

Matthew 5:17-32

Heart Issues

At this time in His ministry Jesus Christ has gained lots of popularity.

A) He has multitudes we're told in Verse 1, that are following Him.

B) And those multitudes are impressed by what they have seen so far.

1) They have seen many miracles and they're drawn by the miracles.

C) This man is like none other they've ever heard or seen. They know that.

1) And so it only makes sense that multitudes would follow him.

However, no doubt among -- at least some of them there is a concern.

A) They really like this guy and he's very impressive but what does he say about the Law of Moses?

B) What does he say about the scriptures that they were raised with? Traditional background understand that.

C) They want to know what is his relationship to the prophets and the Law?

1) Moses Warned in Deuteronomy Chapter 13, "If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams," it is called "among you does a sign and a wonder. 'Examine him.

Be careful' Moses said. 'and make sure that he's not leading you away from God.

A) Examine what he says even if that sign or wonder comes to pass and you see a miracle.

B) Make sure that he's not leading you away, because the Lord, your God is the one that you should worship."

C) So they would have questions.

1) What does he say about the Law of Moses? What does he say about the prophets

D) Well in this next section of the Sermon on the Mount Jesus is going to address those concerns

17 "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

A) Jesus speaks about the law and the prophets. That's his term.

B) Now, that term "Law and the Prophets" is a synonym for the entirety of the OT scriptures.

1) It's a nickname for what we call the Old Testament from Genesis to Malachi.

C) Formally, the Jews divided up their scriptures into three sections;

1) what they call the Torah which is the law,

2) the Nevi'im which are the prophets,

3) and the third, the Ketuvim, which are the writings.

So Jesus said, "I didn't come to destroy that.

A) If that question is in your minds, put your minds to rest.

B) But rather I have come to fulfill it!

C) But what does he mean by that?

1) Either – I have come as the fulfillment of the OT scriptures

D) Or I have come to show you how to live – Perfect man!

1) I think it was both!

Jesus is saying "I didn't come to destroy the law. I'm the subject. I'm the fulfillment.

A) I'm the one that was predicted. They're fulfilled in me.

18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

B) The "jot" was like an apostrophe in the Old Testament and there are 66,420 of them

C) But then he says the tittle. Now the tittle is even smaller.

1) It's the little protrusion or hang-off mark on Hebrew letters.

SO Jesus is teaching that every part of this book is good, even the apostrophes are there by design

A) It is eternal – it can be trusted!

B) You know some people say: I love Jesus – I trust Jesus – but there are parts of the Bible – don't believe

C) Contradiction: Jesus says: "Down to the smallest letter of the law and even the pronunciation mark, it's all God's word."

D) It can all be trusted and I am the fulfillment of the whole thing!

E) Trust me – TRUST GOD'S WORD
Resurrection!!

19 Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Greatness in his Kingdom is based on one thing: Faithfulness

A) Those who take what they have been given and pass it on to others – great in the Kingdom

B) Is there somebody in your life that you are influencing, that you are mentoring,

1) that you are teaching, that you are training to obey the Scripture?

C) Is there somebody that you are catalyst of their spiritual growth?

1) Are you teaching someone to keep the Scripture?

That's not just something that certain people are gifted to do but we're all called in a spirit of influence to do and to teach them.

A) You say "Well, I'm busy. I'm a businessman and I'm a dad."

B) Then you have a Sphere of influence, you have a family to lead. It's a big task.

C) You say, "Well, I'm busy. I'm a mom. I've got lots of kids." That's your mission field.

1) Train those kids, influence those kids.

D) If you are a business person, owner of a business, you have employees perhaps.

1) Again, you can influence and be a catalyst spiritually for the kingdom of heaven.

So Jesus makes this radical statement about being the fulfillment of the law

A) That radical statement is going to be followed by a series of SHOCKING STATEMENTS

B) BLOW THEIR MINDS -

20 For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

A Shocking Statement "Your Righteousness must exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees."

A) That was a SHOCKING STATEMENT: - In the minds of the people of Israel there were no other people **more Righteous than those guys.**

B) A popular Jewish saying of the time, **"If only two men made it into heaven, one would be a scribe, and the other a Pharisee."**

1) BILLY G. OR MOTHER T- Aunt Betty

C) The scribes were scholars who studied, AND interpreted, and commented endlessly upon the Law.

