

Brandon Phillips / General

The King and His Glory / Kingdom of God; Sin; Righteousness / Matthew 5:21–48

Jesus informs His hearers of six demanding truths that characterize the Kingdom ethic which is the heart of OT law.

Pre-Sermon Comments

[Romans 12:15](#) (LSB) ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep,

[James 1:1](#) (LSB) ¹ James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, **To the twelve tribes who are in the Dispersion:** Greetings.

[James 5:1–6](#) (LSB) ¹ Come now, you rich, cry, howling over your miseries which are coming upon you. ² Your riches have rotted and your garments have become moth-eaten. ³ Your gold and your silver have rusted, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. You have stored up *such* treasure in the last days! ⁴ Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields—that which has been withheld by you—cries out against you; and the outcries of those who did the harvesting have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. ⁵ You have lived luxuriously on the earth and lived in self-indulgence. You have fattened your hearts in a DAY OF SLAUGHTER. ⁶ You have condemned and murdered the righteous *man*; he does not resist you.

[James 1:2–4](#) (LSB) ² Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you encounter various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith brings about perseverance. ⁴ And let perseverance have *its* perfect work, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

[James 1:12](#) (LSB) ¹² Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which *the Lord* has promised to those who love Him.

[Acts 7:54-60](#) (LSB) ⁵⁴ Now when they heard this, they became furious in their hearts, and they *began gnashing their teeth at him.* ⁵⁵ But being full of the Holy Spirit, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; ⁵⁶ and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." ⁵⁷ But crying out with a loud voice, they covered their ears and rushed at him with one accord. ⁵⁸ And when they had driven him out of the city, they *began stoning him;* and the witnesses laid aside their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹ They went on stoning Stephen as he was calling out and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" ⁶⁰ Then falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" And having said this, he fell asleep.

[Acts 2:41-42](#) (LSB) ⁴¹ So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. ⁴² And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers.

[Colossians 1:24](#) (LSB) ²⁴ Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and I fill up what is lacking of Christ's afflictions in my flesh, on behalf of His body, which is the church,

[Judges 21:25](#) (LSB) ²⁵ In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

"I must say I'm slightly horrified to hear that Ramadan is being promoted instead, I feel that we are a Christian country." ~ Richard Dawkins

"It's true that statistically, the number of people who actually believe in Christianity is going down and I'm happy with that, but I would not be happy if, for example, we lost all our cathedrals and our beautiful parish churches. So, I count myself a cultural Christian. I think it would matter if we... substituted any alternative religion, that would be truly dreadful. ~ Richard Dawkins

I find that I like to live in a culturally Christian country, although I do not believe a single word of the Christian faith. ~ Richard Dawkins

[Judges 21:25](#) (LSB) ²⁵ In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Sermon Text

[Matthew 5:31-32](#) (LSB) ³¹ “Now it was said, ‘WHOEVER SENDS HIS WIFE AWAY, LET HIM GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE’; ³² but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Proposition and Outline

Section Outline

In [Matthew 5:21-48](#), Jesus informs His hearers of six demanding truths that characterize the Kingdom way which is the heart of OT law. Jesus teaches:

- **Thou Shalt Not Get Angry! ([Matt 5:21-26](#))**
- **Thou Shalt Not Lust! ([Matt 5:27-30](#))**
- **Thou Shalt Not Get a Divorce (in most circumstances)! ([Matt 5:31-32](#))**
- **Thou Shalt Let Your Yes be Yes! ([Matt 5:33-37](#))**
- **Thou Shalt Not Resist an Evil Person ([Matt 5:38-42](#))**
- **Thou Shalt Love Your Enemies ([Matt 5:43-48](#))**

Today's Sermon

In [Matthew 5:27-30](#), Jesus teaches the third of six demanding truths that characterize the Kingdom way, which is the heart of OT law. Jesus teaches -

Thou Shalt Not Get a Divorce (in most circumstances)! [Matt 5:31-32](#)

1. Jesus gives the letter of the command ([Matt 5:31](#))

2. Jesus gives the spirit of the command ([Matt 5:32](#))
3. Jesus illustrates the seriousness of the command ([Matt 5:32](#))
 - a. Wrongful Divorce:
 - i. Makes Her Commit Adultery! ([Matt 5:32](#))
 - ii. Makes Him Commit Adultery! ([Matt 5:32](#))

Introduction

Marriage is a covenant consecrated by God. ~ **John Calvin**

There is no estate to which Satan is more opposed as to marriage. ~ **Martin Luther**

The nearer a nation's laws about marriage approach to the law of Christ, the higher has the moral tone of that nation always proved to be. ~ **J. C. Ryle**

The most difficult years of marriage are those following the wedding. ~ **Anonymous**

There is no perfect marriage for there are no perfect people. ~ **Anonymous**

There is no more lovely, friendly or charming relationship, communion or company, than a good marriage. ~ **Martin Luther**

Review

[Matthew 5:20](#) (LSB) ²⁰ “For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses *that* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Thou Shalt Not Get Angry! ([Matt 5:21-26](#))

Jesus gives the letter of the command ([Matt 5:21](#))

[Matthew 5:21](#) (LSB) ²¹ “You have heard that the ancients were told, ‘YOU SHALL NOT MURDER’ and ‘Whoever murders shall be guilty before the court.’

