

## THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

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...the latter portions. We have been examining...this is a quick review...in Matthew 5, you go through the Beatitudes; Jesus' instruction at his very first staff meeting. He talks about the character of a citizen of the kingdom of God. He talks about the character of the citizens of the kingdom of God and he gives us eight character qualities, which we call the Beatitudes. They all begin with the word "blessed." If you remember, in our instruction, the word "blessed" means happy in spite of circumstances. It means you're in a state of being that you're aware of happiness; that you're at the state of being that you're aware of happiness. Happiness is not controlled by happenings; it's really controlled by the state of being, and that's the characteristics of a kingdom citizen.

In the Beatitudes, Jesus teaches us how one enters the kingdom, and how one begins to take on the characteristics of a kingdom citizen—that would be the Beatitudes. Then we began to talk about the witness of the kingdom citizens. That's where we discovered that we are salt and light. Salt slows down corruption and light exposes sin. As a result of our taking on the characteristics of a kingdom citizen, we now begin to exude that. We begin to demonstrate that through our witness, and that is that we are, in our very mere presence, wherever we are, we are slowing down corruption because we are salt.

The other thing we are is that we expose sin because we are light. Notice the verb tense in verses 13 and 16. It's present-tense reality. Jesus doesn't say, "You should be become salt, or you might become salt. If you yield, become salt. If you turn your life over to me, you'll become salt." He's saying, "When you become a kingdom citizen, the end result of that is consequently you are salt. You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world." Present-tense reality. That's a consequence of the character of the citizen of the kingdom is that you will slow down corruption and expose sin.

Now we move into that section where we talk about the walk of the citizen of the kingdom. We've talked about the character of the citizen. We've talked about the witness of the citizen. Now we talk about the walk of the citizen of the kingdom. That involves relationship; brand new relationships. The word "walk" means direction of your life. As we've discussed before in previous years, we are now walking in the direction of holiness, interrupted by occasional sin; as opposed to walking in a life of evil interrupted by occasional acts of mercy and goodness. We are now walking. Walking refers to the direction of the quality of your life.

Now Jesus begins to say, "As a result of your character, as a result of your witness, you now begin to take on a walk, the direction of your life, and it involves several new relationships." These relationships deal basically with our anger, our lust, divorce, deception and retaliation. Those are the five areas where he now says you have a new walk, a new direction, in how you manage these things. The best way to look at the word "walk" is to how you manage your life. He's saying there are five areas where we need to look at, that we manage our life in the area of anger, the area of lust, the area of divorce, the area of deception (or oaths) and the area of retaliation.

Let's just take a quick look at some of these. In verses 21-26, we talk about anger. The law said, "You shall not kill" (Exodus 20:13), but Jesus says, "Don't be angry with others." Angry really is murder of the heart. If you deal with the root cause, which is anger, you're less likely to want to have the activity of doing the outward extension of murder. He says that the new walk is that we don't get angry with people. Be angry and sin not. We need to spend more time on the "sin not" and don't worry about am I angry. You can have a righteous indignation, a righteous anger, as we talked about last week.

The difference between righteous anger and ego-centered anger is the illustration of Jesus and the

money lenders in the temple. He was angry at his Father's reputation being damaged. How often do you and I get angry when we see God's reputation being damaged? I would say we don't do that too often. We get angry when "my" reputation is damaged. You see, that's the difference between righteous anger and ego-centered anger. What we need to deal with is that ego-centered anger. I do believe, honestly, we need to be more righteously indignant when God's name is defamed. We need to stand up as the body of Christ and do that. But we don't do that very much because we're so self-centered and worried about anger that we have, that damages my reputation or my ego. What Jesus is basically saying is anger is murder of the heart. As a kingdom citizen, you and I have a whole different attitude toward that. The issue is when you're angry, you've got to figure out quickly, "Lord, help me sin not." You've got to recognize your anger.

For me, one of the ways in which I've tried to manage this in my walk as a believer over the years is Exodus 14:14, and that is my life's verse, which is, "I will fight for you while you remain silent." Sometimes my best response to my anger is...keep my mouth shut, because out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth? Speaks.

