



MATTHEW

The Savior-King and His Kingdom

Kingdom Principles – Part 2

Matthew 5:33-48

Message #17 of 80 – S1047

Sermon given on May 28, 2023



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

Kingdom Principles – Part 2

Matthew 5:33-48

Opening Comments

- Open your Bibles to **Matthew 5**
- Today, we continue a series through the gospel of Matthew – **The Savior-King and His Kingdom**
- We are in the section of the gospel of Matthew referred to as the Sermon on the Mount.
- It began with the Beatitudes.
- And then starting with verse 17 to the end of chapter 7 Jesus lays out a series of principles.
- They begin with something His audience already knew, with a phrase like, ‘You have heard it said...’
- But then Jesus expands upon or amplifies that principle with something would sometimes shock His hearers, like **Matthew 5:20**.

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.

- We looked at the first four principles last week.
- **Kingdom Principle #1 – Obey God’s commands!**
- **Kingdom Principle #2 – Don’t trust in your righteousness!**
- **Kingdom Principle #3 – Have a high regard for life!**
- **Kingdom Principle #4 – Have a high regard for marriage!**
- This morning we will be looking at the next three.
- Let’s pray and ask the Holy Spirit to give us ears to hear. - **Pray**

Teaching

- **Kingdom Principles – Part 2**
- The principles we hold to be true in our lives are what determine much of our behavior.
- What we do that others can see is evidence of our principles.
- A man who is unfaithful to his wife does not have a high regard for marriage.
- A person who lies does not have a high regard for truth.

- One of the sad realities of the world we live in that truth is not esteemed like it used to be.
- Today, every single thing we read or see must be evaluated by the question, 'Is it true?'
- And sadly, often the answer is no. Christians should be different.
- **Kingdom Principle #5 – Speak and act with integrity.**
- The world may have a problem with honesty and integrity, but God's people shouldn't.
- **Matthew 5:33**
- The Law of Moses allowed for making oaths, in God's name.
- An oath was something you did so that people believed that you would be faithful to what you said or that what you said was true.
- The people were then admonished to treat those oaths as binding even when it didn't benefit them to do so.
- The problem was that they had added rules that made oaths less binding and included ways you could forego keeping a vow or oath.
- This encouraged lying when giving an oath.
- People could make an oath, saying they were telling the truth, while 'having their fingers crossed' so, in their mind wasn't really lying.
- **Matthew 5:34-37**
- Jesus is saying we shouldn't be making oaths as a way of proving that we are being honest and sincere.
- If we are honest and trustworthy there is no need to swear an oath.
- When a person of integrity says yes to something, they are expected to do what they say.
- Don't say you will pray about it if you aren't going to sincerely pray about it.
- If you are not going to do something, say you aren't going to do it.
- The way this might manifest with Kelly and I is Kelly will sometimes ask if I want to do something that I don't really want to do.
- Like going to a baby shower.
- I believe it is important that I be honest with her and so I will respond by saying, 'No, I don't want to go, but I will go if it is important to you that I am there.'

- I am being honest in regard to her question but at the same I am considering her desires.
- On the other hand, if she were to ask me, ‘Will you go with me?’
- My answer would be, “Yes.”
- She is not asking me what I want, she is letting me know what she wants, and because I love her, I will try to give her what she wants, even if I don’t want it.
- We shouldn’t have to add, ‘I promise’ to the end of a statement.
- Say what you are going to do or not do, then then be faithful to what you said. If you can’t, repent and try again.
- ‘from the evil one’ – swearing an oath just to prove you are being honest is not from God. Just say what you mean and do it.
- The people of God should be the most trustworthy people around.
- The reason is because God is trustworthy – He always does what He says.
- **Kingdom Principle #6 – Respond to evil with good.**
- **Matthew 5:38**
- This is one of the oldest laws in the world.
- It was found recorded in the Code of Hammurabi which dates back to almost 2,300 years before Christ.
- An eye for an eye is intended to limit vengeance.
- Vengeance is found in the earliest pages of the Bible.
- Lamech (Gen. 4:24) claimed the right to 77 times vengeance on anyone who would harm him.
- An eye for an eye was the accepted rule for vengeance, but the Bible was not silent on God’s desire for a better response (Lev. 19:18).
You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.
- Vengeance was not permitted between one Hebrew and another.
- Jesus is going to expand that thought to the whole world.
- **Matthew 5:39-42**
- Jesus provides an entirely new ethic for relating to other people.
- An eye for an eye was meant to limit the retaliatory response of the Jews when they are harmed by others.

