

The Sermon on the Mount, Part 2.

Start living like you mean it. Matt 5:13-32

I marvel at an original and august religion, wholly divine in its authority, its longevity, its perpetuity, its morality, its conduct, its doctrines, its effects.

Thus I stretch out my arms to my Savior, who, after being foretold for four thousand years, came on earth to die and suffer for me at the time and in the circumstances foretold. By his grace I peaceably await death, in the hope of being eternally united to him, and meanwhile I live joyfully, whether in the blessings which he is pleased to bestow on me or in the afflictions he sends me for my own good and taught me how to endure by his example.

Blaise Pascal, Pensées: series XXVIII

Living as disciples in this world, v.13-20.

- Be salt, v.13.
 - Of what value are bland Christians? _____
- Be light, v.14-16.
 - Why are we ashamed of our witness? _____
- Live by the rules, v.17-20.
 - V.17, “the law,” gr. “*nomos*.” indicating both a general concept of law or rules, and also specifically the law of Moses.
 - Oops, what about all the faith v. works stuff? _____
 - Though we are no longer under the “law,” our faith should manifest it:
 - Romans 3:31. _____
 - Gal. 3:21-29. _____
 - Though we have freedom through Christ from the law, we now are required to respond by the Spirit, with discernment.
 - Gal.5:1-6. _____
 - Eph. 2:10. _____

Refining, or rather seeing the spirit, of the rules, v.14-32.

Here we are required to consider the “shape” or condition of our heart. Why do we stay inside the boundaries? Do we consider the law as a restriction or as a guide?

- Comparing murder with the rage of the heart, v.21-22. _____
- Debts of the heart, v. 23-26.
 - Grudges and insults. _____
 - Seeking forgiveness. _____
 - The penalty grows as the perceived insult grows, v.25-26. _____
- Creating new rules to accommodate our weaknesses and lusts, v.27-32.
 - “Lust”, *epithumeo*:” “to set the heart upon or long for.”
 - A judgment on lust as defined above, and on the epidemic rate of divorce among Jewish men at that time. _____
 - Mark 10:5-9, _____

Bringing this into the twentieth century.

- Making new rules, or rather, watering down the old rules to accommodate behavior.
 - Weak and loose. _____
 - Excusing violence. _____
- The result:
 - Broken hearts. _____
 - Disintegrated families. _____
 - Addiction, obsession, violence, and vain death. _____
- The real problem: obscuring the weakness and failure of the human heart:
 - To forgive. _____
 - To seek reconciliation. _____
 - To seek forgiveness. _____

The answer the world hates and refuses to accept: to submit to the sovereignty of another, namely God in the person of Jesus Christ as the redeeming and restoring sacrifice, who freely gives us his spirit when we turn in the old one.