You see, if you want a barometer of your spiritual life, listen to your words. What comes out of your mouth? That's really a reflection. The other thing would be this. Look at your pocketbook. Matthew 6, "Where your treasure is, there your heart is also." Two issues—if you really want to see the condition of your heart, I'd say look at two things—listen to your words and look at your pocketbook, look at your checkbook. Where do you spend your money? You see, those are the two things that are going to be the greatest barometric revelations of the condition your heart spiritually. What comes out of my mouth and where do I send checks to? Where do I spend my money? That reveals where your treasure is. Where your treasure is, there your heart is. How we manage that, you see, is all a reflection of the condition of our heart. What Jesus is saying here in these verses about anger is we need to deal with the anger issue, which is really murder of the heart.

The judgment that he refers to here in these verses is the legal court and the counsel is to the Jewish Sanhedrin, which was the highest court of the land. He says, "Don't wait for your angry brother or sinner to take the first step. You do it, and do it quickly before things get worse." In other words, agree with your adversary. Notice that's one of the great things we can do to diffuse people is to agree with your adversary. He's suggesting this in the court of...when you have personal relationship, not a social relationship, but a personal anger with somebody. Before they take you to court, agree with your adversary. Find something to agree with them on.

That's a great, great technique in just management of personnel. You can always find something to agree upon. Somebody might come at you and really lambaste you with something and you can say, "Well that's a good point," or "I agree with that." It doesn't mean that you're agreeing with the root cause of it, but find something...because when you can agree with your adversary, it really diffuses the potential of anger. Rather than flaring out on your own response, sometimes we just need to realize that I'm angry but I need to work at the sinning not.

That's what he's saying. He doesn't give us a legislative do this, do this, don't do that, don't do this. These are concepts or principles of kingdom living. The beauty of this is these are not literal things that say you've got to do it way A, B, C, D, or you're a failure. He basically says this is the way you need think about things. You see, that's what Paul says in Romans 12, "Do not be conformed to the system of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." If you don't think right, you're not going to act right. What Jesus is saying in these five areas—the first one was anger—you've got to think right about your anger.

First of all, you've got to recognize you have it. Secondly, then how are you going to manage it? I can't

give you a carte blanche do this, do that answer to that. That's where the Holy Spirit has to guide you in your own response. Remember, I can't be your Holy Spirit, so don't ask me, "How do you?" Don't ask me how-to's, because I can't answer that. All I can say is the Holy Spirit will guide you into your response when you begin to think like this. What Jesus is saying is the walk of the characteristics of the kingdom of God citizen starts with how you think. It deals with, first of all, how we think about our anger, which Jesus says is really murder of the heart. You've got to examine your heart. The way we do that? Listen to what comes out of your mouth and where do you put your money. Those are the two quickest, most simple expressions of the condition of your heart spiritually.

Then he goes into lust (verse 27-32). While he actually...adultery is far worse than inward, lustful fantasies; the inner desires can quickly lead to the forbidden. In other words, sometimes you have to just realize, "Lord, as Job said, make a covenant with your eyes." Make a covenant with your eyes. You see, those desires really come in through our senses—what we hear, what we see, what we taste, what we touch, what we feel. You see, those desires come in through our senses. What Jesus is saying is you've got to take responsibility for managing those desires because if you manage those desires then the outward form of that will not occur because you've dealt with the inward attitude. That means this—that you and I have to sometimes, as Job does, make a covenant with your eyes.

I've really had to do that when I'm walking downtown, especially in the summer when you see ladies in short skirts. You go to the mall. I don't like to go to the mall anymore. You see the way young teenage girls dress? Here's your guidance, biblically, for dressing, if you want my opinion. It's this—too much, too little, too tight. Too much, too little, too tight. Now guys, as fathers, we need to take responsibility for our daughters in how they dress. Do we have them dress too much? Call attention to themselves? Gaudiness? All sorts of things to call attention to themselves? That's too much. There's a wide variety of what that definition of too much means. Too much jewelry, too much clothing, too much makeup, too much whatever.

