

Specifics on Gospel-Kingdom Living for Men!

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Date: 24 February 2019

Preacher: Jim Masters

[0:00] I'll read. And then we'll begin our study. Matthew 5, 17. Jesus continues the Sermon on the Mount.

Do not think that I came to abolish the law of the prophets. I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the law until all is accomplished.

Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments and teaches men shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever keeps and teaches, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

For I say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses the scribes and the Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. Verse 21.

You've heard that it was said to the ancients, you shall not commit murder. And whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court. But I say to you, that everyone who's angry with his brother shall be liable to the court.

[1:12] And whoever says to his brother, Raka shall be liable before the council. And whoever shall say moron shall be liable into the hell of fire.

Verse 23. Therefore, if you're presenting your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go.

Be reconciled first to your brother and then come and present your gift. Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with them on the way in order that your opponent may not deliver you to the judge and the judge to the officer and you be thrown into prison.

Truly, I say to you, you shall not come out of there until you have paid up the last quarter cent.

Verse 27. You've heard that it was said, you shall not commit adultery.

But I say to you, that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. And if your right eye stumbles you, tear it out and throw it from you.

[2:21] For it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand stumbles you, cut it off and throw it from you.

For it is better for you that one of the parts perish than for your whole body to go into hell. 31. And it was said, whoever sends his wife away, let him give her a certificate of divorce.

But I say to you, that everyone who sends his wife away except for the cause of unchastity makes her commit adultery. And whoever marries a sentaway woman commits adultery.

Quote, Democratic candidates face political risk when pressed on health care specifics. End quote. That's the title of the article.

And what? Triblive.com? The article says this. When Senator Kamala D. Harris spoke about health care at a CNN forum Monday evening, this past week, she threw her support behind a quote-unquote Medicare for all plan sounding similar to other candidates seeking the Democratic presidential nomination.

[3:40] But when pressed for, and I use the term specifics or details, the senator from California explained the idea in a way most Democrats assiduously avoid.

She agreed that Medicare for all also means private insurance for none. Let's eliminate all of that, Harris said, referring to private health insurance. Let's move on. End quote.

That did that kind of stir up the water here for all of you. Now you may agree or disagree with that issue. Whatever you stand on that. But regardless, here's the truth.

People want to know specifics, right? Of course they do. I mean, how to specifically do something of this magnitude? How will that work, practically speaking?

I mean, it's one thing to say, let's do this. It's another thing to actually, well, how does that flush itself out, right?

[4:41] I mean, how do you put some meat on that bones type principle? I mean, if you have children, I mean, you say to kids, go do this.

And they kind of look at you, blank stare, right? No, no, just go do that. You have to explain it to children. Specifically, okay, you have to do this and go do this and do this and do this and give them specifics.

Practical details. What does it look like? Well, we went through this first part on the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus gave principles.

God-dependent, right? Christ-exalting. Peace, harmony, integrity, right? We talked about those different aspects.

What are some specifics to this? This is gospel kingdom living, but how does it work itself out in the practical daily things of our lives?

[5:47] And that's what we'll see today. Bow down and worship Jesus, the Messiah, King of Israel. Here's specifics on gospel kingdom living. And we'll side note, specifics for men.

And I know, women, you deal with this too, but it's quite interesting how the last two that we looked at today in our verses, there's three of them, the last two really specifically hones in on us as men. So as far as my conviction, I think Jesus is really speaking to men at this point. And He's talking to all of those who are gospel kingdom living. Yes, it's true.

But He's really talking to us men. So, that's why I have it in parentheses there. Specifics on gospel kingdom living. Here's a statement for you. Jesus, the authoritative interpreter of the law, gave specific practical ways to live out the gospel kingdom in our lives.

For traits like mercy, integrity, and harmony, and even being God-dependent, Christ-exalting, and other ones we looked at last week, Jesus gave specific practical ways to put these traits into practice in everyday life.

[7:06] So first, what He does, He introduces Himself in relationship to the law, the law of Moses, or really Him in relation to the traditional understandings of the law.

