

**Live Like Christ: The Sermon on the Mount**  
**Session 3: You Have Heard That It Was Said (Matthew 5:21-32)**

<sup>21</sup>“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ <sup>22</sup>But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire. <sup>23</sup>So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, <sup>24</sup>leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. <sup>25</sup>Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. <sup>26</sup>Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

- Jesus is adding authoritatively to our understanding and application of the 6<sup>th</sup> Commandment.
  - Our thoughts and words are equated to our actions in God’s eyes!
- Bonhoeffer, “In this context ‘brother’ means more than ‘fellow-Christian’: for the follower of Jesus there can be no limit as to who is his neighbor, except as his Lord decides.”
- Bonhoeffer, “Every idle word which we think so little of betrays our lack of respect for our neighbor, and shows that we place ourselves on a pinnacle above him and value our own lives higher than his.”
  - Our careless, cruel thoughts and words reveal our inner heart condition (Matthew 15:17-20).
  - Our anger isn’t holy anger (James 1:19-20).
- Resolving conflict we’re at least partly responsible for must be a higher priority than even worship.
  - Bonhoeffer, “So long as we refuse to love and serve our brother and make him an object of contempt and let him harbor a grudge against me or the congregation, our worship and sacrifice will be unacceptable to God.”
- How many times in the past week have we violated this teaching? The past month?

<sup>27</sup> “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ <sup>28</sup> But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. <sup>29</sup> If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. <sup>30</sup> And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell. <sup>31</sup> “It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ <sup>32</sup> But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

- Jesus now extends the 7<sup>th</sup> Commandment, making clear adultery includes sinful thought and intention.
- We should do whatever it takes, no matter how inconvenient or embarrassing to avoid indulging sinful thought or action.
  - Please note that amputation isn’t required – Jesus is speaking for effect – our eye and hand can’t cause us to sin, it’s our heart (Matthew 15).
  - Don’t flirt with, toy with, or indulge temptation – it leads to sin and sin leads to Hell
  - Bonhoeffer, “Jesus does not impose intolerable restrictions on his disciples, he does not forbid them to look at anything, but bids them look on him. If they do that he knows that their gaze will always be pure, even when they look upon a woman.”
- Jesus takes marriage very seriously. He lays the burden of guilt for adultery upon someone divorcing his wife for any reason other than sexual immorality.
- Bonhoeffer, “The disciple’s exclusive adherence to Christ therefore extends even to his married life. Christian marriage is marked by discipline and self-denial. Christ is the Lord even of marriage. There is of course a difference between the Christian and the bourgeois conception of marriage, but Christianity does not therefore depreciate marriage, it sanctifies it.”