- Jesus is telling us to respond in a manner that is contrary to conventional logic.
- Turn to **Romans 12**
- What is most obvious in this ethic is its attempt to respond to the negative things in life in a positive manner.
- An eye for an eye allowed for some evil to be exercised in response to evil done but was limited to how much was done to you.
- Jesus is calling to a completely different response.
- Instead of responding with evil we are to respond with good.
- Paul echoed these commands.
- **Romans 12:17-21**
- This is an unnatural response to evil.
- Jesus wants us to overlook the evil done to us and look for a good that can be done in response.
- Retaliation or vengeance should never be a consideration in the heart of a true Christ-follower.
- Turn back to **Matthew 5**
- This is an incredibly complicated principle when it comes to how we relate to people in this world.
- Doing good in an evil world is not simple.
- Responding to the evil done to us is not something we can create a rule about and cover all the issues that might come up.
- We must trust in God and let the Holy Spirit lead us through every situation.
- Respond to evil with good.
- **Kingdom Principle #7 – Love everyone.**
- This is one of the better-known parts of the Sermon on the Mount.
- **Matthew 5:43**
- According to Jewish tradition it was permitted to hate your enemies.
- It was also permissible to hate Gentiles – non-Jews.
- Jesus throws that thought out the window.
- **Matthew 5:44-47**
- Jesus bases His call to love on the perfection of God's love to everyone, both the evil and the good.

- God is love (1 John), He loves all His creation.
- If we treat others the same way they treat us, we are no better than the unbelievers around us.
- Jesus is calling us to a higher standard – a higher level of perfection.
- In the same way we are to try do good to those who do evil to us, we are to try to love those who are our enemies.
- We must choose to see them as someone God loves and desires to do good to.
- God put us in their life to express God's love and do the good He created us to do for them.
- Jesus closes this chapter with something that might be hard to accept.
- **Matthew 5:48**
- We must not interpret this to be a call to moralistic perfectionism.
- That would drive us insane or to despair because we are incapable of achieving it.
- The word 'perfect' has the sense of fulfillment or completion.
- This is a call to abandon ideas of our own ability to be perfect and to yield our will as much as we are able to the will of God.
- And the phrase 'shall be' is in the future tense. It is what we will be as we allow God to shape us and mold us to be like Christ Jesus.
- There is so more that could be said about these principles.
- It is my goal that these brief overviews would get you thinking more about them.
- Seek God's will in His Word and in prayer.
- **Kingdom Principle #5 – Speak and act with integrity.**
- Say what you mean and do what you say.
- **Kingdom Principle #6 – Respond to evil with good.**
- Resist the natural temptation to retaliate and look for a good that can be done.
- **Kingdom Principle #7 – Love everyone.**
- There is a way to love everyone, even those who act like an enemy.
- If you are anything like me, a message like this might leave you with loads of questions.
- I can imagine scenarios and then wonder how I apply these principles.

- You don't need to answer all those questions.
- Trust God, grow in your knowledge and understanding of what His Word says, and trust the Holy Spirit to lead you when the situation arises.
- And if you get stuck, reach out to someone, me, Pastor Randy or Kelly or Debbie or some other brother or sister in the Lord.
- God's people are people of principles – Kingdom Principles.
- I am going to pray, and David is going to lead us in one last song.
- Kelly and I will be up here to pray with you.
- Pastor Randy and Debbie will be in the back.
- Let's pray!