

“You Shall Love Your Neighbor As Your Self” By E. A. Terry Delivered 8/19/18
Matthew 5:21 -30; 1st John 3: 11 – 18; Romans 13:8 – 10; Matthew **22:34 – 40 (Sermon)**

When one of the Pharisees asked ***“what is the greatest commandment”*** Jesus answered; ***“Love The Lord your God with all of your heart and with all of your soul and with all of your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it; Love your neighbor as yourself. All of the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”*** (Matthew 22:37 -40)

Last week we looked at the Biblical definition of love.

We said that ***“God is love”*** and ***“love comes from God”***. (1st John 4:16, 4:7, & 3:16)

And 1st John 3:16 tells us; ***“This is how we know what love is: Jesus laid down His life for us.”***

You see love is much more than a feeling or words - love is action.

Love is a choice we make to put another person’s needs and desires ahead of our needs and desires.

Love is sacrificing our self for someone else.

Love never takes advantage of or hurts someone.

Love always builds up a person.

The Apostle John also tells us; ***“Whoever does not love does not know God because God is love.”*** (1st John 4:8)

Jesus’ answer to the Pharisee is clear; the two most important things in life are our relationship with Almighty God and our relationship with our neighbor.

In The Parable of The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25 -37)

Jesus clearly tells us our neighbor is anyone who needs our help.

And Jesus command to love our neighbor is repeated in Matthew 5:43, Matthew 19:19, Romans 13:9 - 10, Galatians 5:14, and James 2:8.

The 10 Commandments are also about our relationship with The Lord and our relationship with other people.

This morning we will look at The 6th and 7th Commandments.

We will look at The 4th and 5th Commandments on next Sunday.

The 6th Commandment is; ***“You shall not murder”***. (Exodus 20:13)

God is the giver of life and God plainly stated that life is sacred and a person’s life is to be protected.

It is God’s desire for us to love life, sanctify life, and to preserve life.

Any society or any individual that disregards the value of life becomes corrupt.

In Matthew 5 Jesus pointed out the errors of the Jewish religious leaders.

They only considered the letter of the law not the spirit of the law.

They thought The 6th Commandment only prohibited the act of murder, not the sinful thoughts that can lead to murder.

They were only concerned with the civil application of the 6th Commandment.

They neglected the spiritual meaning of God's Law and that God justly punishes all those who break His commandments.

In verse 22 Jesus elaborates on the dynamics that lead to murder.

Jesus is saying that anger and verbal abuse lead to hate and hate ultimately leads to murder.

Jesus makes it clear that murder begins in the heart long before it explodes in action.

Jesus said we must not only deal with the outward act of murder, we must also deal with the inside drives that move us toward the outward act of murder.

Anger in its simplest form is a spontaneous response.

We express anger before we have time to think and anger often obstructs our better judgment.

Anger includes thoughts of making a painful impression on others, whether physically, verbally, or emotionally.

The problem is that anger can quickly turn into hatred and hatred into murder.

Jesus said we should not allow ourselves to become angry enough to consider harming someone in any way because when we do we have already committed murder in our hearts.

Hatred is a form of murder because hate desires to hurt or destroy someone either emotionally or physically or both.

Malicious slanders and censures are poison from the tongue, that kill secretly and slowly.

Bitter words are like arrows that wound.

Jesus says hatred will subject an individual the dangers of the fire of hell.

In 1st John 3:15 we read; ***“Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him.”***

This tells us abusive insults and hateful words spoken in anger are treated like murder in God's eyes and these abusive insults and hateful words carry the same moral guilt as the physical act of murder.

When we look at murder from God's perspective we easily see why anger, hatred, and murder are so serious.

The Bible clearly teaches us that life is a sacred gift from God.

In Genesis 1 we read that God created mankind in His image, God blessed mankind, and God pronounced that His creation was very good.

God created mankind in His image so that we could have a personal relationship with Him.

Jeremiah 29:11 tells us that God has a definite plan for each individual.

Psalms 139 tells us that God designs each individual with specific talents and abilities to do a specific job for Him.

So it is obvious that if we destroy a life either verbally or physically we are destroying God's handiwork and we are destroying what is valuable to God.

In addition you are guilty of disrupting God's eternal plan when you murder someone because God created and God has a specific plan for the individual you murdered.

When you are angry, hate, or murder you are mocking Jesus forgiveness because Jesus loved that person enough to die for them.

The parable of The Good Samaritan teaches us that loving our neighbor means helping someone in need.

Then our lesson from Matthew 5 we learn that loving our neighbor also includes the way we think about other people, the way we talk about other people, the way we act toward other people, as well as forgiving other people.