And then He gives two sets of three specific contrasts. They say this, but I say. They say this, but I say. They say this, but I say.

And He does this showing His authoritative understanding. Another statement for you. This truly is Jesus defining things for His faith worshipers as to how they specifically would have gospel kingdom living.

In other words, this is truly living under the law of Christ. Living under the law of Christ begins here, the Sermon on the Mount. And as I said earlier, I'm convinced that these gospel kingdom ways of living are directed specifically toward men.

Not that women don't deal with anger, I think they do. I know they deal with lust and divorce, of course. But the fact of the matter is that Jesus spoke to men about lust and causing a woman to commit adultery.

[8:23] that's directed us as men. But be that as it may, true disciples, true gospel kingdom living lives the true original intent of the law, which is now seen in and through the eyes of the true authority of the law, the Messiah King of Israel.

We see things for how they really are because we're not under the law of Christ. He's the authority. He speaks the original intention of God's word.

Disciples of the Messiah King, they're not called to obey the law, Old Testament per se. We are called to obey our king as the ultimate interpreter of the law and its true authority.

I saw one writer put it, the ultimate interpreter of the law. That's a great way to put it. That's what Jesus is. He is the ultimate interpreter of the law. Oh, it went out.

Go figure that. But you know what? That guy is on top of that. You want to know why? Because Aaron's awesome. This would be true righteousness that surpasses the religious leaders of the day.

[9:47] This would be true gospel living. In other words, as he's getting up there, he's getting up, he's working on it, we emulate God's character. That's how another writer put it.

is we're emulating the very character of God in our lives. Which is why I gave you those specific songs that we sang this morning. Speak, O Lord. Which I think there is a part in there, I think it's the second verse, where we're emulating the character of God in our lives as the word is being spoken.

Having repented and trusting in our Messiah, King, God has begun this work in us in principle, but now we, his disciples, we're called to cultivate these things in our lives.

Jesus, practically speaking, Jesus, who is the ultimate goal of the law and the prophets and the one to whom they point, he came to show the true meaning of the law.

He's not simply reaffirming the law. As we go through this part in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is not simply, oh thank you, rock buddy. Oh yeah, he came to show the true meaning of the law.

[10:53] He didn't come just to affirm it. He goes even farther. Jesus is the sole authoritative teacher. It's like a new kind of law. It goes farther than in traditions.

Jesus would unfold the true implications that were in Moses the whole time, as one writer put it.

Thus, that's the reason why we're not under law but under grace.

That is the law of Christ. so that the whole Old Testament points to Jesus and he's the one who fulfills it. Or another way to put it, he's the goal of the law. Or Paul puts it in Romans chapter 10, the end of the law.

He is the authority. So notice, we'll start here verse 17 through 20. Jesus, the authority of the gospel kingdom. Notice how he begins, verse 17.

Don't think I came to abolish the law of the prophets. He's prohibiting his disciples from thinking he came to destroy the law. I did not come to abolish but fulfill it.

[12:00] To fulfill it because it's eternally valid. He didn't come to contradict the law or the prophets or destroy them or not just to reaffirm them.

He fulfills them. Jesus is the end or goal of the law because the law points to Jesus. It points to him. Romans chapter 10 verse 3. That's why Jesus teaching, he's not an antinomian, no law, but he stands as the authority of the law. What the law truly was intended to say.

As I said earlier, disciples of the Messiah King are not called to obey the law per se. They're called to obey their king as the ultimate interpreter of the law and its authority. this is true righteousness.

Notice how he affirms or I should say explains verse 17. Look at verse 18. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter, the stroke shall pass away until all is accomplished.

[13:06] Not even the slightest detail will go unaccomplished. when this present age ends, all will be done. Notice, the smallest letter in the Hebrew, it's a little yod.

It's like this, like that. It's like a little teeny little letter, a yod. Or, the stroke of a pen. We have that in our English language. It's important.

If it's a P, or you put a little slant on it, right? If you call some guy Paul versus Raul, that makes a kind of a difference. Not just ethnically, but English way.