D) The word "Pharisee" literally means "separated one." Numbering seven thousand, this company of men **kept the minutest details of the Law.**

For Example: TITHE MINT LEAVES – 9 for me one for God

A) Avoid Lust: Wore hoodies – head down – bumping into things -

B) They were known as the bump and stumbling Pharisees – always bumping into things

1) EXTREME – OUTWARD

C) Their works and performance would earn them right standing with God.

1) In the EYES of the people – no one was more righteous

SO you imagine those listening – Righteousness needs to exceed Pharisees

A) DOOMED – no one is going to make it into heaven

B) **REALLY A PLAY ON WORDS:** takes us back to the First Beatitude: Poor in Spirit – destitute –
1) Bankrupt

C) What Happens- The Resources of the King are put into my account

1) Starting with HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS

D) His Righteousness is given to me – transferred

1) My Sin to Him – His righteousness to me

The only way to have a righteousness that exceeds the Scribes and Pharisees – JESUS – HIS given

A) Our righteousness – is not perfect – Flawed

B) Picture a brand new Mercedes Benz

1) Paint sparkling – interior – fresh leather smell

C) Every way: - Premier - One problem – a tiny little scratch – driver's side door - PERFECT?

1) Someone giving you that – I don't care

D) But if you were going to pay 70K – are you saying no big deal? – Unacceptable

E) Righteousness in God's eyes = perfection

1) Anything less is Unrighteous –

The only way that you and I can become righteous enough for God's kingdom – Jesus righteousness

A) That is the only way our Righteousness can exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees

B) Paul the Apostle came to this realization.

1) Prior to his conversion - Paul was a Pharisee. Law – BLAMELESS - PERFECT Righteous DUDE

C) Outwardly Paul had it together – but He was not perfect – so in his testimony in Philippians 3

"But what was gained unto me, I have counted as rubbish that I might be--" listen to this. "Be found in Him not having my own righteousness which comes from the law but the righteousness which comes from faith in Jesus Christ."

E) Righteousness given rather than earned!

So that helps us when we read Verse 20. **"Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the Scribes and the Pharisees you will by no means enter the**

kingdom of heaven."

NOW Beginning in Verse 21, we have a series of six statements that finishes up the chapter

A) They are comparative statements. **You have heard that it was said, but I say unto you.**

B) JESUS IS going to address six ideas they were raised with, six things they had heard, / tradition

C) Jesus is going to put a little different spin on each of them

1) Revealing that A Right Heart attitude is more important than RIGHT actions

2) **We are going to look at 4 of them tonight**

First statement is concerning murder.

²¹ **"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.**

A) Jesus is referencing the sixth commandment. You shall not murder.

Aa) In the list of 10 Commandments, the second table of the law that deals with our relationships with other people.

B) In that 2nd tablet we read **"You shall not murder."**

C) Most of us would say: NO Problem – I have never done that! – Not a Murderer !

Jesus says ²² **But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire.**

A) See Jesus is saying, "I agree with the commandment. God said that.

B) But I disagree with your definition of murder.

1) You have defined murder as simply an action. I define it as an attitude." **Angry without cause**

C) Now the word 'Raca' in verse 22, the word Raca is an Aramaic term that refers to an imbecile, an idiot.

1) It is an arrogant pronouncement that would insult the lack of intelligence of another person.

D) The word you fool is the Greek word "Moros"

we get the term moron from it.

E) Ever called someone an idiot or moron?

Driving!!!

1) **Mom, why do all the idiots come out when dad is driving?**

So murder begins with anger in the heart, that's the seed where it all starts.

A) Kingdom citizens – live by a different standard
➤ **Rather than being given over to anger – be quick to forgive/ seek Reconciliation**

Jesus uses two different analogies – to illustrate the same idea:- Make HASTE in pursuing Reconciliation

²³ **Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.**

A) Does this mean we should track down every person who has something against us? – NO

B) For some of us, that would be a full-time job!

Bb) I believe the key to understanding this is found in the phrase, ²³ Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember ...”

C) **You Remember** you offended someone – (**Idea – there is a reason**) You offended someone

1) When you are at the altar and *there*, in the place of prayer, the HS brings to your remembrance

D) **Leave your gift – Go make it right**

1) **Point: Being Right with your Brother is more important than your Religious Ritual.**

Another analogy: Depicting Haste -

²⁵ **Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison.**

²⁶ **Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny.”**

A) They would literally grab a person by the collar – drag them to the Elders – the council – sit in city square.