The 7th Commandment is; ***"You shall not commit adultery."*** (Exodus 20:14)

I realize that sexual purity is a very touchy issue and it is totally contrary to today's culture which accepts and promotes being sexy, promiscuity, co-habitation before marriage, extra marital affairs, homosexuality, and polygamy.

However The Bible clearly and consistently teaches that any and all sexual relations are only to be enjoyed within the context of marriage.

If you do not like what The Bible says your argument is not with me.

You need to take your argument to The Lord Himself who wrote these prohibitions in the scriptures.

I challenge you to go home and read these other scriptures: Leviticus 20:10 - 23; Deuteronomy 5:18, Proverbs 6:32; Matthew 5:27-28, Romans 1:26 - 27; Galatians 5:19; 1st Corinthians 10:8; 1st Thessalonians 4:3-7; Hebrews 13:4, Revelation 2:20 - 22.

These scriptures are just a few of the many prohibitions against any sex outside of marriage that we find in The Bible.

As Christians we must address the issues of sexual sin because adultery, lust, teen pregnancy, fornication, and homosexuality are a major threat to our society.

And all forms of sexual immorality are a major problem in the church today.

Matthew 5 Jesus affirms the 7th Commandment, ***'You shall not commit adultery'*** and in verse 28 Jesus said; ***"I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart."***

Jesus is saying the sin of adultery also includes a person's attitude as well as their desire for sex outside of marriage.

Jesus tells us that sexual purity isn't just about avoiding sexual intercourse with someone who is married; adultery goes to the heart of a person's attitudes toward another person.

Proverbs 6: 25 is a clear warning to us; ***"Do not lust in your heart"***

In Matthew 15:18 Jesus said; ***"But the things that come out of a person's mouth come from the heart, and these defile them."***

Jesus was clear any sex outside of marriage is a very serious sin.

Again in Matthew 5 Jesus pointed out the fundamental errors of the Jewish religious leaders.

They were only considered the letter of the law not the spirit of the law.

They thought The 7th Commandment only prohibited married people having extra marital sex.

The Jewish religious leaders were only concerned with the civil penalty for breaking the 7th Commandment.

Leviticus 20: 10 clearly states that ***"both the adulterer and the adulteress are to be put to death."***

They neglected the spiritual meaning of God's Law and that God justly punishes all those who break His commandments.

If we only look at the literal wording of Exodus 20:14 we are no different than the Pharisees.

A second very common sexual sin that The 7th Commandment prohibits is the sin of fornication, which is means sexual relations between single or unmarried people.

1st Corinthians 6:18-20 says, ***"Flee from sexual immorality,"*** and the word used there is ***fornication."***

"All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body."

1st Thessalonians 4:1 – 8 condemns ***"all sexual immorality"*** and calls us to live holy and pure lives.

For us to understand why Jesus emphatically stated that any sex outside of marriage is a very serious sin we need to remember that The Bible refers to the church as The Bride Of Christ. (Ephesians 5:20-32)

Marriage is to be a picture of a believer's intimate relationship with Jesus.

So it is only logical that Jesus prohibits any and all sex outside of marriage.

The Bible is also clear that marriage is a three party covenant between a man, a woman, and God. That is why marriages between Christians should always be performed by a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

God's provision, God's protection, and God's power flow through His covenant with His people.

If you are not faithful to the provisions of God's covenant of marriage you will not experience all of God's blessings.

Think about this; if you take the morality out of sex then people engaged in sex become no more than a mating animal.

In today's society sex is accepted and expected between consenting adults.

Some people say, *"We live in a new era and have a new morality"*.

But remember in Hebrews 13:8 we read ***"Jesus is the same yesterday, and today, and forever"*** and last week we looked at Jesus' words in Matthew 5:18 where Jesus said; ***"I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen will by any means disappear from the law until all is accomplished."***

God's word is eternal and God's word is unchanging.

Some people ask; *"why would a good God fill us with such strong sexual desires and raging hormones and then command us to keep ourselves sexually pure?"*

God gave us the ability to resist temptation and to choose between good and evil.

God created us, God loves us, and God knows what is best for us. God's laws are for our ultimate good.

God wants us to experience the abundant victorious life He planned for us.

Jesus said; ***"The thief comes only to steal, kill, and destroy. I have come that they might have life, and have it to the full."*** (John 10:10)

In our lesson from Romans 13 we read that all of the commandments about our relationship with other people ***"may be summed up in this one command; "Love your neighbor as yourself"***.

"Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law."

AMEN