Jesus gives the spirit of the command ([Matt 5:22](#))

[Matthew 5:22](#) (LSB) ²² “But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, ‘Raca,’ shall be guilty before the Sanhedrin; and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ shall be guilty *enough to go* into the fiery hell.

Jesus gives two illustrations of the command ([Matt 5:23-26](#))

[Matthew 5:23-24](#) (LSB) ²³ “Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.

[Matthew 5:25-26](#) (LSB) ²⁵ “Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way, so that your opponent may not hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. ²⁶ “Truly I say to you, you will not come out of there until you have paid up the last quadrans.

Thou Shalt Not Lust! ([Matt 5:27-30](#))

Jesus gives the letter of the command ([Matt 5:27](#))

[Matthew 5:27](#) (LSB) ²⁷ “You have heard that it was said, ‘YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY’;

[Matthew 5:28](#) (LSB) ²⁸ but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

[2 Samuel 11:2-3](#) (LSB) ² Now when evening came David arose from his bed and walked around on the roof of the king’s house, and from the roof he saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful in appearance. ³ So David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, “Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?”

Jesus illustrates the seriousness of the command ([Matt 5:29-30](#))

Pluck your Eye ([Matt 5:29](#)) and cut off your hand ([Matt 5:30](#))!

Thou Shalt Not Get a Divorce! ([Matt 5:31-32](#))

Jesus gives the letter of the command ([Matt 5:31](#))

[Matthew 5:31](#) (LSB) ³¹ “Now it was said, ‘WHOEVER SENDS HIS WIFE AWAY, LET HIM GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE’;

The background to Jesus’s quote in [Matthew 5:31](#)

[Deuteronomy 24:1-4](#)

[Deuteronomy 24:1](#) (LSB) ¹ “If a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts *it* in her hand and sends her out from his house,

Leviticus 20:10 LSB

¹⁰ ‘If *there is* a man who commits adultery with another man’s wife, one who commits adultery with his friend’s wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

Deuteronomy 22:22–24 LSB

²² “If a man is found lying with a married woman, then both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman, and the woman; thus you shall purge the evil from Israel. ²³ “If there is a girl who is a virgin engaged to a man, and *another* man finds her in the city and lies with her, ²⁴ then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city, and you shall stone them, and they will die; the girl, because she did not cry out in the city, and the man, because he has violated his neighbor’s wife. Thus you shall purge the evil from among you.

[Deuteronomy 24:2–4](#) (LSB) ² and she goes out of his house and goes and becomes another man’s *wife*, ³ and if the latter husband turns against her and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts *it* in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her to be his wife, ⁴ *then* her former husband who sent her away is not allowed to take her again to be his

wife, since she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before Yahweh, and you shall not bring sin on the land which Yahweh your God gives you as an inheritance.

Israel twists our Lord's intent

[Matt 19:1-9](#)

[Matthew 19:3-6](#) (LSB) ³ And *some* Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and saying, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?"

⁴ And He answered and said, "Have you not read that He who created *them* from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE, ⁵ and said, 'FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH'?"

⁶ "So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate."

⁸ He said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way.

God's permission for divorce was but another accommodation of His grace to human sin. ~ John MacArthur

[Matthew 19:9](#) (LSB) ⁹ "And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery."

You cannot understand marriage unless you are a Christian. ~ **David Martyn Lloyd-Jones**

God's original intent for marriage - [Gen 1 & 2](#)

[Genesis 1](#)

[Genesis 1:1](#) (LSB) ¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

[Psalm 24:1](#) (LSB) ¹ The earth is Yahweh's, as well as its fullness, The world, and those who dwell in it.

[Romans 1:18](#) (LSB) ¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

[Proverbs 3:19](#) (LSB) ¹⁹ Yahweh by wisdom founded the earth, By discernment He established the heavens.

[Genesis 1:26–28](#) (LSB) ²⁶ Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness, so that they will have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” ²⁷ And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

²⁸ God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that creeps on the earth.”