B) You are being dragged before the judge – the council – **Try and settle the matter before you get there.**

C) **Point. Being reconciled and having UNITY IS VERY important to God! “If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all men.”**
Romans 12:18

Next Adultery

²⁷ **“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ ²⁸ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.**

At a Pastor’s conference an older Pastor began his message this way: Brothers I have a confession to make. **“I spent the best years of my life in the arms of a woman who was not my wife!”** As audience gasped he said, “She was my mother!”- all laughed

A young Pastor who was there thought – that is brilliant and decided to use it on his congregation back home. So the next Sunday:

He began – his message by saying: **I have a confession to make today: “I spent the best years of my life in the arms of a woman who was not my wife”.**

The congregation gasped as the preacher paused, problem was **at that moment his mind went blank, he couldn’t remember the punch line**

Everyone was starring in horror – he was turning beat red – sweat forming on forehead

After a few nervous moments he said, **“And for the life of me, I can’t remember who she was!”**

Seriously: Adultery is no laughing Matter.

A) Many of you know first hand the pain and Devastation that accompanies that sin!

B) Broken hearts – Broken families – Destroyed lives.

C) What Jesus wants us to understand is that Adultery happens long before the Physical act
1) **Adultery starts with lust in the Heart!**

²⁷ **“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ ²⁸ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.**

Lust: To look at someone and Desire them sexually.

A) Longing look – where mind goes where it should never go! Make happen

B) Note: **It is not a sin to see a beautiful woman or a handsome man!**

C) Problem: Is the 2nd look – to linger – to desire to envision yourself with that person – fantasize

1) Wonder what it would be like.....

D) To open your heart **up emotionally to someone** you are not married to.

E) Porn – obviously falls in this category

Jesus redefines Adultery:

A) Not just the actions – it is the Heart!

B) Remedy? **Take Radical action against Lust:**

²⁹ “If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast *it* from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. ³⁰ And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast *it* from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.”

C) Now it is important to note that the words of Jesus were never intended to be taken literally here.

1) Jesus is not advocating SELF Mutilation. – **Repeat**

D) Don't want to show up next week – bunch of guys wearing eye patches. / Missing hands

E) **Origin:** Castrated – Didn't solved the problem – still struggled

1) **St Anthony** – Hermit – didn't help

2) **Blind men** – Lust in their minds

So if Jesus doesn't want us to take this literally – What is He saying? TAKE SIN SERIOUSLY!

A) Graphic illustration OT 1 Samuel 15 Saul brings back Agag as a trophy.

B) Samuel – give me your sword! HACKED AGAG.... TO PIECES

C) Point. Get aggressive about dealing with Sin!

Interesting Jesus uses right eye and Right hand in his illustration. Why the right eye and hand?

A) IN that culture as in ours most people were right handed. –

B) So the **right eye** represented your best vision. **Right hand** your one's best skills.

Jesus' point is that we should be willing to give up whatever is necessary,

A) Even the most cherished things we possess, if doing that will help protect us from evil.

B) How many of you liked to **catch lizards** when you were young? Lizards are cool!

1) How many of you learned – Never grab a Lizard by the tail? – Why breaks off.

C) **Lizards are wise:** A lizard is willing to sacrifice his tail in order to save his life!

D) Willing to get a filter – give up a liberty? Break off a relationship?

1) Can a man take fire to his bosom and not get burned?

NO – DON'T PLAY WITH FIRE

Murder – Adultery – NEXT Divorce

“Furthermore it has been said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’

³² But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.

To understand what Jesus is saying you need to understand the context

A) Jesus lived a culture that was being plagued with divorce

B) At the time there were 2 prominent rabbis (**Rabbi Shammai, and Rabbi Hallel** –

C) These two guys were influencing the culture at the time, and they were on opposite ends of the spectrum

1) The law spoke of the allowance of divorce if ‘uncleanness’ was found in the wife –

D)Shammai – Conservative and literal – uncleanness meant – Sexual immorality – Adultery

Hallel on the other hand interpreted “uncleanness” as anything about your wife that caused you to sin

A)For example –if your wife puts too much pepper in your eggs, and you got mad, well she caused you to sin, so she is unclean, you could get rid of her

B)That was Rabbi Hallel.

C)Which do you think was the more popular ?

1) Rabbi Hallel -A casual approach to marriage

Make matters worse there was another Rabbi Akiva carnal approach "If a man finds another woman that he finds more attractive than his wife that's uncleanness in his wife, - Divorce His Wife!

A)So that was the problem: They were claiming we keep the law – Rabbi Hallel – Akiva – godly guys

B)The ease of which these men were divorcing their wives was really – just another form of Adultery.

