**May 19, 2019 “You Fool”, Pt 1 Matthew 5:21-26**

I think it would be wise of us to take a little time to revisit some of the things we have learned thus far from the Sermon on the Mount. To do this we will need to look back in chapter 5 in order to refresh our memories but I also believe that we need to look forward in this Sermon to the theme of what Christ is teaching those in attendance and those of us who are listening to Him today.

At the end of chapter 7, the last two verses help us to understand a couple of things. First, the people were amazed at His teaching and second, was that the reason that they were amazed was because He taught as one who had authority… not like the scribes of their day.

So, what was so amazing about what He taught? The answer to that question is found in chapter 5 verse 20… “unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees… you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven”. To give a little insight into what was going on in the religious circles of Jesus’ day, please turn to Titus 3:9… this is what constituted the religion of the day… endless arguments about genealogies, disputes about the Law…

There were endless debates on what ancient Rabbis said or did. Endless intricate discussions on genealogies probably on who was qualified to do this or that based on their ancestors… and on and on it went.

Why did the Jewish teachers of the so-called Law do this? The answer is because everything they did was concerning the external… seeking a righteousness that did not exist. That is why they had so many rules and regulations regarding Sabbath day actions and a host of others.

So, when Jesus comes on the scene and He teaches His disciples and those around Him, He does not deal with the external but rather with the issues of the heart. Why? (I Samuel 16:7)… “man looks at the outside but the Lord looks at the heart”.

So now let’s look at what Jesus is saying in this light

Matthew 5:3-12… description of a child of God

* Poor in spirit
* Mourn over sin
* Meek
* Hunger and thirst for righteousness
* Pure in heart
* Peacemakers
* Persecuted
* Reviled
* Rejoicing

The Scribes and the Pharisees were none of those things but the people who have this character… will be salt and light in the world.

All this leads to Matthew 5:17-20 which is the preamble for the rest of the sermon… “unless your righteousness exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven”. From verse 20 of Matthew chapter 5 through the end of chapter 7, Jesus is teaching on this truth.

1. Matthew 5:17… do not think
   1. Jesus did not come to destroy the Law
      1. He came to reveal the intent of the Law
         1. Galatians 3:25
   2. Jesus came to reveal what God had said and compare that to what the Scribes and Pharisees said
      1. 6 times (Matthew 5:21-48)
         1. You have heard it said or a variance of that statement
            1. Vs 21, 27, 31, 33, 38, 43
         2. Each one of these statements was followed by
            1. “But I say to you”
            2. Vs 22, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44
      2. 6 themes (Matthew 5:21-48
         1. Murder
         2. Lust
         3. Divorce
         4. Speech
         5. Truth
         6. Retaliation… loving your enemies
   3. Why is Jesus doing or saying this?
      1. Proverbs 4:23…
         1. Note the ascending order
            1. Individual

Murder and lust

* + - * 1. Relationships

Divorce and speaking truth

* + - * 1. Whole subject of dealing with everyone

Love…

* 1. “Do not think I came to abolish the Law”
     1. I came to strip off all the varnish that man has applied to the Law
     2. If you or I asked most people
        1. “Are you a good person”
        2. What would be their answer?
           1. Why would they say that?
           2. Man always looks at the external

“But the Lord looks at the heart”

* + - 1. Scribes and Pharisees
         1. Always dealing with the external
         2. Matters of the heart

Not an issue to be dealt with

1. You have heard it said
   1. Why did Jesus say this?
      1. Common term for rabbis
         1. “fathers of antiquity” or “men of long ago”
   2. Lesson from history
      1. Dark Ages… period of time from the fall of the Roman Empire around 476 AD to around 1500 AD
   3. Where was the Bible during this period?
      1. Very few volumes existed
      2. So nearly all of Christianity was oral renditions
         1. In Latin
         2. Which the common person could not understand
         3. Much like that in Jesus day
            1. O.T. was written in Hebrew

Most common folks could not read or understand Hebrew

They relied on what the so-called teachers of the Law told them

You see in Jesus day all that the religious leaders taught was that everything relating to God was legalistic. Jesus comes along and tells them that conformity to God’s Law is a matter of the heart… not just external.

Luke 16:15

1. Let’s revisit what we have learned today
   1. 6 things
      1. It is the spirit of the Law that is the priority
         1. Thou shalt love the Lord they God with all your heart, with all your mind and with all your strength
      2. By the keeping of the Law… no one is justified
         1. That leads to spiritual character (Matthew 5:3-12)
      3. Purpose of the Law
         1. Galatians 3:25… lead us to Christ
      4. God alone is going to be the judge of all men
         1. Why? He knows all the secrets of men’s hearts
      5. Hebrews 4:14-16
         1. We have One who knows exactly who we are, what we are going through and He is the way to mercy and Grace with God
      6. There are divine standards in life
         1. Heaven and earth will pass away before they do

The true Christian lives with the understanding that they will never achieve a righteousness by being good enough. Their only hope is Jesus’ sacrificial death… nothing else.

There is none righteous… no not one… to which we can all say “AMEN”