

# The Mount Message - Lesson 5

## Matthew 5:21-26

### August 30, 2021

THE EXPERIENCE BIBLE STUDY

THIRD BAPTIST CHURCH

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# Modeling The Greater Righteousness

## Chap 5:21-32

- ▶ Each of the 6 units begin with "what was said to those of ancient times" (God through Moses) AND what is being said by Jesus to his disciples.
- ▶ "*You have heard* " refers to hearing the Scriptures read in the synagogue
- ▶ Jesus relocates authority from the written text to himself - His teaching is not transgression of the Law but it's transcendence (*existence or experience beyond the normal of physical level*)

# OVERVIEW: Verses 21-32

- ▶ The structure of each unit has a *reaffirmation* of the Law, *radicalization* of the Law & *situational application* of the radicalized Law
- ▶ Reaffirms that Jesus is NOT abolishing the Law; Radicalizes by revealing the ultimate will of God was and is mediated by the Law; Situational application is the call for day-to-day living for imperfect people who fall short of this call to live by the perfect will of God, resulting in a changed life.
- ▶ For Matthew, commitment to Jesus results in a changed life (repentance)

# Love Shows No Hostility (vs.21)

- ▶ **The Law Reaffirmed** : These antitheses deal with relations between human beings, not with religious rituals that express our relations to God.
- ▶ ***"If you commit murder, you are subject to judgement"*** is a paraphrasing of several legal texts in the Torah (Books of Law - Exodus 21:12; Leviticus 24:17; Numbers 35:12; Deuteronomy 17:8-13).
- ▶ This is included in order to introduce the word "judgement", which plays a decisive role in Jesus' pronouncement.

# The Law Radicalized (vs.22)

- ▶ The command is not revoked but Jesus pronounces that anger makes one subject to judgement - *without distinguishing "justified" and "unjustified" anger.*
- ▶ Verse 22 is a declaration of the absolute will of God - the God who wills not only that persons not kill each other, but also that there be no hostility among human beings.
- ▶ This is about *submitting our thoughts about other people, as well as the words that rise from those thoughts, to the penetrating judgement of God*

# Situational Application of The Law (vs 23-26)

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- ▶ Hostility in the world is inevitable and *Jesus challenges the disciples (and us) to consider reconciliation more important than worship at the altar (vs.23-24)*
- ▶ They are to work for reconciliation in the light of the end-time judgement they are journeying toward (vs.25-26). Neither picture is to be taken legalistically as a literal case but as *a pointer to the kind of greater righteousness appropriate to those who belong to the kingdom of God.*
- ▶ *Disciples are responsible for using this example creatively to apply the teaching of Jesus to their own situations.* This picture is a testimony to the urgency of reconciliation before arriving at the end-time judgement of God



# Takeaways: Verses 21-26

- ▶ Verses 21-22 says in essence that all *anger & hostility are outside the bounds of God's kingdom.*
- ▶ Verses 23-26 admits that *Christians get angry and suffer through broken relationships and tells us what to do when the reality occurs.*
- ▶ The difference between the 2 halves of this passage is a matter of *promise and hope*

# Prayer

Almighty God, we **admit** tonight that these words are tough to swallow. We **recognize** that there have been times when we have fallen victim to anger. Lord, we ask that You forgive us for those times when we have allowed our anger to suppress Your will for our lives. **Empower** us with Your Holy Spirit to live what is true about us – that we belong to the kingdom of God. **Convict** our hearts and **transform** our minds. In Jesus name, Amen.