[Genesis 1:31](#) (LSB) ³¹ And God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

[Genesis 2](#)

[Genesis 2:1–4](#) (LSB) ¹ Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts. ² And on the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because on it He rested from all His work which God had created in making *it*. ⁴ These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that Yahweh God made earth and heaven.

[Genesis 2:5–6](#) (LSB) ⁵ Now no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet grown, for Yahweh God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground. ⁶ But a stream would rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground.

[Genesis 2:7–8](#) (LSB) ⁷ Then Yahweh God formed man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and so the man became a living

being. ⁸ And Yahweh God planted a garden in Eden, toward the east; and there He placed the man whom He had formed.

[Genesis 2:9](#) (LSB) ⁹ And out of the ground Yahweh God caused to grow every tree that is desirable in appearance and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

[Genesis 2:15](#) (LSB) ¹⁵ Then Yahweh God took the man and set him in the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.

[Genesis 2:16–17](#) (LSB) ¹⁶ And Yahweh God commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden you may surely eat; ¹⁷ but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat from it; for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.”

[Genesis 2:18](#) (LSB) ¹⁸ Then Yahweh God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.”

[Genesis 2:19–20](#) (LSB) ¹⁹ And out of the ground Yahweh God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and He brought *each* to the man to see what he would call it; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ And the man gave names to all the cattle and to the birds of the sky and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him.

[Genesis 2:21–25](#) (LSB)²¹ So Yahweh God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. ²² And Yahweh God fashioned the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman, and He brought her to the man.

A wife worthy of the name does not need to be exhorted to take an interest in her husband’s affairs; she counts it her greatest privilege to be helping her husband; she is vitally interested in all he does, and in its success. ~ **David Martyn Lloyd-Jones**

²³ Then the man said, “This one finally is bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh; This one shall be called Woman, Because this one was taken out of Man.”

²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother, and cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.

As God designed it, marriage is to be the welding of two people together into one unit, the blending of two minds, two wills, two sets of emotions, two spirits. ~ John MacArthur

You cannot detach yourself from your body, so you cannot detach yourself from your wife. ~ **David Martyn Lloyd-Jones**

God's love ties the marriage knot so fast that neither death nor hell can break it. ~ **Thomas Watson**

[Matthew 19:6](#) (LSB) ⁶ “So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.”

[Mark 10:9](#) (LSB) ⁹ “What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.”

Marriage was God's plan, not man's, and in the deepest sense every couple that has ever been married, whether believers or not, participates in a union established by the Creator Himself. ~ John MacArthur

The Fall - [Genesis 3](#)

[Genesis 2:16–17](#) (LSB) And Yahweh God commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden you may surely eat; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat from it; for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.”

[Genesis 3:6](#) (LSB) Then the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make *one* wise, so she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

[Romans 5:12](#) (LSB) Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—

[Genesis 3:16](#) (LSB) To the woman He said, “I will greatly multiply Your pain and conception, In pain you will bear children; Your desire will be for your husband, And he will rule over you.”

Conclusion

The Gospel

God

Created and owns everything

[Gen 1:1](#)—*In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth*

[Psalm 24:1](#)—*The earth is the Lord’s, and all it contains, the world and those who dwell in it.*

Is Perfectly Holy

[1 John 1:5](#)—*This is the message we heard from Him and announce to you that God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all.*

[Matt 5:48](#)—*Therefore you are to be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.*

Requires perfect obedience to His Law

[James 2:10](#)—*for whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.*

Man

Has broken God’s law

[Rom 3:10,23](#)—*there is none righteous, not even one...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*

Will pay the eternal penalty for his sin

[Rom. 6:23](#)—*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord*

Cannot save himself by his good works

[Titus 3:5](#)—He saved us not based on works which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.

Christ

Came to earth both as God and sinless man

[Col 2:9](#)—For in Him the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form

Demonstrated God’s love by dying on the cross to pay sin’s penalty

[Rom 5:8](#)—But God demonstrated His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us

[2 Cor 5:21](#)—He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Rose from the grave and is alive today

[1 Cor 15:4](#)—And that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures

Sinners

Must repent of all that dishonors God

[Isa 55:7](#)—Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

[Luke 9:23](#)—if anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.

Must believe in Christ as Lord and Savior

[Rom 10:9](#)—that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.

Will you repent and believe in Christ?

[Acts 17:30](#)—therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance God is declaring to men that all everywhere should repent.

Don't hesitate to contact Pastor Brandon or Pastor Keith if you have any questions about this sermon or if you would like to know how to follow Christ.

