



“Beyond Rule Keeping: Anger”

Current Series: The Gospel of Matthew

Key Passage: Matthew 5:21-26

Opening thoughts

Many people often view Christianity as merely an outward standard of behavior people are commanded by God to resemble, but God is intensely interested in what is taking place inside our hearts. In the passage we’re studying today, Jesus describes the sin of anger to be just as worthy of judgment as the sin of murder, because both are evidences of the real problem – the brokenness of sin. The remedy to this brokenness is not adherence to an outward law, but rather the gospel of Jesus, which brings forgiveness and restoration.

Other passages we’ll examine:

Romans 5:8-11; 1 Corinthians 13:4
Matthew 22:37-40; Romans 8:1-15
Galatians 2:19,20; Matthew 23:25-28
Mark 14:20-23; 1 Peter 2:18-25
James 1:19,20

Key Definitions:

Idolatry – Making something other than God your ultimate source of happiness, security, identity, and comfort.

New humanity – People who have been forgiven through Jesus and are being restored by Jesus back into the image of God.

Key Points and Questions To Take With You

How does anger typically manifest itself in your life – through venting or through the “slow burn”?

Think back to the times in the recent past that you have been angry. Can you identify the things in your life that had become too important to you?

Why is Jesus just as concerned about anger in our hearts as He is about murder?

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Do you have the view of Christianity that as long as you are generally behaving well, you must be doing all right as a Christian? What is wrong with this view?

If the anger in your heart, no matter how well hidden, is not dealt with, what are some possible outcomes?

Look at Romans 8:28,29, Colossians 3:9,10, and 2 Corinthians 5:17. What is the ultimate purpose of God for our lives? How does this go far beyond keeping rules? What steps do you need to take this week to work with God in this process?

What have you learned about what it means to follow Jesus that you could share with someone God has placed in your life this week?

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