

Lesson 6

Matthew 5:31-37

**A Christian's Righteousness – fidelity in marriage and honesty in speech
Textbook pages 92-102**

Third and Fourth Antithesis Statements

1. Divorce – 5:31-32; Also see

- Matthew 19:3-9
- Exodus 20:14
- Deuteronomy 5:18
- Malachi 2:14-16 – deal treacherously with the wife of your youth
- Ephesians 5:31
- Hebrews 13:4 – marriage bed undefiled
- 1 Corinthians 7:1-16

- Jews had two schools of thought
 - i. Rigorist line – only for some grave matrimonial offense
 - ii. Common view – lax – incompetent cook; lost interest in looks

Pharisees	Jesus
Focused on the grounds for divorce	Focused on the institution of marriage
Command	Concession
Took it lightly	Took it seriously; prohibition with only the exception for adultery

- Due to hardness of heart
- Object of the Mosaic Law was to control divorce since it had become chaotic
- Men believed that they had the right to divorce for any reason
- Mosaic law – three principles
 - i. Limited divorce to certain causes
 - ii. Established that a bill must be given; statement of defect – not unfaithfulness

- iii. Not allowed to remarry the same woman again; Prohibition to remarry the same woman once she had been divorced; If sufficient grounds to divorce; then sufficient grounds to not remarry
- Think of God as the Divine Lover who woos back adulterous Israel
- Genesis 1 and 2 – Marriage
 - Exclusive – a man and a woman
 - Permanent – leave and cleave
- Jesus taught
 - i. Emphasized the sanctity of marriage
 - ii. God never commanded any one to divorce
 - iii. Only legitimate cause was adultery
- Context of beatitudes – how can someone divorce without cause who has become:
 - Meek
 - Merciful
 - Pure in spirit
 - Peacemaker

2. Oaths

- Oath – speaker calls upon God to witness his vow and to punish him if it breaks it
- Exodus 20:7
- Leviticus 19:12
- Numbers 30:2
- Deuteronomy 23:21
- Psalm 132:11
- Hebrews 6:13-18
- Pharisees
 - Shifted emphasis away from faithfulness to a formula
 - Precise wording of vow – formula is irrelevant
- Emphasis on profanity; not on perjury

- Only formula that included the divine name made the formula binding
 - Temple
 - Heaven
 - Altar
 - Jerusalem
 - By my head

All are about God

- Swearing by oaths and vows – really a sad confession of our own dishonesty
- Characteristics of certain individuals who have a reputation for lack of truthfulness/faithfulness
- Need to be careful for interlacing our conversations with oaths
- Two questions
 1. Why did God use oaths
 - Not to increase His creditability – God cannot lie – Numbers 23:19
 - To elicit and confirm our faith
 2. Is the prohibition absolute
 - Acceptable to take oath if required by some external authority
 - Genesis 14:21-22
 - Matthew 26:63-64
- Also need to be careful of all forms of exaggeration, hyperboles and use of superlatives – “ Fantastic, fabulous, supercool, most awesome; exaggeration becomes a lie
- Purpose of Mosaic law
 1. Place a bridle on man’s proneness to lie
 2. Restrict oath taking to serious and important matters
- Realize that our talk and conversation must be done in a way that God is looking at us
- Jews were making distinctions that some oaths were binding and others were not
- Jesus teaching
 1. Forbid the use of sacred titles always in the matter of swearing or cursing
 2. Forbid swearing by any creature since all were made by God
 3. Forbid oaths in ordinary conversation

- Do we, or should I say how many times to we, picked apart some instruction
 - “You did not say that I couldn’t drive the car to Dallas you just said that I couldn’t the car to the mall”
 - To do so is to play lawyering
- “ I promise by ____ my Lord of the Rings poster, that I will take out the trash”
- Anything more than Let your “yes be Yes” and your “No be No” is from evil
- We want people to be able to believe us simply without too many analyses
- A sin of mine is agreeing to quickly to something without thinking it through or without setting up a definitive way to make sure that I do it. Example when Vicki used to call me when we were dating
- We do not want people to feel that they have to ask us “ Do you really mean that”