

Righteousness, Inward Or Outward?

Matthew 5:31-37

Intro:

- A. **Jesus is teaching His disciples.**
 - 1. He has taught them the beatitudes.
 - 2. These truths have to do with the heart.
 - 3. They do not dismantle the law.
 - 4. The law must be fulfilled.

- B. **Jesus points to the scribes and Pharisees as an example of an outward righteousness.**
 - 1. It is a righteousness of the law.
 - 2. The righteousness which is of faith springs from the heart and is in principle.
 - 3. Just because a man has never broken a particular law does not keep him from being a sinner.
 - 4. Jesus illustrates this by quoting from the law or from the sayings of the ancient ones.
 - 5. Luke 16:15-18

I. The Disciple And Divorce.

- A. **"It hath been said, whosoever shall put away his wife..." v.31**
 - 1. put away = απολυω = "to release"
 - 2. "whoever dismisses the wife of him..."

- B. **"...let him give her a writing of divorcement."**
 - 1. divorcement = αποστασιον = "departure from"
 - 2. "...a written notice of dismissal"

- C. **The statement of the law.**
 - 1. Deuteronomy 24:1-4
 - 2. uncleanness = "indecenty"
 - 3. "...because he has found some evidence of open prostitution in her" - Lam

II. The Explanation Of Jesus.

- A. **"But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication..." v.32**

1. put away = απολυω = "to release of dismiss"
2. saving = παρεκτος = "near by without", "out of"
3. cause = λογος = "a charge or accusation, and therefore the reason."
4. fornication = πορνεια = "to play the harlot"
5. "for any other cause but the loss of her virtue" - Bas

B. "causeth her to commit adultery"

1. causeth = ποιω = "to make", to be the means of a thing"
2. commit adultery = μοιχαομαι = "to be guilty of adultery"
3. How could a man divorcing a woman cause her to commit adultery? Since this was the statement of the law it would be assumed by all, since there was not a civil hearing, that the husband had discovered something in her past that indicated sexual infidelity, thus branding the wife as an adulterer.

C. "...and whosoever shall marry her that is Divorced committeth adultery."

1. marry = γαμω = "to take as a wife"
2. committeth adultery = μοιχω = "to cause one to commit adultery"
3. How can this be?
4. If a man divorces a wife for any other cause than sexual infidelity, she has not broken a principle but the husband has, therefore, the divorce is invalid and the woman is still married to him. If she then marries, her husband is involved sexually with another man's wife and has therefore committed adultery. These are logical conclusions but they are not reality.

D. The perversion of divorce.

1. Matthew 19:1-12
2. Mark 10:2-12 (Here Jesus provides for the woman to divorce her husband) **v.12**

E. The act of marriage.

1. It should be between male and female.
2. It should be until death.
3. It should create a new home.
4. Since sexual infidelity is the only scriptural reason for divorce, we must assume that this is the reason all people have gotten a divorce. This was not true and it is not true today. The changing of this principle let people divorce and still maintain a righteousness which is of the law.
5. hardness = σκληροκαρδια = σκληρος = "dried up" "dry", "stiff," "of voices, harsh", "of winds, fierce."
6. In Judaism, there were no distinctions of religious laws and civil law, they were the same. So every divorce was a matter of religion to the Jew. Today we have separation of State and Church. This creates a different circumstance. Today we are married by the State and we are separated by the State. The exception to this is in Catholic countries where they are still united. In these countries they are still controlled by the Roman Catholic Church.

III. The Disciple And Oaths.

- A. "Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself..." v.33**
1. once again = "or, "addressing another issue."
 2. "to the ancients"
 3. forswear = επιορκεω = "to swear falsely"
- B. "...but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:"**
1. perform = αποδιδωμι = "to give away from oneself", "to deliver over", "to give in full"
 2. oath = ορκος = "the object by which one swears", "the witness of an oath", "an oath"
- C. "But I say unto you, swear not at all" v.34**
1. "I, however say to you" - TCNT

2. "you should not bind yourselves by any oath at all." - Knox
 3. Swearing an oath is not necessary to telling the truth.
- D. **The object we swear by in trying to avoid the use of God's name is nonetheless vitally connected to Him. Vs.34-36**
1. "neither by heaven: for it is God's throne."
 2. "nor by earth" for it is his footstool.
 3. "neither by Jerusalem: for it is the city of the great king."
 4. "Neither shalt thou swear by the head: because thou canst not make on hair white or black. (to invoke one's gray hairs as a sign of truth telling)
- E. **"But let your communication be, yea, yea, nay, nay." V.37**
1. communication = λογος = "one's speaking"
 2. yea = certainly", "an affirmation"
 3. nay = ου = not, full and direct negation"
- F. **"...for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."**
1. "And what goes beyond these..."
 2. "has a hint of evil" (makes one suspicious)
- G. **There are oaths that one makes or takes in regard to the work of God.**
1. They are binding. Ecclesiastes 5:4-5
 2. They must not be rash. Proverbs 20:25
- H. **They do not include one's swearing in a court of law to tell the truth.**
1. A problem to early Christians.
 2. Often a controversial subject for the Anabaptists and Baptists. (early and late)