The other side is too little. The short skirts that are Daisy Duke shorts. Now I didn't watch the show; I just heard about it. {LAUGHTER} I heard about it.

*Don: I watch it with the sound down. {LAUGHTER}*

But too little. You just notice, notice how young girls are dressing. The styles are too little. The more exposed you are, the more acceptable you are. Guys, as fathers, and as grandfathers, we need to take responsibility for the generation of our daughters, how they dress. You see, if it's too much, it's too little.

The third one, I would say is too tight. Because they call attention to themselves. Biblically speaking, clothing is to call attention to your countenance. Countenance is an expression of the inner being of the person manifested by your face. Clothing is to call attention to the inward countenance of the person, which is modeled or expressed by the face condition. In other words, when you see that person's face, you see their countenance, which is the inward state of their being. Clothing is a way in which that can be affected or enhanced. Clothing is designed to call attention to our countenance, not to our bodies.

We just need to be careful, guys, because as Job says, I have to make a covenant with my eyes just not to look at things. I remember I saw a TV show a couple of years ago where they had this very voluptuous looking woman in very scantily dressed clothes and they just had a camera to see what men did as she was standing there on the corner. They wanted to see if they looked or didn't look. It was just amazing the response that men had. It's very realistic. You and I would probably have the same response. All I'm saying is Jesus is saying, "Don't do that. Don't do that." It doesn't tell you how not to do it. He just says you've got to guard that. If you guard the lustful desires, then the outward expression

of that, which would be adultery, or divorce perhaps, will be eliminated, because you've got to deal with those desires. He deals with anger. We have a new way of dealing with our anger. We have a new way of dealing with our lust.

***Don:** It's interesting to me, Bruce, those passages, oh boy, in verses 29-30 of this chapter, and if you go to Mark 9:42-48 and as Jesus doesn't, is no holds barred there. The radical nature of this, if your eye or your hand or your foot causes you to sin, it's interesting that he says those things.*

He does that as a point of tremendous emphasis of saying, "Take this seriously." Here's the way in which you would take it seriously. You're better off to have that portion of your body removed than to spend eternity in hell. Now I don't know how big a contrast you could have than that. Don's point is absolutely right on point. Jesus is saying this is serious stuff, guys, to the degree of this—you'd be better off if you were in this condition than you were if had all of your faculties and were in that condition. So take it seriously. There's no holds barred understanding on this.

He doesn't tell us exactly what to do, but he says you're responsible because you are a what? You're a kingdom citizen, and the walk of your life is different. You're not like the rest of the world. You live a different life. You've got different character. You're a different witness. Now you have a different direction, the way you manage your life in these areas. These are the things that we're going to be confronted with through the system of this world.

***Audience Member:** Very recently, a church pastor told me that he had developed over time an interesting understanding of that plucking out of the eye and what you just talked about there. His understanding was simply this—that there is a comparison there to the body of Christ. In that comparison to the body of Christ, he talked about staff members who were corrupt people that he had to remove from their power. He said, "Those verses gave me confidence that I was doing the right thing." He looked at that, not as literally tearing your eye out, but removing anyone that's going to destroy the work of Christ on earth from the presence. That was his way of looking at it, in addition to the fact that, yes, it points out there is a hell. What's your interpretation of what he said?*

I would say that's an interesting application. There's no interpretation...yes, Bishop.

***Bishop Rogers:** I was just thinking of Luther with dealing with the covenant of the eye said, "You can't stop the birds from flying over your head, but you can stop them from nesting in your hair."*

Yeah. Exactly. Good.

***Bishop Rogers:** it's one thing to notice something when is sort of possible not to.*

That's right.

***Bishop Rogers:** But it's anything thing to turn around and stare or buy a magazine.*

Robert E. Lee said this about his troops of the southern army, "I cannot expect them to be free from the exposure to sin; I just expect them not to be contaminated by it." You see, that's our mantra. We are not going to be free from being exposed to it. We just need to make sure that we're not contaminated by it. There's no way you're going to prevent your children from being exposed to the sin of this world. You can't do that. You can't have them live in isolation. The thing we need to do is to teach them how not to be contaminated by that; however we do that. The contamination might be in a staff situation. I think that's an interesting application. Certainly we need to rid those persons in our staff who are impacting the kingdom of God. There's a wide application. Jesus does not give us a how-to here. All he's saying is

this is how you begin to think.