1)The issue is they were not taking Their MARRIAGE VOWS SERIOUSLY

C)Jesus is all about Marriage: First miracle was at a wedding

1)Water into wine – Embarrassment young couple

D)Stamp of approval on Marriage

Jesus is seeking to elevate Marriage Vows

A)Jesus pulls it back: ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.

B)You have to go through the legal process – and the cause – SEXUAL IMMORALITY

C)Which had to be proven! –

1)You couldn't just end your marriage on a whim

D)PROBLEM today – People give up on marriage way too easily – wrong reasons. – No longer in love

1)Irreconcilable differences –

Jesus wants them to understand that the Sanctity of marriage is important to God!

A)The Bible doesn't use the term Hate in reference to God about many things: **Mal. 2:16 Hates divorce!**

B)Two boards nailed together – Holes – scars

C)Ruins God's picture – Hurts lives /Kids, etc

Marriage is a serious commitment – Marriage is to be honored – respected – cherished

A)Jesus is elevating Marriage as a Union not to be broken lightly

B) Jesus says: ³² **But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.**

C)Paul would add Abandonment – 1 Cor. 7 Abuse are the exceptions

Now Does this mean if you got divorced for the wrong reasons – and then remarried – you have committed adultery?

A)Listen it is true that Jesus said if a person divorces their spouse for non biblical reasons - **THEY COMMIT ADULTERY**

B)What he doesn't say is that they are living in adultery!

C)See Jesus didn't say Matthew 12:31 **“All manner of sin is forgiven all men except for one: divorce.”**

1)Divorce is not the unpardonable sin

D)That's not what Jesus said. He said, **“All manner of sin is forgiven all men except the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit—the rejection of Jesus Christ”**

E)There is forgiveness - Christians who divorce and remarry for the wrong reasons – can be forgiven.

1)I think they need to **OWN IT – Mistake**

F)They can then Move on and be blessed – but there will always be consequences to Divorce.

So Jesus' statement is for them to take their Marriage relationship seriously

One more - Moves from there – Take their Commitments seriously.

³³ **“Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.’ ³⁴ But I say to**

you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; ³⁵ nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. ³⁶ Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. ³⁷ But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.

The Practice of Oaths Dates back to OT

A) Where God provided for making oaths by His name

B) A clear description of an Oath is given in the book of Hebrews:

- ❖ "For men swear by one greater than themselves, and with them an oath given as confirmation is an end of every dispute" Hebrews: (6:16).

Bb) The idea of swearing by SOMEONE greater than themselves – mainly God gave greater credibility to what was said!

C) But People would make an Oath swearing by God **only in matters of great importance.**

1) Example: Marriage Vows

2) Abraham confirmed his promises to the king of Sodom (Gen. 14:22–24) and to Abimelech (21:23–24) with oaths in the name of God.

D) Even God made an Oath to Abraham –

1) He swore by Himself – none greater – He would fulfill his promise to Abraham.

So the Problem that Jesus had was not with taking Oaths in General but with The Perversion of Oaths

A) First of all the religious leaders in Israel had ok'd the taking of Oaths for **Frivolous reasons.**

B) No longer was it for special important things like marriage vows – any old thing – Take an Oath.

1) We do that today too: "I swear to God." – Really?

C) I swear on a Stack of Bibles -

➤ Or if I be lying I be dying -

1) Or I swear on my mamas grave (Didn't know your mom passed away.) She hasn't.....

D) Or this one: **Cross my heart and hope to die – stick a needle in my eye! – WHAT ?**

Israel had their own phrases: If you swore by God the Creator it was Binding –

A) But if you swore by any part of creation: the heavens, the earth, the temple, your own head it was **less binding**

B) These were their loop holes for being deceptive. – 1) Not swearing by God because I am accountable for that.

Bb) But I will **swear by the temple** – AND this guy is religious he will like that

C) **Swear by my own head** - (Their version of Cross my heart....in my eye)

D) It was almost like our version of Promising but keeping our fingers crossed.

E) It was Evasive Swearing- which in actuality – was Taking an oath became a way to lie.

C) **Jesus' point here: We need to have integrity in our words- IF YOU DO! -You WILL NOT need to Swear at all.**

1) Simply PUT - Let your Yes be Yes and your No be No!

D) Live as one who's word can be trusted!

When your heart is right with the Lord – you want to treat people the right way!

A) Ephesians 4:1 **I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called,**

B) Walk would weigh as much as your calling – your profession

with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, ³ endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.