



SERMON NOTES

US N^o. 168

Date: December 28th, 2014

Title: Anger leads to hate, hate leads to suffering

#7 in the series on the Sermon on the Mount

1. Intro

- a. Once Jesus has made it clear that he is not opposing the law itself but interpreting it, He shows how the customary practice of the law in His day was inadequate. In this section, Jesus shows the true meaning of the law. This isn't Jesus against Moses, it's Jesus against false and superficial interpretations of Moses. In regard to the law, the two errors of the scribes and Pharisees were that they both restricted and extended certain commandments of God past His intention.
 - i. Rev. 22:18-19, *"For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."*
 - ii. Mt. 5:19, *"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."*
- b. Mt. 5:20, *"...unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees..."*
 - i. Jesus proceeds to comment on some prevailing opinions among the Jews to show that the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees was defective. The people needed a better righteousness, or they could not be saved. He proceeds to illustrate what He meant by showing that the common opinions of the scribes were erroneous.
- c. Mt. 5:22, 28, 32, 34, 44, *"But I say to you..."*
 - i. Since Jesus is God and man (cf. Jn. 1:11, 14), and therefore, being the original giver of the law He has the right to expound or change the Law as He pleased.
 - ii. Jesus has the authority to speak thus, and spoke as no other teacher had.
 1. Mark 1:22, *"And they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."*
 2. Mt. 7:28-29, *"And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."*
 - iii. The Scribes used to say *"our Rabbis,"* or *"our wise men say..."* Such as were on the side of Hillel made use of his name and those who were on the side of Shammai made use of his name. Seldom would they say anything of themselves, but said rather quoted the ancient doctors or innumerable instances out of the Talmud might be given in which one Rabbi speaks in the name of another. But Jesus spoke boldly of himself, in his own name, and did

not go about to support his doctrine by the testimony of the elders. He spoke as having received power and authority from his Father and not as the Scribes.

2. Jesus on murder

- a. They also taught that anything short of murder might be allowed. Jesus corrects this, and makes it clear that it is not only those who commit the act of murder who are in danger of judgment, those who have a murderous intent in the heart are also in danger of the judgment. Jesus declared that His followers understood that God's morality addressed not only the end but also the beginning of murder.
- b. *"The supervision of the Kingdom does not begin by arresting a criminal with blood-red hands; it arrests the man in whom the murder spirit is just born."* (Morgan)
- c. Barclay, commenting on the specific ancient Greek word translated angry, wrote *"So Jesus forbids forever the anger which broods, the anger which will not forget, the anger which refuses to be pacified, the anger which seeks revenge."*
- d. To call someone *"Raca"* expressed contempt for their intelligence, while calling someone a fool showed contempt for their character. Either one broke the heart of the law against murder, even if it did not commit murder.
 - i. *"Raca is an almost untranslatable word, because it describes a tone of voice more than anything else. Its whole accent is the accent of contempt... It is the word of one who despises another with an arrogant contempt."* (Barclay)
 - ii. *"A Syriac word, expressive of great contempt. It comes from a verb signifying to be empty, vain; and hence, as a word of contempt, denotes senseless, stupid, shallow-brains."* (Barnes)
- e. Mt. 12:36-37, *"But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."*
- f. The Jews considered but one crime a violation of the sixth commandment, namely, actual murder or the willful, unlawful taking of life. However, Jesus says that the commandment is much broader. It relates not only to the external act, but to the feelings and words. Among the Jews there were three degrees of condemnation: that by the *"judgment,"* the *"council,"* and the *"fire of Hinnom."* Jesus says likewise there shall be grades of condemnation for the different ways of violating the sixth commandment. Not only murder shall be punished by God, but anger and contempt shall be regarded by Him as a violation of the law, and punished according to the offence. As these offences were not actually cognizable before the Jewish tribunals, He must mean that they will be punished hereafter, and all these expressions therefore relate to degrees of punishment proportionate to crime in the future world – the world of justice and of woe. Jesus specifies three forms of such violation:
 - i. Unjust anger.
 - ii. Anger accompanied with an expression of contempt.
 - iii. Anger, with an expression not only of contempt, but wickedness.