You see, as a kingdom citizen, that's the beauty of the Sermon on the Mount. People are looking always for the how-to's, "Well how I do that?" I have no idea. That's the role of the Holy Spirit to guide you and to apply that truth. Remember wisdom, understanding and knowledge of the way in which a house is built, according to Proverbs. A house is built on knowledge. Knowledge is the desire and the ability to acquire truth. It's built on knowledge. That's what we have in the Scripture.

Secondly, wisdom is the application of that knowledge. Wisdom is the application of that knowledge. Understanding is the understanding of the consequences of the wisdom of the application of the knowledge I'm applying. You've got them in this order—knowledge, wisdom and understanding. That's what we need to pray for, "Lord, give us the knowledge, which we do in the Sermon on the Mount, give me the wisdom to apply this knowledge, and help me understand the consequences of my choices when I do apply it." That's the beauty of the Sermon on the Mount because it's not a prescription of how-to's. That's where you have to walk by faith and trust the Holy Spirit. Yes, we are never going to be removed or excused from the presence of sin. We just need to make sure that we and our children are not contaminated by it.

*Tom: A corollary to that word choice, you can also be smart and aware of when to choose to avoid a situation that might be...*

Yes, just to choose to avoid it. That's it. Avoidance is a great aggressive response. I'm going to avoid that. You have to recognize...you know, just as we put people in the presence of grace. How does somebody come to saving faith? We put them in an environment where God's grace is shed upon them. That would be in worship, observing the Lord's Supper, participating in the ordinances of the church, the ministry of the church, the teaching of the Word. Wherever grace is applied, we need to expose people to that. The same thing we need to avoid those situations where we're in contact with evil. On one side, you want to expose people to grace; on the other side you want to remove ourselves and avoid the presence of evil.

These are some wonderful guide lines here, but there's not clarity in basically saying, "This is how you do it, John" or Bill or Bruce or Tom. It's basically saying, "You've got to think like this because you're a kingdom citizen. You've got different character. You've got a different witness. Now you've got a different walk. It's not going to be easy." And that's where Romans 5, 6, 7 and 8 will help us understand this more when we get into that next should you join us.

The next thing he talks about is divorce when you come to verses 31 and 32, "<sup>31</sup>It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.'<sup>32</sup>But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery." Then you have to go over to Matthew 19 to see some other instructions that he gives us on divorce. Matthew 19:3, "And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, 'Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?'"

Basically what they were doing is they were putting him up against Moses. In Deuteronomy, Moses had some instruction where he said, "Divorce is permitted because of the hardness of the heart." Moses was not authorizing or encouraging divorce; he is saying it happens because of hardness of the heart. Essentially these Pharisees we are putting Jesus up, "We're going to put up Jesus, this Teacher, who's supposed to be so renowned, let's put him up against the law. Let's put him up against Moses." That's what they were trying to do Matthew 19.

<sup>3</sup>And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, 'Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any

cause?’<sup>4</sup> He answered, ‘Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female.’” Here he goes back to the real issue of marriage. It’s a creation ordinance. That’s where he goes back to that. Divorce is a violation, not only of personal pain and heart breaking, but it’s also a violation of the creative ordinance.

Here’s where you begin to see churches playing around with doctrine. You see now, there are some major denominations that are going to spend two years and come up with a definition of marriage. So in their great wisdom, they’re going to spend time studying the Scriptures and looking at People magazine, and whatever else they’re going to look at, so they can come up with a consensus on the definition of marriage. You don’t have to go any further than right here.

You see, let’s read the rest of this, because it really is, divorce is a violation of the creation ordinance. “<sup>4</sup>He answered, ‘Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female,<sup>5</sup> and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? <sup>6</sup>So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.’ <sup>7</sup>They said to him, ‘Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and to send her away?’” Now they’re trying to pit him up against Moses. Let’s put up Jesus, this renowned teacher, let’s compare him to what the law says and to Moses.

