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**“The Heart of the Matter” Series (Sermon on the Mount)**

**“There’s Been a Murder” (Matthew 5:21-26**

**Introduction:**

**-Introduced the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:1-2)**

**-“The Great Contradiction” (Matthew 5:3-12)**

**-“Being Salty and Shine” (Matthew 5:13-16)**

**-“Become Greater” (Matthew 5:17-20)**

**1. Jesus came and fulfill the Law (v. 17).**

**2. Jesus affirmed the continuing authority of the Law (vv. 18-19)**

**3. Jesus proclaimed the need for greater righteousness (v. 20)**

**-Beginning of “You have Heard… But I say to you.” Messages. Two problems Jesus will address, starting with today’s message.**

**1. People have heard different things from the Old Testament, but not all have been taught correctly.**

**2. People limited the Old Testament Commandments to external actions, not inward righteousness. Jesus reveals the true intentions of the law as it concerns the heart (The Heart of the Matter).**

**Today we begin the 1st of the “You have Heard… But I say to You” Messages.**

**I. The Real Meaning of Murder (vv. 21-22)**

**A. Anger- The attitude behind the act.**

**-James 1:13-15: Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God;” for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He himself does not tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when his is carried away and enticed by his own lust (or desire). Then when lust (desire) has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.**

**B. What about Jesus?**

**1. Angry at sin.**

**-Mark 3:1-6: He entered again into the synagogue; and a man was there whose hand was withered. They were watching Him to see if He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him. He said to the man with the withered hand, “Get up and come forward!” And He said to them, “Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save a life or to kill?” But they kept silent. After looking around at them with anger, grieved their hardness of heart, He said to the man “Stretch out your hand.” And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored. The Pharisees went out and immediately began conspiring with the Herodians against Him, as to how they might destroy him.**

**-Ephesians 4:26-27: Be angry and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity.**

**2. But did not retaliate when personally offended**

**-Luke 23:34a: But Jesus was saying “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.”**

**-1 Peter 2:23: and while reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting himself to Him who judges righteously.**

**-Remember Cain in Genesis 4:6-7: God warn him he must master its desire.**

**II. The Importance of Reconciliation (vv. 23-24)**

**A. Example-Offering gift at the altar**

**-Isaiah 1:11-15: “What are your multiplied sacrifices to Me?” says the Lord. “I have enough burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed cattle; and I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls, lambs or goats. When you come before me, who requires of you this trampling of my courts? Bring your worthless offerings no longer, incense is an abomination to me. New moon and Sabbath the calling of assemblies-I cannot endure iniquity and the solemn assembly. I hate your new moon festivals and your appointed feasts, they have become a burden to me. I am weary of bearing them. So when you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide my eyes from you; yes even though you multiply prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are covered with blood.**

**-Jeremiah 7:9-11: “Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery and swear falsely, and offer sacrifices to Baal and walk after other gods that you have not known. Then come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name and say, ‘We are delivered!’-that you may do all these abominations? Has this house which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your sight? Behold, I, even I, have seen it declares the Lord.”**

**B. Must reconcile first.**

**-Psalm 66:18: If I regard wickedness in my heart, The Lord will not hear.**

**-1 John 3:20-21: in whatever our heart condemns us; for God is greater than our heart and knows all things. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God.**

**III. The urgency of reconciliation (vv. 25-26)**

**A. Example: Adversary taking you to court**

**B. The Principle: Do not Delay**

**-Romans 12:18: If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.**

**-Ephesians 4:26-27: Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity.**

**Conclusion:**

**-What if reconciliation is Impossible?**

**-Romans 12:17-21: Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.**

**-Matthew 6:14-15: “For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.” “But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.**

**Application:**

**1. The sin of murder is not just an external act but includes your heart motives and attitudes.**

**2. The Punishment for murder is not ultimately decided by earthly courts but by our Lord God.**

**3. If we truly obey the law, we must not only avoid the negatives but also pursue the positives.**

**-We should always pursue reconciliation and friendship in all our relationships when possible.**