A little push stroke there, it makes a difference. That's what Jesus is talking about. Not a little letter, not even a stroke. That's going to be accomplished.

So he's going from the lesser to the greater. God will bring to pass even the most trivial parts of written scripture, and thus, weighty matters will definitely be accomplished.

[14:07] The law is eternally valid. We're not called to do away with it, but to follow the law authority. It should not be taken lightly.

And notice what he says there in verse 19. Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments and teaches men shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever keeps and teaches, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Whoever takes these things seriously, and notice, both are in the kingdom. Both are in the kingdom. One is the least, the other is the greatest.

And then he makes the shocking statement, which is really kind of like almost thematic for the rest of the Sermon on the Mount.

Verse 20. For I say to you, now, before we look at this again, think about the fact you're listening to Jesus and you're a Jew.

[15:11] For I say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. That would shock you as a Jew.

These guys were perfect. Uh-uh. Far from it. They, like us, have three tendencies.

Dean Cathcart did a paper on this passage here and he sent it to me to help me out tremendously.

Dean gets credit for this. We have three tendencies.

We relax the total authority of God's commands, we measure righteousness by externals, and we elevate tradition over truth. That's exactly what we do and that's exactly what the Jews did and

that's exactly what the scribes and Pharisees did.

We will resort and default to doing this. We'll relax God's commands.

[16:17] Oh, he didn't really mean that. We'll measure righteousness by externals. Jesus will mention it's much more important for you to reconcile with somebody than for you to go to your little worship service.

And then we elevate tradition over truth. Tradition doesn't matter. God's truth does. We have these tendencies. Thank you, Dean. Good point.

Jesus fulfills the law and declares it to be authoritative for his disciples. He's the ultimate interpreter and he showed that higher righteousness is demanded than that taught by Israel's religious leaders. Not gained. Not developed. Demanded. But guess what? Jesus is the demand. He is the law fulfiller and it's through his shed blood on the cross by which sinners are declared righteous.

It's him. It's wrapped up in Jesus. And as we are cultivators of the Beatitudes upright gospel kingdom living we'll have a righteousness that far surpasses these scribes and Pharisees.

[17:35] Jesus will bring this up later. He says he's the way. The way is not through them the leaders but through the narrow gates.

I'll say that Matthew chapter 7 verse 13 enter through the narrow gate through the Messiah King the Lord Jesus he is the way. Look this is for you if you're here and you're not a Christian.

You must enter through that narrow gate. you must enter through Jesus. He is the demand. You must have relationship with Christ.

Repent today and trust Jesus. It's all wrapped up in him because he's the authoritative interpreter of the law. He is the authority.

It's him. So we looked at this first point Jesus the authority of the law now notice he goes into specific examples six examples we'll look at three today.

[18:30] First have gospel kingdom emotions verses 21 through 26 notice how he confronts the teaching of the Pharisees you've heard that it was said or you've heard that it was said to the ancients you shall not commit murder and whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.

So notice he's calling the disciples back to faithful intent of the law since he is the true authority of the law. He's not giving them like this new law so to speak but this is the original intent of the law calling us to true righteousness based solely on grace and enabled by the Holy Spirit.

Thank you Dean that's another great point. So this was the original intention of the law according to the Son of God and notice again that contrast the ancients were said this or they told you this or this is told to them to do this but notice what he does but I say to you notice the authority you see that contrast and also Jesus not just authority but versus what's said by these religious leaders who are in spiritual darkness they really don't know what they're talking about but I say to you verse 22 everyone who's angry with his brother shall be liable before the court whoever shall say to his brother empty head shall be liable before the council whoever shall say moron shall be liable into the hell of fire what's he saying anger and angry words are synonymous to murder as one writer put it perfect exactly this is the law of Christ and notice the three statements anger and then empty head calling them and then moron and he gives these three aspects of judgment so to speak liable to the judgment liable to the council and liable of the hell of fire and he does that not in terms of the ascending severity but vivid descriptions of anger's consequences in the court of law you're liable for the sin of anger you're liable to send hegemon for calling someone empty head you're liable to be sentenced to hell when you call someone in anger a moron so move notice how he moves from lashing out to speaking abusive speech or words you lash out you're an idiot you're a moron done in anger it's not just the action but it's the attitude another writer put it like this in God's eyes anger that expresses hostility is the same as murder anger that attacks another person's intelligence or moral uprightness is the same as murder another quote by Dean if there's anything with which men struggle we struggle with our tempers we struggle with our and I know you ladies you struggle with that too

