

Sunday Morning Message

August 25, 2019

Amplifications of the Law - Adultery

Text – Matthew 5:17 - 30

Congregational Reading – Matthew 5:27 - 30

Introduction

Read Matthew 5:17 – 20

This morning, we are continuing our examination of the famous message that Jesus preached called *The Sermon on the Mount*. This message contains quite a few of the very familiar teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. In this sermon, Jesus speaks about the **Kingdom**, which Christ will set up some day here on the earth. Sometimes, we refer to the Kingdom as the Millennial reign of Christ, or the Millennium, because it will last for 1000 years. Christ will literally rule and reign on the earth during this period of time, and Jerusalem will be the Capitol of the World.

The principles found in the Sermon on the Mount and in other similar messages in the gospels will be the **rule of law** during the Millennium. However, these principles also should apply today to those of us who are the children of God; to those who have been saved. We who are saved have the Holy Spirit of God dwelling inside of us, and the Spirit of God within us is working, transforming us and re-creating us into the very image of Christ.

You will notice as we study this message that the **principles** contained in it **go far beyond** the Old Testament Law. Here in this section of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus **amplifies** the Law. He explains that His expectations are not that the Law be followed just according to specific external applications, but that Christians should seek to understand and exemplify the spirit of the Law. This section will cause us to look within ourselves at a much deeper level. We will be forced to peer into our own hearts in order to see where the conflict between God's standard and human behavior begins. It's a heart problem. What Jesus is teaching in this section of the Sermon on the Mount is that Christians should have an internal conformity to the spirit of the Law rather than just an external observance of the letter of the Law.

In the remaining portion of this fifth chapter of Matthew, Jesus will deal with how the Old Testament Law relates the Spirit-filled Christian. What are we supposed to do with the Law? Many Christians today are completely forsaking the moral aspects of the Law, claiming that they are free to do whatever they please because they are under grace. Thank God for God's mercy that forgives us and keeps us from receiving the judgement that we deserve. Thank God for His grace, which will eventually bring us into Heave, which we certainly do not deserve. But God's grace is not a license to do whatever we please. Quite the contrary:

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and

our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus 2:11-14)

In the remainder verses of chapter five, there are six amplifications (or magnifications, or expansions) of Old Testament commandments given. Before we get started, I am warning you: you have probably already blown it many times in many of these areas, if not all of them. God is not trying to heap guilt upon for what was done yesterday. He is trying to cause us to see the depth (the root) of our sin problem, and help us, through His power, better live out His principles in front of a fallen world.

- I. Amplification # 1 Anger – Matthew 5:21 – 26
- II. **Amplification #2 Adultery – Matthew 5:27 – 30**
- III. Amplification #3 Divorce – Matthew 5:31 – 32
- IV. Amplification #4 Oaths – Matthew 5:33 – 37
- V. Amplification #5 Judgment – Matthew 5:38 – 42
- VI. Amplification #6 Love – Matthew 5:44 – 48

Amplification # 2 – Adultery

This morning, we are going to examine the second amplification - adultery.

Introduction - By definition, adultery is the act of physical intimacy between two people, where at least one of them is married or betrothed to someone else. Adultery is a type of fornication, but it specifically involves a violation of a marriage covenant.

Examples – married or engaged man with either an unmarried or married woman; a married or engaged woman with either an unmarried or married man.

I. Scriptures - Bible Principles regarding adultery:

Adultery is one of the “big ten.”

"Thou shalt not commit adultery." (Exodus 20:14; see also Deuteronomy 5:18)

Adultery was punishable by death according to the Old Testament Law:

"And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death."
(Leviticus 20:10)

Even in the time of Christ, the Pharisees demanded that the woman taken in the act of adultery be put to death see John 8:3ff.).

We have the most famous biblical example of adultery in the Bible with David and Bathsheba, and the immediate consequences of their sin and the subsequent cover-up resulted in the death of Uriah, Bathsheba’s husband; as well as the death of the baby who was born as a result of the adulterous affair. There were also many long-term consequences.

The Book of Proverbs is loaded with many practical warnings against adultery:

"For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life: To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman. Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids. For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life. Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned? So he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent. Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry; But if he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house. But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul. A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away. For jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance. He will not regard any ransom; neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts." (Proverbs 6:23-35)

Note – God’s purpose here is not to beat anybody up about the sins in their past, but rather to stress God’s standard regarding fidelity within the marriage. In 2019, God has not changed his mind about fidelity. He expects you today to be faithful to your spouse, just as He expected it in Bible times.

Why? – Because God uses marriage to paint a picture of Christ and His Bride, the church:

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband." (Ephesians 5:22-33)

- II. **Statistics** – Statistics regarding adultery are difficult to accurately determine, but even conservative estimates place the number of marriages that experience infidelity at least once in a marriage at well over 40%. Statistically, overall, men are more likely to cheat; but, women in the 18 – 29 age group are a little more likely to cheat than their male counterparts. You might be surprised to learn that the problem does not go away with age. The highest infidelity rate for men is men who are in their seventies; and, the highest rates for women are women in their sixties.¹

¹Institutue for Family Studies article: <https://ifstudies.org/blog/who-cheats-more-the-demographics-of-cheating-in-america>

Adultery is obviously one of the leading causes of divorce. Divorce, in most cases, has a devastating negative impact on the well-being of children.

Adultery is not good.

Jesus is clearly stating here that, as God's people, we need to take a higher view of the marriage relationship.

Biblically, marriage is designed by God to be between one man and one woman for a lifetime – "as long as you both shall live."

III. Solution

The solution starts with a **realization** that the problem is within the heart. (v. 28)

Once again, Jesus goes back to the root of the problem – heart. Someone once said, "At the heart of every problem is a problem with the heart."

The problem does not begin with the physical act, it begins with eyes. What the eye sees goes into the heart.

Job made a covenant with his eyes:

"I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?" (Job 31:1)

David said:

"I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me." (Psalm 101:3)

Obviously, David violated this principle when he gazed at Bathsheba from His rooftop while she was bathing.

Lusting at someone other than your spouse is much easier today than it was 100 years ago for many reasons:

1. People are dressing much more immodestly today than they did before.
2. Adultery is much more acceptable today than its ever been. In many cases, society does not even think it's a problem.
3. Technology has made it so that each of us has a XXX rated bookstore with us at all times through our smart phones.

You and I must realize that the root of adultery begins with lusting after someone other than our spouse with our eyes and then in our minds, long before it ever graduates into the act of adultery.

We must also realize that the devil has created a cultural system that makes lusting and even acting upon our lust very easy today.

Once you realize the problem, you can apply the **remedy** (vs. 29 and 30).

We must put up strong and high fences in our lives that will help to keep us away from adultery.

Read Proverbs 5 (focus on v. 8)

Conclusion

What fences have you put up to keep you from lusting after somebody else's wife, or somebody else's husband?

1. Protect Your Mind

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." (Philippians 4:8)

"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;" (2 Corinthians 10:5)

2. Protect Your Marriage

- a. Never be alone for long periods of time with members of the opposite sex.

Illustrate - The Billy Graham Rule is a good one – Vice President Mike Pence lives by it.

- b. Put controls on your technology. There are web services available that will filter out explicit content.
- c. Be completely transparent with your spouse. No passwords on computers or phones that keeps your spouse from seeing everything.
- d. Allow your wife or husband to know where you are at all times. (Find your friends)
- e. Work at keeping your own marriage healthy – go on dates; get away for a couple of days; do the things that you used to do when you first started dating.