And Deborah was a woman judge. And whenever there was a major dispute of some kind and they couldn't settle it among themselves, they would go, both parties who were in contention, they would go to the judge or the elders at the gate and there they would spread out the whole affair and each one would present their case and the elders at the gate would convene and render a decision and that decision was final.

That's the way it was going to be. So that's part and parcel of what is involved here culture-wise that is so radically different from ours. So whoever is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court.

Well now, who doesn't get ticked at his brother once in a while? Whether you're living in the same house with him or whatever, we all know how easy it is to be offended by someone, be turned off, be insulted.



[ 38 : 59 ]    Somebody steals from us or lies against us, we automatically were angry. So what is this about? And whoever shall say to his brother, Raka, shall be guilty before the supreme court.

Ooh, that's a step up. What does this mean? The word Raka, not an English word at all, not a Greek word either, it's an Aramaic word, but it is transliterated from the Aramaic so that it is brought right over into the English and put into English letters just as it is in the Arabic without even attempting any kind of a translation.

It's a transliteration. Raka. Raka means I spit in your face. Not a nice thing to do. We would wonder, well, what in the world, where does that come from, and how is, what is it?

Well, the word Raka is related to spitting, and we will see, probably not in this session, but we will see in the Old Testament how spitting in the face of another person communicated something, probably akin to what it communicates to us today.

It was a very, very grievous offense. It has something to do with the matter, the fluid of an angry person propelled into the face of an adversary that represents the ultimate in contempt and disgust and hatred.

[ 40 : 41 ]    This is where this begins. It was the spitting in the face, and there are places today in the Mideast where this is still practiced. I mean today, in the 21st century.

It is a despicable thing. I'll give you some details about it. we'll look at some Old Testament incidents of the spitting in the face. It exercises a kind of special contempt that mere language or words cannot do.

Any kind of human body, fluid, essence, matter, projected upon another person is considered the ultimate in an offense.

intensified only by taking their life. Not too long ago, there were some unpleasant news items that we read and heard about regarding American GIs in Afghanistan who were charged with and took pictures of American soldiers urinating on the bodies of the dead enemies.

Do you have any idea what that communicates to the locals? Do you have any idea what kind of hatred that kind of thing would generate on the part of the locals toward Americans?

[ 42 : 13 ]    Americans? And in World War II, this was particularly epidemic among the Japanese. Interesting that it is still the East and the Orient.

And there were prisoners in prisoner of war camps that were subjected to defecation and urination by Japanese soldiers on American prisoners of war.

war. It's a very, very disgusting, hateful, vindictive thing that is virtually indescribable.

And so it is with the spitting in the face of another. And whoever shall say, you fool, shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell.

Now, wait a minute. Surely this can't be. Nobody's in danger of going to hell for calling somebody a fool. I mean, hell is going to really be populated, isn't it?

[ 43 : 11 ]    So what is involved here? Again, this is an area where we have to bridge the cultural gap if we're going to understand what is taking place here. Because we cannot impose our understanding on it.

It's not nice to call a person a fool, but it's not that big a deal. I mean, nobody's going to jail for calling somebody a fool. So what is this all about? that's the cultural gap that comes in.

Therefore, you are presenting your offering at the altar, and we don't do that either. That's in a Jewish context when they would go to the temple to present their offering to the Lord, and there you remember that your brother has something against you.

Now, that's really different, too. This would be a lot easier to read and a lot easier to understand if it says, and if you have something against your brother. But it doesn't say that.

It says, your brother has something against you. Well, if your brother has something against you, then he's the one that has to fix it, and he's the one that has to address it because he's the one that's got something against me.

[ 44 : 18 ] But that's not what the text says. It says, if your brother has something against you, you, go to him. Oh, wait a minute. Why should I go to him?

I'm not the one with the beef. He is. Moral of this story is this, and you're not going to like it, but here it is.

Whenever there is a conflict between two people, it is always your responsibility to take the initiative.

Yours. and how many of you are in conflict with someone, falling out, bad feelings, insults, offenses, etc., rift between you, maybe parents, maybe brethren, maybe neighbors, maybe employers, who knows what, who, maybe me, and you're waiting for them to come to you.

You're out of line. Don't wait. You go to them. Well, why should I go to them? I'm not the one who, you go to them.

[ 45 : 47 ] That's the principle. And it's a hard principle. It's really hard. It means you take the initiative. Well, I will when they do. No, no, no. You take the initiative.

Who wants to do that? So the rift goes on. The distance goes on. The hard feelings go on.

Never is resolved. Because you're waiting on them. And guess what they're waiting on? They're waiting on you. So you've got a standoff.

Life is too short to spend it at odds one with another. I want to share something with you that I promised.