I'm not saying that women don't but if there's one thing for us as men it's our tempers our anger and for us have control to put off the sin of anger that's why we read from Ephesians chapter 4 therefore put all aside anger wrath malice slander abusive speech from your mouth this way of gospel kingdom living is for all of Jesus followers and yet for us as men we really struggle with anger towards others so it's more important to reconcile than to do our religious duty because look at verse 23 therefore if you're presenting your gift at the altar and there you remember your brother has something against you verse 24 leave your gift there before the altar and go be reconciled first

to your brother then come present your gift or your offering it's more important to reconcile than to do your religious duty it's more important for us to have reconciliation and peace than to go do the church thing did you notice something now what Jesus does here in verse 23 it's not just your own anger but the anger of another toward you we must control our anger yes but also we must reconcile with others who are angry with us do you see that so reconciliation is more important than maintaining your own rights or being vindicated that's why sometimes we get angry about something because something was wrong something should not have happened and we get angry over it but reconciliation is more important than your feelings of hurt or offense we must take responsibility and reconcile with our brother and notice it's not just about controlling our own anger once again a gospel kingdom living follower of Jesus will not arouse other people's anger or you know pushing those buttons a true faith worshiper of the Messiah

King is resorted to what peacemaking harmony remember when Jesus talked about that the beatitude blessed are those who make peace remember when he said that we don't arouse other people's anger we don't push those buttons not about justice not about strife but about peacemaking truly putting off and putting on the emphasis for us as gospel kingdom followers of Jesus is we make reconciliation peace a greater priority than sacrifice Jesus will say this later he'll say this to the religious leaders the scribes and Pharisees go and learn what this means I desire mercy rather than sacrifice and look at what he says once again he says leave it there at the altar go so wait you just like leave it there yes go and this is why this passage

[26:04] I make mention of this once a month we're about to take the Lord's supper or we take it on Good Friday I make mention of this passage why because you are about to partake of the Lord's supper you're about to take of the bread and the juice which is what it's a symbol of how God has reconciled with you and yet you hold something against your brother or sister in Christ that's ridiculous leave your gift there at the altar don't you partake of that Lord's supper you go and if you even have to get up from your chair and go to that brother and say brother you know what I think there's something you have against me can we reconcile and make things right leave it there and go and reconcile first this way then you come and worship God then you come and glory in the fact that God has reconciled with you that's why

Jesus says that reconciliation is way more important than us doing our little church thing notice what he does here too verse 25 make friends quickly with your opponent at law where you're with them on the way for that your opponent may not deliver you to the judge the judge the officer you're thrown into prison notice not only do gospel kingdom faith worshipping Jesus followers seek reconciliation with those within the faith community we also reconcile with those outside of the faith community we settle things outside the judicial secular courts where judicial consequences may ensue which is why Jesus says in verse 26 truly I say to you you will not get out of there until you have paid up the last quarter cent first century debtors went to prison oh goodness if that happened today everybody would be in prison debtors went to prison until the last payment was made the point make the first effort to reconcile with others inside the community of faith or outside the community of faith don't let things fester and end up creating bitterness in your heart or in the heart of another now what's the first question that comes to mind what if they don't want to reconcile what if they don't want to reconcile with me then what do

I do you can't force them to do it can you you do what you can do to make things right with a brother or sister and then you leave it in God's hands gospel kingdom emotions that's what we're called to have number two have gospel kingdom eyes I notice this is directed towards men specifically verse 27 you've heard it was said you should not commit adultery but I say to you that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart as one writer puts it lust is synonymous to adultery if there's anything with which men struggle it's lust pornography is rampant everywhere in our society Jesus condemned adulterous thoughts which lead to the very act not just the behavior this is the true meaning of the seventh commandment and notice has committed adultery with her in his heart heart meaning the center of life emotions thoughts his will well she's dressing provocatively and it's her fault yep right