<sup>8</sup>He said to them, ‘Because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. <sup>9</sup>And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery.’ There we have to understand that that’s an issue that is really not up for discussion about who defines marriage. It’s defined right there as a man and a woman. It’s part of the creative ordinance, and divorce, really, is an obstruction of that. Now divorce, as you can see here, it occurs...you’ll never see the Scripture encouraging divorce. Two grounds—desertion and infidelity. We need to realize that divorce is just like any other sin. It can be what?

***Audience Member:** Forgiven.*

Forgiven. We need to realize that. It can be forgiven, just like any other sin. The sin of pride. Pride can be forgiven. Lust can be forgiven. Now that does not mean that we take a licentious attitude to our divorces. I’m not saying that. All I’m saying is you’ve got to realize that the sins of the spirit, biblically, are more heinous than the sins of the flesh. Anger, pride, ego, self-centeredness, covetousness. You see, those are sins of the flesh that are equally heinous as divorce. But they can be what? Forgiven because of the love of Christ. You see, grace is not something that we have whether or not. Grace is not something that we have done. Forgiveness cost the Father the life of his Son.

***Audience Member:** Dr. Bickel, I’ve asked this question several times in the past at other locations. Did Moses trump God? Did Moses trump God? I ask that because Moses allowed divorce.*

Of course not. No, no one can trump God.

***Audience Member:** It’s going through my mind—adultery is a sin. Right? Marrying a divorced woman is adultery. Sin can be forgiven. But a sin that you keep doing—in other words maintaining...how can you be asking for forgiveness and be forgiven. I’m just trying to filter that through what you just said. I assume that marrying a divorced woman is adultery, as Jesus said...*

That’s what he said.

***Audience Member:** ...and can be forgiven, as all sins can be.*

It's a good question—a very good question. Now you have to look at whether or not it was biblical divorce. That's one thing. Was it a biblical divorce? Was it on the grounds of adultery or desertion? If it was, then a marriage in that case would be different than one who was not divorced in that situation. There's a lot of extenuating circumstances. Also look at all the repetitious sins that you commit. The lust of the eyes, the pride of life. Are those forgiven? Even though they are repetitious? You see, any time you and I repent of our sin and ask forgiveness, that chain has been broken. Our responsibility is not to resurrect it again.

We have to be very, very careful here about how we understand what this means because he's saying yes, you would marry an adulteress. But that can be forgiven just as anything else. That doesn't give you license guys. Understand what I'm not saying. I'm not saying that at all. All I'm saying is that any sin can be forgiven. That's where we just have to be very, very careful as how you enter into something. Be careful how you enter into something before you enter into that.

***Tom:** I think one thing to keep in mind is that, for instance, the Bible doesn't say anything about a woman divorcing a man, and yet we see a lot of that today. God looks at the heart. He looks at the [UNCLEAR], not so much the action. Sometimes we just look at the actions and make a judgment. It goes back to what you're saying.*

If you look at marrying a woman who had a non-biblical divorce and you're committing adultery, I mean, I look at all the repetitious sins that I do every day. They're just constant. I don't know about you, but my life is just constant, "Lord, forgive me. There's that thought again. There's that thought again. There I did it again. Here I go again." Constant forgiveness. You see, one of the great joys we have of being a child of the kingdom is we live in a relationship of absolute forgiveness, and we need to understand that. Our greater understanding of his forgiveness, not our decision making, that is going to motivate us to make right decisions.

***Audience Member:** If I could get back to the definition of marriage that is talked about in Matthew 19, how in the world...*

I don't know now. Don't the question how. {LAUGHTER} Remember two questions you can't ask me: How and why? Don't ask me ever how and why. I can't be your Holy Spirit, and I can't tell you why denominations are doing it. Don't ask me that. Go ask them. I can tell you why I don't do it. I can't tell you they do do it. I can't give you that answer. You need to find that out from them. Don't ask me; I'm not on their side. I can tell you, "Here's my definition. That's why I take this position." Go ask them why they don't, and let me know the answer.

