

PASTOR: Kip McCormick

DATE: February 23, 2025

SERIES: Sermon on the Mount

SERMON: The Next Right Thing

MAIN SCRIPTURE: Matthew 5:17-33 (NASB)

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE / FURTHER READING: Exodus 20:13; Deut. 16:18; 24:1-4; Matthew 19:3-12; Genesis 2:18-25; Malachi 2:13-16; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:22-23; 1 Peter 3:1-7; 2 Timothy 3:16-17



MESSAGE TAKEAWAY: Contrasts force us to ask ourselves in any situation, “What’s the next right thing to do?” In other words, “What’s the next step?”

SUPPORTING THOUGHTS:

- Breakout of the Sermon on the Mount:
 - Matthew 5:1-16 Beatitudes and Attitudes: What does it mean to be well-blessed and to live our lives in an attractable way? (Baseline teaching the rest is built on)
 - Matthew 5:17-47 What does this Kingdom look like in our daily lives contrasted with what the religious elite have taught us (and not modeled for us)?
 - Matthew 6: Where do we wrongly place our false hopes and security?
 - Matthew 7: What is and is not real love? What happens if we don’t live out this way Jesus describes?
- The problem wasn’t the Law and the Prophets. The problem was bad interpretation and application of them. They missed the intent of the Law.
- Jesus tells His disciples/listeners that keeping the Law and the teachings of the Prophets is good – don’t abandon them. But always understand the Law’s intent.
- By mimicking Jesus, having His heart attitude, they would be able to respect the Law and move beyond the righteousness of the Pharisees and teachers of the Law.
- Matthew 5:21-48 = Six examples of what it means to have a Kingdom Heart: 1) murder (vv21-26); 2) adultery (vv27-30); 3) divorce (vv31-32); 4) oaths (vv33-37); 5) revenge (vv38-42) and 6) love (vv43-48) (We’ll discuss the first three this week.)
- Repeated pattern of contrasts: “You have heard” (teaching from the rabbis)...but I say to you” (the correct application/interpretation of the biblical truth).
- Murder: unjustly taking the life of another.
- *Anger indulged, instead of simply waved off, always has in it an element of self-righteousness and vanity. Find a person who has embraced anger, and you find a person with a wounded ego.* Dallas Willard.
- “Raca” – a deep degradation of another, combining all that is evil in anger as well as contempt of the heart.
- Anger next step: reconciliation.
- Truth bomb: Our relationships with others impact our relationship with God.
- Adultery: Jesus says here that to look at someone longingly devalues them while affecting your mind and your heart. Many of these contrasts are about human value and heart conditions.
- Vv. 29-30 He’s using exaggerated language to make an emotional impact.
- Next Step: You need to do an extreme heart makeover in this life so that you won’t be dragged into condemnation in the next.
- Divorce needs to be handled with great care, great prayer, and great counsel.

(SUPPORTING THOUGHTS CONTINUED)

- 4 Principles when dealing with the issue of divorce:
 - 1) Start with scripture, lead with grace, pray for wisdom.
 - 2) It's complicated and rarely black and white.
 - 3) Be like Jesus (intent of the Law), not like the Pharisees (misapplied letter of the Law).
 - 4) When in doubt, go back to principle #1
- **CHALLENGE: Do a heart check.**
 - What are the things that are causing you anger? Next right thing?
 - How do you normally respond to things which you can't control? Next right thing?
 - How do you deal with people who rub you the wrong way? Next right thing?
 - What do you do when you catch yourself in a moment of lust? (For a person, for food, for something that steals your heart?) Do you linger or redirect your focus (eyes, mind, heart) Next right thing?
 - For those who are married, next right thing with marriage maintenance?
 - For those who are going through a time that could lead to a divorce: Next right thing in counseling, individually or together? Review the Four Principles.
 - For those who are single, next right thing with remaining pure?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What portion of Kip's teaching today challenged you? Why?
- Why do we study the Old Testament and the New Testament at New Life Fellowship?
- What was the issue with the Pharisees and their interpretation of the Law?
- What did Jesus mean in verses 18-19?
- Where have you had to battle legalism in your life as a Christian? How did you work through that time?
- Kip said, "Anger is tied to control and ego." Discuss that point.
- If you've battled with anger and/or lust and have had success in that battle, share what helped.
- Our relationships with others impact our relationship with God. How?
- Discuss Kip's teaching on divorce. Why is understanding the intent of God's commands so important?
- How can the concept of doing the "next right thing" help you as a disciple of Jesus?

NOTES:

Sources: Oswald Chambers (Studies on the Sermon on the Mount); Douglas Denton (Outlines on the Sermon on the Mount); Life Application Study Bible (Matthew); Charles Swindoll (Matthew 1-15 New Testament Commentary, Matthew 16-28 New Testament Commentary); Dallas Willard (The Divine Conspiracy).