Jesus ain't stupid it's your problem pal it's our problem and even looking at a woman in a way where it entices her to lust that's on us too yes in the midst of the study I was reminded the Houston Chronicle brought up within Southern Baptist churches 380 Southern Baptist church leaders and volunteers face allegations of sexual misconduct have you seen that about 220 offenders have been convicted or took plea deals dozens of cases are pending they were pastors ministers youth

pastors Sunday school teachers deacons volunteers this is why Jesus wrote this this is why Jesus said this and then he says take radical steps look at verse 29 if your right eye stumbles you tear it out and throw it from you hyperbolic statements as a way to take radical steps to eradicate sin within us avoid sin even if it means radical sacrifice right eye and the right hand are means by which lustful thoughts are put into action they stumble you or the word means to entrap you so take radical surgery because blessed are the pure in heart those who have integrity remember that the beatitude to pluck out your eye and then he says here in verse 30 and if your right hand makes you stumble or causes you to stumble or stumbles you cut it off it's hyperbole you know like a little kid says what you're supposed to cut off your hand oh no what am I going to do then it's hyperbole it's meant to shock us it's better to radically deal with lust than to be thrown into hell because of it was one writer put it he says it's better to limp into heaven than leap into hell don't compromise with evil whatever measure it takes is that not the case for us in our society with pornography if you need to get rid of your computer go back to the my cell phone's down there go back to the you know phones that used to do this remember those a you know trying to text message where is the c oh I passed it again oh go back to the right three right remember those you go back to the flip up phones maybe that's what you take radical steps he says to have gospel kingdom eyes gospel kingdom emotions gospel kingdom eyes and then three have gospel kingdom marriages and I know it's put in the negative but I'm putting this in the positive verse 31 and it was said notice it was said oh this is whoever sends his wife away let him give her a certificate of divorce except in the case of fornication and we'll talk more about this in a moment divorce and remarriage is synonymous to adultery period as one writer puts it and he puts it very well now understand the teaching of the day in the first century get this which some of you probably already know many teachers of Jesus day gave men the complete right of

way to divorce many taught they were permitted to send their wife away to divorce her if she spoiled a meal or there's a more beautiful woman available now not all taught that but some actually did as a matter of fact within Judaism a man was entitled to divorce his wife she was not permitted to divorce her husband so you know why Jesus said this Jesus said this to protect wives and women in general I brought this up to this gal in Jerome I said I've been thinking about you all week she says why I said because once again I reminded of the fact that Jesus was a revolutionary and he was on the side of women he cared about them tremendously because in the first century they were outcasts and here's an example he was a radical in his day so it's clear but I say to you everyone who divorces sends his wife away except for the cause of unchastity and that meaning is debated causes her notice he causes her and a potential future spouse to commit adultery so if no infidelity then no real divorce and if no real divorce and no remarriage the meaning is evident case is closed as far as Jesus is concerned and remember

[35 : 42] Jesus is the ultimate authority of the law he's the ultimate interpreter God hates divorce period if it's at all possible it should not happen God's original intention of marriage was that it was for life which is why we say till death do us part because we're called to peace remember that harmony blessed are the peacemakers now as to the meaning of unchastity we're going to reserve that when we go through Matthew chapter 19 because there's lots of debate about what that means with unchastity and why Jesus uses which is actually the word pornea we get the word fornication why does Jesus use that word and not the actual word adultery he doesn't use that word he uses fornication why we'll talk about that when we get into Matthew chapter 19 because it's much more extensive there but for now

I want to bring up these points in reference to divorce and remarriage number one the stance of Cottonwood Bible Church is that sexual union with another person other than one spouse is grounds for divorce and therefore remarriage but mind you it doesn't need to go down the road of divorce remember what Jesus just talked about reconciliation in other words get this just because God allows something it doesn't mean he endorses it somebody comes to you and says God allows for slavery slavery is in the Bible it doesn't mean he endorses it as a matter of fact God is against it why did God permit divorce which is what the Pharisees asked Jesus right we'll get to that in Matthew chapter 19 but they say why did Moses give permission permission and they actually said it like that too why did