***Audience Member:** When you say desertion, are you referring to the [UNCLEAR] where Paul talks about the unbelieving spouse [UNCLEAR]...?*

Yes. Bishop, do you want to add anything to this?

***Bishop Rogers:** Just puzzling over what you do with the violence, of a husband that violates, physically, a wife beater.*

Yes. That's another issue you've got to take a look at. One of the things we need to understand is that God's view of marriage is not unworkable. Historically, there's some evidence that these verses in Chapter 19, really taking on two different Rabbis of the Hebrew culture, one who took a real rigid stance that said absolutely no condition, regardless of what's going on in the family, and the other one said for any reason you want if you don't like her, if she burns your meat then you can... as far as you're doing it you can divorce her. I mean, there were two sides. Somewhere in the midst of all of this, you had two

schools of thought in the Rabbinical teaching. One was this hard core and one was the loose core.

We need to understand that God's view of marriage is not unworkable. It has some guidelines. But it understands and it takes into consideration the hardness of the heart. It takes into consideration...now that's a mercy of God; it's not a license for man. It's a mercy of God. We need to take a look at other things. What about abuse of a wife or abuse of a husband? How do you counsel that? What do you do with that?

I've had a couple of situations when I was pastoring a church where I had to actually counsel separation for the purpose of reconciliation. I said, "We need to help you get out of here because you're in danger physically. We have a responsibility, as your brothers and sisters and your pastor of your church to protect you from this situation. Now we're going to encourage you to separate for a while. We're going to help you do that, come up with a way of doing it. But the whole intention is that you can reconcile." You see, divorce is permitted, never encouraged. Reconciliation is always the better option.

Sometimes you have to take a look at those situations. What about a woman who deserts a man? Bed and board. That's your basic definition of desertion. Bed and board. No emotional contact. No tenderness. No affection. No intimacy. Of any sort. All the violation of the responsibilities of the home. How do you counsel a man in that situation? You see, these are things that are not really black and white, guys. These are things that you have to go to the Scripture and say, "Lord, give me the knowledge, give me the wisdom, and give me the understanding of how I deal with these things." That's the beauty of the Sermon on the Mount. It's not a how-to or a why-for thing; it's basically you've got to come to me. That's why it's so important that we get counsel from the...there's great wisdom in the counsel of many brothers. You get counsel from people who know the Scripture. You get counsel from those who have done this well. You get counsel from people who've been through, perhaps. They can be great advocates of understanding the situation.

There's a whole dynamic of things that are not covered here, but are really under that umbrella of desertion or sexual immorality. You've just got to be careful. God's view of marriage is not unworkable. It's all maintained by grace and forgiveness. Grace and forgiveness.

**Scott:** *All these attitudes, or all these issues you're talking about, are gray, no doubt. But the black and white is attitude of the heart.*

Yes. There you go. That's right, Scott.

**Scott:** *In all the instances, the black and white is simply the attitude of the heart.*

Yes. That's excellent, Scott. Thank you.

**Ted:** *Let me say that actually the heart is not right, because our motives are always mixed. No one has a pure attitude of the heart.*

That's right.

**Ted:** *And we deceive ourselves all the time by thinking that the heart is right, when really it's [UNCLEAR].*

The heart is deceitful above all things. That's why it's so important, guys.

**Ted:** *The attitude of the heart does not escape the scrutiny.*



That's right. You have to scrutinize the attitude of your heart. That's what Scott is saying. He's not saying that you cover it up. He's saying you've got to scrutinize the heart. You've got to examine your heart. I would say the quickest way, the simplest way to do that, is to listen to what comes out of your mouth. What do you talk about? Why do you say the things you do? The second thing is look at your pocketbook, look at your checkbook. Where your treasure is, that's where your heart's going to be. What do you spend your money on? Too much, too little, too tight? That says something about your heart.

*Don: What frightens me, Bruce, is the subtle, how people are taking such liberties, even in political platforms, with the definition of marriage. Once you start playing around with that, you're in effect slapping God in the face.*

Absolutely.