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Application questions

1. Reflecting on the statistics regarding the decline in traditional marriage and family structures, how does this align with your social observations or experiences? How do these trends impact your views on marriage and family?
2. Consider the quote by Bishop JC Ryle: "The nearer a nation's laws about marriage approach to the law of Christ, the higher has the moral tone of that nation always proved to be." How do you see the correlation between a nation's adherence to biblical principles regarding marriage and its moral health?
3. Reflect on your marriage or future aspirations for marriage. How do Jesus's teachings on marriage and divorce challenge or affirm your understanding of this institution?
4. Discuss the connection between Jesus's teachings on anger, lust, and divorce. How do these sins manifest at the heart level and impact relationships, including marriage?
5. Reflect on God's original intent for marriage as described in [Genesis 1](#) and 2. How does this contrast with the realities of marriage in a fallen world? How can we strive to align our marriages with God's original design despite the challenges of sin?

6. Consider the impact of the fall, as described in [Genesis 3](#), on marriage and divorce. How does sin distort the marriage relationship and contribute to the prevalence of divorce in society?
7. In light of Jesus's teachings and the biblical understanding of marriage, what practical steps can individuals or couples take to strengthen their marriages and uphold the sanctity of this institution in a culture that often devalues it?

Next time

Jesus gives the spirit of the command ([Matt 5:32](#))

[Matthew 5:32](#) (LSB) ³² but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Jesus illustrates the seriousness of the command ([Matt 5:32](#))

Wrongful Divorce:

Makes Her Commit Adultery! ([Matt 5:32](#))

Makes Him Commit Adultery! ([Matt 5:32](#))

In [Matthew 5:21-48](#), Jesus informs His hearers of six demanding truths that characterize the Kingdom way which is the heart of OT law. Jesus teaches:

Thou Shalt Let Your Yes be Yes! ([Matt 5:33-37](#))

Thou Shalt Not Resist an Evil Person ([Matt 5:38-42](#))

Thou Shalt Love Your Enemies ([Matt 5:43-48](#))

Additional Quotes

Marriage, and the process of coming to it, is not heaven! It is the bonding together of two needy sinners in order to make a partnership which is substantially greater than either of them alone. ~ **Sinclair Buchanan Ferguson**

Marriage is not a concession to our sinfulness; marriage is a provision for our holiness. ~ **J. Alec Motyer**

There must be forgiving love and restoring grace in a marriage. That alone makes marriage a proper symbol of God's forgiving love and restoring grace. That is the magnificence of marriage. ~ John MacArthur

It is clear that divorce is like a person cutting off an arm or leg because he has a splinter in it. Instead of dealing with whatever trouble arises between husband and wife, divorce tries to solve the problem by destroying the union. ~ John MacArthur

Without exception, divorce is a product of sin, and God hates it. He never commands it, endorses it, or blesses it. ~ John MacArthur

A man or woman who has no right to divorce has no right to remarry. To do so initiates a whole chain of adultery, because remarriage after illegitimate divorce results in illegitimate and adulterous relationships for all parties involved. ~ John MacArthur

God never "commanded" divorce but only "permitted" it as a concession to sinful, self-willed mankind. ~ John MacArthur

The marriage relation lies at the very root of the social system of nations. ~ **J. C. Ryle**

The one-flesh marital union is a signpost pointing to our relationship with Christ as our bridegroom. Once we reach the destination, however, the signpost becomes unnecessary. That one marriage—our marriage to Christ—will be so completely satisfying that even the most wonderful earthly marriage couldn't be as fulfilling. Earthly marriage is a shadow, a copy, an echo, of the true and ultimate marriage. Once that ultimate marriage begins, at the Lamb's wedding feast, all the human marriages that pointed to it will have served their noble purpose and will be assimilated into the one great marriage they foreshadowed. The purpose of marriage is not to replace Heaven, but to prepare us for it. ~ **Randy Alcorn**

It is only the Christian who truly understands and appreciates marriage. I think I can say honestly that in my pastoral experience, there has been nothing more wonderful than to see the difference Christianity makes in the husband/wife relationship. Where there was a tendency to part and to drift from one another, and an antagonism and almost a bitterness and a hatred, the two people on becoming Christians have discovered one another for the first time. They have also discovered for the first time what marriage really is, though they may have been married for years. They now see what a beautiful and what a glorious thing it is. ~ **David Martyn Lloyd-Jones**

Within marriage, sex is beautiful, fulfilling, creative. Outside of marriage, it is ugly, destructive, and damning. ~ **John F. MacArthur**

There is no greater recommendation to ... the power of the Christian faith than a Christian husband and wife, a Christian marriage and a Christian home. ~ **David Martyn Lloyd-Jones**

The mystery is not any particular marriage or marriage itself; it is the union of Christ and the church which is reflected in a truly Christian marriage. Such a mystery is indeed 'profound' ~ **Peter T. O'Brien**

Only six marriages in a hundred are truly fulfilling. ~ **Howard Hendricks**