3. Inappropriate anger and words

- a. Interestingly, Jesus qualifies this anger as “*without cause*,” or rash anger.
 - i. Parenthetically, there is a good debate on whether this clause, represented by the Greek word “*εικη*”, should be included. Bèze (1:31) states, “*Therefore not all anger is to be condemned, such as that kind which is commended in the name of zeal and also that which the Peripatetic philosophers not insincerely call 'the crag of fortitude': but in the end what is censured is that [anger] which is either unjust or immoderate (Eph 4:26).*” Grotius (1:117) also states, “*The anger which has the best justification is that which is derived from the indignation of the offended Divine, namely, that of which kind Christ exhibited in Mark 3:5.*” To briefly summarize:
 1. at least 1449 Greek manuscripts have *εικη*, including the Old Latin, Syriac, Coptic, and others, and many church fathers;
 2. the word was offensive to some, like Jerome, a circumstance that easily could have occasioned its removal;
 3. a misapprehension of *οργιζομενος* to mean malicious hatred, which is always sinful (cf. Matt 5:44, and Jesus' correspondence of anger and hatred in 5:21–22), could have caused some to omit the word as superfluous;
 4. *εικη* could have been omitted accidentally, either from the sheer brevity of the word, from parablepsis error
- b. James 1:19-20, “*So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.*”
 - i. These verses speak of anger that erupts when our ego is bruised; selfish anger never helps anybody.
 - ii. When injustice and sin occur, we should become angry because others are being hurt. (cf. Mt. 23:13-33)
- c. Eph. 4:26-27, “*“BE ANGRY, AND DO NOT SIN”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil.*”
 - i. It is important to handle our anger properly. If vented thoughtlessly, anger can hurt others and destroy relationships. If bottled up inside, it can cause us to become bitter and destroy us from within. Paul tells us to deal with our anger immediately in a way that builds relationships rather than destroys them. If we nurse our anger, we will give the devil an opportunity to divide us.
- d. Eph. 4:29-32, “*Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.*”
 - i. Acknowledge that the people we associate with do actually influence us. 1 Cor. 15:33, “*Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."*”

- ii. *"Corrupt" is likened to rotten, putrid, etc. and cannot produce good fruit. Mt. 7:17, "**Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.**"*
 - iii. Col. 3:8, *"But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth."*
 - e. James 4:1-4, *"Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."*
 - f. 1 Jn. 3:15, *"Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him."*
 - g. *"He that hates his brother without a cause is guilty of a violation of the sixth commandment, and shall be punished with a severity similar to that inflicted by the court of judgment. He that shall suffer his passions to transport him still further, so that he shall make his brother an object of derision and contempt, shall be exposed to severer punishment, corresponding to that which the Sanhedrin (council) inflicts. But he who shall load his brother with odious appellations and abusive language shall incur the severest degree of punishment, represented by being burned alive in the horrid and awful valley of Hinnom."* (Barnes)
4. Appropriate anger and words
- a. On the other hand of anger without cause, there are numerous biblical examples of what we label *"righteous anger."*
 - b. Eph. 4:26-27, *"**BE ANGRY, AND DO NOT SIN**": do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil."*
 - c. Ps. 7:11, *"God is a just judge, and God is angry with the wicked every day."*
 - d. Mark 3:4-6, *"Then He said to them, 'Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?' But they kept silent. And when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other. Then the Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him."*
5. Take-aways
- a. When it comes to the Word of God, do not add or subtract anything.
 - b. Jesus is the Teacher of teachers
 - c. God's addresses not only the end of murder but also its beginning.
 - d. Let no corrupt word come from us; instead use them to edify and build justice & mercy
 - e. Our battle is not against flesh and blood; let's not be confused on who the enemy is.

- *"And again: It has been said, Thou shalt not kill. But I say unto you, Every one who is angry with his brother WITHOUT A CAUSE, shall be in danger of the judgment."* Irenaeus (115 - 202 AD), *Against Heresies*, 4.13 & 4.16
- *"But I say unto you that every one who is angry with his brother WITHOUT A CAUSE is worthy of the judgement."* Taitian (140 AD), *Diatessaron*
- *"But I say unto you, That every one who is angry with his brother WITHOUT CAUSE shall be guilty of the judgment."* Cyprian (200 - 258 AD), *Treatise 12*
- *"But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother WITHOUT A CAUSE, shall be in danger of the judgment."* Chrysostom (347 - 407 AD), *Homilies on Matthew* (6 quotes)
- *"But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother WITHOUT A CAUSE shall be in danger of the judgment."* Augustine (354 - 430 AD), *Sermon on the Mount* (6 quotes)

Textual evidence supporting "without a cause" in Matthew 5:22:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Codex Sinaiticus, 7th century corrections in margin • Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis, 5th-6th century ms. • Codex K, 9th century uncial • Codex L, 9th century uncial • Delta, a 9th century uncial • Theta, a 9th century uncial • Pi, a 9th century uncial • f1 and f13, families of miniscule mss. dating between the 11th and 14th centuries, and containing a total of 16 mss. • 28, an 11th century miniscule • 33, a 9th century miniscule | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 565, a 9th century miniscule • 700, an 11th century miniscule • 892, a 9th century miniscule • 1010, a 12th century miniscule • 1241, a 12th century miniscule • The Byzantine textual set majority • The majority of lectionaries • The Old Latin version • The Syriac versions • The Coptic versions |
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Other references

- <http://tcgnt.blogspot.com/2011/07/matt-522.html>
- <http://brandplucked.webs.com/matthew522withoutcause.htm>
- <http://www.studytoanswer.net/consref/anger.html>