*Don: You're going against the very fabric of what [UNCLEAR], and that's frightening.*

It is frightening.

*Don: And it may incur God's judgment in some way. Maybe it already is happening.*

I'm no prophet. You've heard me say that. I'm no prophet at all. But if you nail me to the wall, my observation, which you can throw out with a bucket of water, is I don't see the presence of the Holy Spirit in America. In my opinion, God has removed the Holy Spirit from the United States. What's his job description? Guide us into all truth and call attention to the person and work of Christ. Is that going on? Not very much. It's going on among the remnant, in local places, certainly. But in mass, as a culture, as a nation, I don't see that. I don't see that. So I can't get all excited about, "Oh, the Lord's working in America." I wish I could say that, guys, but I, honestly, with a clear conscience, I can't say that. We need to realize that revival starts where? In the church. It starts inside the church. Repentance needs to occur inside the church. As much as I love my country, I honestly have to say that I don't see much work of the Holy Spirit in America. I see it in the remnant. Like you guys on Friday. You're the greatest encouragement of my life.

Yesterday I set up 14 foundation meetings that I have between now and December 21<sup>st</sup>. Eleven of those are outside Pittsburgh. I've really tried to schedule every one of them Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, but not on Friday. You see, because you guys are such an encouragement to me. I need to be with you. It isn't you need to be with me. We need to be with each other. I need to be with you guys because you guys are such a protection for my heart. When I think of the thoughts that come through my mind, I'm thinking, "What would those guys say if they knew I was thinking this?" You see, that's a wonderful protection of my heart—you guys are that. I thank you for your faithfulness. When I have a chance to talk to you guys individually, I try to thank all of you for your faithfulness, because that is a powerful ministry to me as a man. I'm so grateful for that. We really need each other. That's the value of our coming together.

What we have to do, as Scott is saying and Ted is saying is this—you've really got to take a look at the tenor and the condition of your heart. The heart is deceitful among all things, the Scripture says. That means I've got to take a look at that constantly because it's the looking at my heart that's going to have these attitudes that will take on action.

*Audience Member: I like what St. Paul did, [UNCLEAR] the standards for marriage, that man shall love his wife as Christ loved the church and gave his life for it. What a standard for marriage.*

Yes, it is. All sorts of standards. But the issue here... Jesus is saying divorce is really a violation of the creation ordinance. That's where it starts. It goes right back to that; right back to that issue. You go from that point on not dealing with a denominational perspective on the definition of marriage.

Deception is the next one. That's about oaths. Remember we talked about that, just touched on it last week? The reason we're instructed not to make oaths is because the moment you make an oath on something, you're basically creating what? Doubt. The moment somebody says, "I swear," the first thing, "Maybe they're not going to tell the truth." He says let your yes be yes and your no be no. He's basically saying tell the truth. Just basically tell the truth, and don't make oaths because immediately it's going to put somebody in a position of doubting what you're going to say.

Next we get into retaliation. I'll tell you what; let's pick that up next week because that's another one that needs some examination as we apply that in our lives because it's very, very difficult. What do we mean by going the extra mile? Does that mean we're doormats? That we let people walk on us? It doesn't mean that at all. We'll take a look at that next week.

Let's pray. Father, we have experienced our ineptitude of understanding your Word. We really need to have the mind of Christ. Father, forgive us of thinking that we have figured this all out. May we always be in a position of absolute dependency upon your Holy Spirit to be the Teacher of us, the Teacher for us, and the Teacher that reveals you. Father, remind us, again, that it is his job to guide us into all truth. May we have our minds set upon the person and work of Christ, those things that are lovely, those things that are beautiful. Father may we also richly spend our time in the Word, and guide us through your Word. You gave us, when you departed this earth to take up your residence in heaven, you gave us a standard. That standard is the Scripture. You gave us a source of power to understand that, and that is the Holy Spirit. Father, we pray that the Holy Spirit would be our Teacher. If we've said anything today that's contrary to your nature, your attributes, your glory or your magnificent nature, we pray that you'd just remove those thoughts from us. Only let us remember those things that are consistent with your glory. And all the Brave Men said... Amen!!