

Matthew 5:23-26: So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. ²⁵ Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. ²⁶ Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

Intro: Matt 5:21-22: You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; & whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; & whoever says ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire

a. Jesus’ Disciples Heard A Wrong Interpretation Of The Law

Jesus’ hearers heard God’s law and Word from the Scribes and Pharisees and Sadducees. They were the primary teachers of Israel. But they did not teach God’s law and Word faithfully! Jesus gives the proper and fully authoritative interpretation and meaning of God’s law and God’s Word!

b. The Pharisees, Scribes, And Sadducees Taught God’s Law But They Mishandled And Abused It

They taught, for instance, that if you didn’t physically murder someone, then you have kept the fullness of this commandment. Their righteousness was only external! They didn’t get to the heart of the matter!

c. Four Basic Principles Of Jesus’ Six “But I Say To You” Statements

Lloyd -Jones: 1) The spirit of the law matters to God, not merely the letter of the law. Obedience to the law is not in actions only, but also in thoughts, motives, and desires

2) The law is not merely about what we can’t do, but it’s about a passionate pursuit of holiness and righteousness for the glory of God

3) Christ’s commandments are not a burden, but a joy and a delight to God’s people

4) Christ’s commandments are not an end in themselves – the end is to know & glorify God: our obedience to them is evidence that we are born again & trust and know God & have a vital, living relationship with God

d. Jesus Warns Us About Our Anger – It Is Murderous

1. You Cannot Love God And Hate Your Brother

1 John 4:20: If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.

Matt 5:23-24: if you are offering your gift at the altar & there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar & go. First be reconciled to your brother, & then come and offer your gift

a. We should love others so much that we try not to make them angry: D. A. Carson: Remarkably, neither illustration deals with “your” anger but with “your” offense that has prompted the brother’s or the adversary’s rancor . . . We are more likely to remember when we have something against others than when we have done something to offend others. And if we are truly concerned about our anger and hate, we shall be no less concerned when we [cause anger and hate] in others.

b. We should not try to atone for moral failure or cover up moral failure by doing good, religious activity (Lloyd-Jones): Carl Lentz: Our time at Hillsong NYC has come to an end. This is a hard ending to what has been the most amazing, impacting and special chapter of our lives. Leading this church has been an honor in every sense of the word and it is impossible to articulate how much we have loved and will always love the amazing people in this church. When you accept the calling of being a pastor, you must live in such a way that it honors the mandate.

That it honors the church, and that it honors God. When that does not happen, a change needs to be made and has been made in this case to ensure that standard is upheld. Laura and I and our amazing children have given all that we have to serve and build this church and over the years I did not do an adequate job of protecting my own spirit, refilling my own soul and reaching out for the readily available help that is available. When you lead out of an empty place, you make choices that have real and painful consequences. I was unfaithful in my marriage, the most important relationship in my life and held accountable for that. This failure is on me, and me alone and I take full responsibility for my actions. I now begin a journey of rebuilding trust with my wife, Laura and my children and taking real time to work on and heal my own life and seek out the help that I need . . . Thank you for your grace and kindness especially in this season, as you have done so much to protect and love us through this. We, the Lentz family, don't know what this next chapter will look like, but we will walk into it together very hopeful and grateful for the grace of God.

Lloyd-Jones: This matter, He tells us, is so important, that, even if I find myself at the altar with a gift I am going to offer to God, and there suddenly remember something I have said or done, something which is causing another person to stumble or go wrong somehow; if I find that I am harboring unkind and unworthy thoughts about him or in any way hindering his life, then our Lord tells us (may I put it thus with reverence), we should, in a sense, even keep God waiting rather than stay. We must get right with our brother and then come back and offer the gift. In the sight of God there is no value whatsoever in an act of worship if we harbor a known sin. The Psalmist puts it like this, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." If I, in the presence of God, and while trying to worship God actively, know there is sin in my heart which I have not dealt with and confessed, my worship is useless. There is no value in it at all. If you are in a state of conscious enmity against another, if you are not speaking to another person, or if you are harboring these unkind thoughts and are a hindrance and an obstacle to that other, God's Word assures you that there is no value in your attempted act of worship. It will avail you nothing, the Lord will not hear you.

c. God is not interested in our public worship of Him if we are not in right relationship with one another: If we are not talking to one another, loving one another, forgiving one another, seeking to serve one another, considering one another better than ourselves, thinking pure, holy, kind, loving thoughts toward one another, then we are not in a right relationship with one another. And that means we are not in a right relationship with God.

The Lord's Supper: 1 Corinthians 11:20-32: When you come together, it is not the Lord's supper that you eat.
²¹ For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal. One goes hungry, another gets drunk. ²² What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I commend you in this? No, I will not. ²³ For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. ²⁷ Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹ For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. ³⁰ That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. ³¹ But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. ³² But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.

If you know someone in this church has something against you, go to them and be reconciled!

If you know you've done something to hurt or offend someone else, go and be reconciled!

d. Be reconciled: Verse 24: First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

Seven A's Of Biblical Confession (Peacemaker Ministries)

- 1) Address everyone involved (All those whom you affected)
- 2) Avoid if, but, and maybe (Do not try to excuse your wrongs)
- 3) Admit specifically (Both attitudes and actions)
- 4) Acknowledge the hurt (Express sorrow for hurting someone)
- 5) Accept the consequences (Such as making restitution)
- 6) Alter your behavior (Change your attitudes and actions)
- 7) Ask for forgiveness

Four Promises Of Forgiveness

I will not dwell on this incident.

I will not bring up this incident again and use it against you.

I will not talk to others about this incident.

I will not let this incident stand between us or hinder our personal relationship.

2. Be Quick To Give Justice To Those You Have Wronged

Matthew 5:25-26: Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. ²⁶ Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

This circumstance is not in the church but in the secular justice system setting. You have done something to wrong someone (it could be stealing, or some financial crime, fraud or embezzling money), and Jesus is saying make it right with them **quickly**, even before it gets to court.

D. A. Carson: Settle matters with the offended adversary while still “with him on the way” to court . . . In the ancient world, debtors were jailed until the debts were paid.

Jesus' words echo 1 Corinthians 6:1-11: If any of you has a dispute with another, dare he take it before the ungodly for judgment instead of before the saints? ² Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? ³ Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life! ⁴ Therefore, if you have disputes about such matters, appoint as judges even men of little account in the church! ⁵ I say this to shame you. Is it possible that there is nobody among you wise enough to judge a dispute between believers? ⁶ But instead, one brother goes to law against another-- and this in front of unbelievers! ⁷ The very fact that you have lawsuits among you means you have been completely defeated already. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated? ⁸ Instead, you yourselves cheat and do wrong, and you do this to your brothers. ⁹ Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders ¹⁰ nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Who makes reconciliation possible? God the Son was enjoying the fellowship of the glory of the Triune God from all eternity. But He and His Father and the Holy Spirit had something against sinners! So He left heaven, took on human flesh, lived a perfectly obedient life, died on that cross for sinners, and rose from the dead so that we might be reconciled to God forever by faith alone in Christ alone and then be reconciled to one another!

Jesus Gives The Gift Of Peace
Making Sin And Judgment Cease
Through His Life And Death Decrease
But Resurrection Life Increase
All Conflicts Cease And He Wins Peace

And From Sin's Bondage Does Release
So Trust The Son The Prince Of Peace
In Christ You'll Be God's Masterpiece
And Reconcile To Him Increase!