And in a couple of minutes we've got left, this will set the stage for what is coming yet. This has to do with the law of murder. And I told you I was going to rely on the writing and the pen of Arnold Fruchtenbaum because I do not know of anybody who has a better handle on these issues than Arnold Fruchtenbaum.

[ 46 : 55 ] He was our guide in Israel for the six weeks that we spent there in 1990. And Arnold Fruchtenbaum was described by Hal Lindsay as probably the one individual who knows more about modern and ancient Israel than any other person alive.

And having spent six weeks with Arnold Fruchtenbaum and listening to many of his lectures, I'm convinced that is not an overstatement. the man knows his stuff. And in this, on the law of murder, he says, the first example is the commandment you shall not kill.

According to Phariseeism, one was not guilty of violating the righteousness of this commandment until one actually committed the act of murder.

But Jesus said that was the wrong interpretation of the standard of righteousness, which the law demanded. While one was not guilty of violating the letter of this commandment until one had committed the act of murder, one actually violated the righteousness of this commandment before then.

Before anyone commits the act of premeditated murder, premeditated for the younger crowd means that you think about it in your mind, and you plan it out, that you want to do it, and you're going to do it, and how you're going to do it.

[ 48 : 22 ] That means premeditated. You thought about it ahead of time. Before anyone commits the act of premeditated murder, he first develops an animosity toward the victim.

Once the animosity is there internally, the righteousness of this commandment of the Mosaic law has already been violated.

As soon as one calls someone else *rakah*, a Hebrew word meaning you empty head, or you fool, or I spit on you, there is animosity internally that can later lead to the external act of murder.

Now, this must be understood that it is in reference only premeditated murder. This would not come under the classification of what we would call a crime of passion, where someone flares up and tempers flare and somebody strikes another with a club or something and kills him.

That is not premeditated. That would be called manslaughter perhaps, but it is not something that you planned out or intended to happen in advance. That's still taking of a life, it's still unacceptable, but it wasn't a result of planning, conniving, scheming, hatred, building in the heart, so that you got to the place where you're willing to take this life and you do it deliberately.

[ 49 : 45 ] That's what he's talking about in this context, as opposed to a crime of passion or two people just disagreeing and getting into a fight and one of them kills the other. That's entirely different.

That's not what he is talking about here. While it is the external act of murder that violates the letter of the commandment, the righteousness of the commandment is already violated once the animosity is there internally.

The problem is what is growing on the inside before he acts out with it. That's where the problem lies. And Jesus said, you have heard that it has been said that there is no offense, no crime, no foul, unless you actually do it.

And our Lord said, no, that's wrong because it is out of inner hatred and animosity that the doing actually arises.

Where does the problem need to be stopped internally before it is acted out? Now, when you understand that, it will make the next law that Christ deals with a lot clearer.

[ 51 : 01 ] It's the law of adultery. Well, you haven't actually committed adultery unless you've gone to bed with her and had sex with her. Then it's adultery. No, no, no, no, no.

I say unto you, that's what has been said, but I say unto you, that whoever looks upon a woman to lust after her has committed adultery already.

Where? In his heart. What he's saying is, I would if I could. He already has internally, he just hasn't acted out on it.

You see, internally is where the spirit of the law operates. Externally, actually doing it, is where the letter of the law operates.

And the Jew was so caught up in the letter of the law that he ignored the spirit of the law. And that created a huge conflict.

[ 52 : 00 ] He put it in an entirely different light. And it is one principle of which applies to this day. So, we've taken a little bit of introductory material here again, and I trust it shed some light upon this.

There are six areas of difficulty where our Lord is going to confront the establishment and ultimately they will kill him for it. But, as you look at all six of these, they all have to do with the very essence of life and living, the way people get along.

And nothing has changed from that. So, we've got a lot of information in store for us. And I think this Sermon on the Mount is going to come to us with neon lights around it.

And perhaps we'll see it a lot more clearly than we ever have. I know I have. Thank you for your kind attention this morning. Would you bow with me in prayer? Father, there are things here that really need to be applied in our lives.

And even though these things are not written to us as recipients of the law of Moses, we still fall in the same place as they do with our flesh and with the corruption that is all part of our systemic being in Adam.

[ 53 : 25 ] God's and yet even though there is that vileness about us all, you loved us with an incredible love that you provided a basis whereby we don't have to be given over to this.

God's love that God's love that is the gospel of God's love that is the gospel of God's ever surfaced in this world that can truly change a human heart and replace hatred and animosity with love and compassion.

Nothing else can do that. We are so grateful for that gospel and for everyone here who has embraced it and for any who have not. we pray you will show them how deficient they really are and how rich and full they can be through trusting in the finished work of our Lord Jesus Christ in whose name we pray.

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