

UPPER ROOM SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY

Living the Life of the Beloved/Belonging: Matthew 5-7

Pastor Jim Otte

Spring-Summer, 2018

Lesson 10 – (May 20, 2018) Matthew 5:31-37

From Last Session:

- a. Anyone can commit the sins of lust.
- b. Frequent lusting leads to addiction and the formation of a false god.
- c. The false god “speaks” the message that God’s “belovedness” cannot be trusted.

Matthew 5:31-32

³¹ “It has been said, ‘Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.’^[a] ³² But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

a. “Anyone who divorces his wife must...”

a. Jewish Marriage/Divorce:

b. Deuteronomy 24:1. *If a man marries a woman who becomes displeasing to him because he finds something indecent about her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house,*

c. Two divergent schools of teaching:

i. Shammai – “**something indecent**” = adultery; immorality

ii. Hillel – “**something Indecent**” = any reason displeasing to the husband

1. Women were considered property of the man/father

2. No rights to divorce even if abused

d. Matthew 19:3. *Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?”*

i. “They asked”: (“Out of which school of thought do you teach?”)

e. Greek Marriage/Divorce:

i. Marriage was primarily for having legitimate children.

ii. Sexual relationships outside of marriage were common and accepted as normal and healthy.

iii. Temple prostitution was revered; funds were used to build temples

iv. Wives were expected to remain chaste and secluded, while husbands could be as sexually immoral as they wished

f. Roman Marriage/Divorce:

i. Prior to Greek influences, Romans practiced home/marriage fidelity

ii. Romans eventually adopted the more immoral Greek practices.

- b. “except for sexual immorality”** – engaging in sexual immorality (adultery) was breaking the marriage vow, and would give a believer the legitimate right to divorce (though not divorcing was an option!).
- c. “makes her the victim”** – if the woman did not commit adultery, and her husband divorced her anyway (Hillel School), then she would be a “*victim of adultery*,” that is, everyone would assume that her adultery was the cause of the divorce. She would unjustly suffer!
- d. “who marries a divorced woman commits adultery”** – If the same woman, then, married another man, he would be a second victim, unjustly suffering the stigma of marrying someone reputed to be an adulterer.
 - a. Jesus’ Point:** Jewish marriage/divorce law had reached such a low point, that it became an issue of temporal convenience rather than a response to God’s love, as a way to love God back and love the neighbor.
 - b. Matthew 19:4-6.**⁴ “Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’⁵ and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’⁶? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”
 - i.** Biblical marriage consists of one man/one woman.
 - ii.** Oneness in marriage is a gift from God, expressed sexually and exclusively, within the confines of marriage.
 - iii.** Oneness is not given when people live together outside of marriage.
 - iv.** Living together does not prepare people to be married. It prepares them for living together.
 - v.** God’s intent is for marriage to last your lifetime.
 - vi.** If death occurs, people are free to marry again.
 - vii. The Beloved Life Principle #22:** Reasons for divorce vary. It still involves forgivable _____.

Matthew 5:33-37

³³ “Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not break your oath, but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made.’

- a. “Do not break your oath”** – In Jesus’ day, two abuses regarding oath-taking were happening.
 - a. Fivolous swearing,** where no oath was required.
 - i.** “*On my mother’s grave.*”
 - ii.** “*I swear to God.*”
 - iii.** The use of sacred language in a trite way.
 - b. Evasive swearing,** where the object of the oath determined one’s being bound to his oath.
 - i.** “*In God’s name*” – bound the person to the oath.
 - ii.** “*Heaven is my witness*” – did not bind the person to the oath.

- c. Rationalization: If God's name was used, then God became a partner in the transaction (Barclay); if God's name was not used, then He had nothing to do with the promise.

³⁴ **But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is God's throne; ³⁵ or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. ³⁶ And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black.**

a. **"for it is God's throne...footstool...the city of"**

- a. **The Beloved Life Principle #23**: You can't divide _____ into compartments, in which God is involved or not involved. "*What I do in my personal life doesn't affect my public life,*" is a common belief to justify compartmentalized spirituality.
- b. All of life belongs to God, whether you are at work, school, home, church, in private, or in public.
- c. The exception to the rule is in the courts, where "*so help me God,*" is a commonly required oath.

³⁷ **All you need to say is simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.**

a. **"All you need to say is simply..." –**

- a. **The Beloved Life Principle #24**: Be mindful of your choice of words! They matter! They reflect the voice of who's in _____!
- b. **Question**: What practical steps do you follow to teach young people that their word matters?
 - i. **Hold them to their promises.**
 - ii. **Teach them to think about the consequences before they agree to something.**
 - iii. **Don't let them quit.**
 - iv. **You keep your word, even if unforeseen obstacles get in your way.**