Moses get permission and what does Jesus say because of the hardness of your hearts in other words you're going to do it anyways because we don't what is our tendency we're going to get away with as much as we can right that's our tendency and that's what Jesus says because of the

hardness of your hearts because you're going to do it anyways so God gives you parameters so anyways this is the stance of Cottonwood Bible Church as a church now number two there is debate as to what unchastity means here the American sense is unchastity for fornication I personally am one who will take a much stricter understanding of it within the context of Matthew's gospel in light of Mark's gospel and Luke's gospel we'll get to that when we get to Matthew chapter 19 but you got to know that you know these things but number three some take the view that Paul gave another ground for divorce in 1 Corinthians chapter 7 right desertion now it's debatable on the nuance of that word when you desert you should wait to reconcile wait for what wait so that you can remarry or wait so you can reconcile with them see there's debate with that within 1 Corinthians 7 and not to mention the fact who makes the call on desertion if somebody comes to me and says Pastor Jim my spouse deserted me okay I'm not going to give you like a blessing that you can divorce your husband I'm not going to do that I will not do that I cannot do that that's not meant for me to do that you need to decide that in your own mind and you better make sure you're deciding from scripture because if you don't you can be convened the sin of adultery you see what I mean that's a very serious issue you need to work through so that's number four physical abuse is not grounds for divorce you see that and you can't say Jesus didn't know about that he ain't stupid he's the son of God let's not belittle him now our culture says differently our culture says physical abuse is ground for us Jesus does not say that now would we say a wife or a husband should just take it no absolutely not church discipline along with the local authorities will most assuredly come into the picture but mind you it's not grounds for divorce last one number five some here in this room have divorced for non-biblical reasons and have remarried what do you do I actually had somebody years ago say to me well should [41:13] I divorce this wife and go back to no brother no as Paul has said the place that you're at right now you stay what do you do you repent and stay faithful to your present spouse Lord what I did I probably should not have done that there was no biblical grounds for that I repent and I thank you that there's forgiveness of sins and I'm going to honor Christ in this marriage for the glory of my king that's what you do you know go down what if I should have I want stop repent I confess I repent this is the marriage that you have for me I'm going to honor Christ in this allow your marriage to be a display of the gospel to all people let them see Christ in this marriage that you have let them see Jesus in this marriage let them see true gospel kingdom living in this marriage that you have and for that matter may we allow the gospel to be displayed in all of our lives with the freedom that our father has forgiven us of all our sins when we don't control our anger when we don't control our lust and even when we've been divorced for unbiblical reasons

God is faithful isn't he he's faithful gospel kingdom marriages gospel kingdom eyes gospel kingdom emotions we are Christ exulters he is our Messiah King Jesus we follow you Jesus Jesus the authoritative interpreter of the law he gives us specific practical ways to live out the gospel kingdom in our lives for traits mercy integrity harmony he gives you specific practical ways he put these traits into practice in the daily living one kingdom because as Christ exulters we follow Jesus he's our authority he's our king right he's our king Lord Jesus thank you father thank you Holy Spirit thank you that you take the word the living word written in the written word directing us back to you Father thank you for your grace and your mercy that you show us and thank you Jesus that you are the demand you are the authority and we follow you and we know we fall so short and yet thank you that in you there's forgiveness and grace because we are a people that are so in need of forgiveness and grace take these moments where it's just you and Christ your King and let the word of God let it be implanted deep within you let your mind dwell on these things and we'll do our time of giving we'll sing songs we'll do those things but for now just for a minute between you and your King relish and let your mind ponder maybe pray

God work these traits in me of emotions in my eyes my marriage where you have me in my life I want to honor you my King do that take a few moments let these truths sink deep into your soul come before you thank you and then let your soul we'll do it quick just to sharing to you and come Fortune and let your mind see you again between your mind