

JESUS EXPLAINS THE CHARACTER OF THE LAW
A PREVIEW OF MATTHEW 5:21-48

I. Jesus' Six ILLUSTRATIONS

A. Their CONTENT

1. Prohibition of MURDER (5:21-26)
2. Prohibition of ADULTERY (5:27-30)
3. Regulation concerning DIVORCE (5:31-32)
4. Regulation concerning VOWS (5:33-37)
5. Instructions concerning MERCY (5:38-42)
6. Instructions concerning LOVE (5:43-48)

B. Their SOURCE

1. Two from the TEN COMMANDMENTS
2. Two from GENERAL principles of the Law
3. Two from BROAD principles of the Law

C. Their SIGNIFICANCE

1. Address foundational issues of INDIVIDUAL and SOCIAL preservation
2. Progress from PROTECTION of EACH INDIVIDUAL to a LOVE for EVERY INDIVIDUAL

- II. Jesus and the LAW (cf. 5:17-20)
 - A. He was neither ELIMINATING nor EXPANDING the Law
 - B. He contrasted what they had HEARD with what HE SAID
 - 1. JESUS' teaching was CONSISTENT with every word of the OT
 - 2. The RABBIS' tradition was NOT
 - C. He EXPLAINED what the Law had ALWAYS intended
 - 1. One cannot EARN favor by OUTWARD behavior
 - 2. One must OBEY out of an INWARD desire to be godly
- III. Summarizing the PRINCIPLES Jesus Applies to the Law
 - A. Outward conformity MUST be motivated by inward SUBMISSION
 - B. The Law is both NEGATIVE and POSITIVE
 - 1. To PREVENT inner and outward SIN
 - 2. To PROMOTE inner and outward RIGHTEOUSNESS
 - C. The Law is not an END in itself
 - 1. Secondary purpose is to PURIFY GOD'S PEOPLE
 - 2. Primary purpose is to GLORIFY GOD
 - D. Only God is qualified to JUDGE, as only He knows our HEARTS
 - E. Every human is commanded to live up to God's PERFECT standard
 - 1. IMPOSSIBLE for human fulfillment
 - 2. Requires God's GIFT of CHRIST'S righteousness