

XX. Matthew in Biblical Perspective
A Royal Manifesto of the Kingdom from the King
Christ, the Law, the Gospel and Purity
Matthew 5:27-30
By: Dr. Harry Reeder
June 20, 2010 – Morning Sermon

This study covers Matthew 5:27-32 but because of the time element I will forgo covering verses 31 and 32 which covers divorce and marriage in this study and I'll cover it in the next study. It actually belongs in the context of what we are dealing with today but we'll just look at verses 27 through 30 today. Let's look at our text then for this study. Matthew 5:27-30 says, *27 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.*

The grass withers. The flower fades. This is the Word of our God. It abides forever and by His grace and mercy may it be preached for you.

We are in our study of the Sermon on the Mount and we are at the section of the Gospel use of the Law under the commandments of Christ and how He is teaching it. If I could put it this way, we are kind of on a journey here. This is an interesting journey because in this sermon there is this first of six discourses of Christ recorded in the Scriptures with five of them being in Matthew. This very first discourse that manifests the Kingdom, telling us what it means to be in the Kingdom, to know the King, and how you live for the King in His Kingdom until the King comes again, puts us on a journey. It is a journey that takes us from sin to Christ to trust in Him alone for salvation. Then Christ continues the journey by sending us to live for Him. On this journey we are brought from death unto life as we are brought from sin to our Savior. The journey continues as Christ then teaches us the life that we now have in Him and how we live for Him. When He begins to teach it will be a continual reminder.

First of all it will be a reminder of the impossibility of earning heaven on your own and that we need a Savior. Good News, there is One, Christ the Lord. He is the Only One but a Sure One, Christ the Lord. This is a sermon that not only teaches us the impossibility of doing a righteousness that can merit heaven and come to Christ whose righteousness He gives you for heaven but it is also a sermon that tells you the opportunity of now being in Christ how you can practice exceeding righteousness that will honor the Savior. So it's one that communicates the impossibility of a righteousness to gain heaven and the privilege and opportunity of a righteousness on your way to heaven that is growing day by day where the Lord shows the power of His grace not only to forgive us but to change us to a watching world.

We have already looked at one section of the Sermon on the Mount and we call that section the beatitudes. The beatitudes are the Gospel blessings of salvation and reformation and are described in Matthew 5:1-12. Jesus says, "Now that I have saved you personally I joined you in the Kingdom to the Body of Christ, My church, and now

that you are joined together, you all are the salt and light of the world.” He gives us our Gospel ministry of transformation in a world that is under the curse of sin. Then He says, “Now what about the Law and the Prophets, those 39 books that lead up to Me? The Law predicts Me. The Prophets predict Me and I haven’t come to abolish them, I’ve come to fulfill them. I’ve come to fulfill them by dying for you. I took the curse of the Law for you by obeying the Law with perfection to give it to you and now to write that Law upon your heart that you might use it out of loving obedience to Me. The Law has no power but it is My directive. So don’t relax any one of these commandments that I’m teaching you.” So this Jesus who went up on the mountain to teach is the Jesus who had come down to the mountain to give the original Law to Moses at Mt Sinai. Now this Jesus has already come down and goes up on this mountain and will take that Mt Sinai Law and say, “Let me open this up for you in a way that you’ve never seen and in a way that you can now embrace because you’re not trying to do it for salvation but you want to do it for Me, your Savior.” He’ll give us ten commandments.

This isn’t exhaustive of the Christian life but He is showing us how the depth of the Christian life works from the inside and how it pervades every area of life. Now we have already seen how He has done it with one of them, being the commandment ‘you shall not murder.’ He has already made that clear to us and in this study we will see how He does it with another one. These ten commandments are divided into two tables very much like the Ten Commandments from Mount Sinai and they work from the commandments at Mount Sinai but they take it to a whole other level and a whole other place for us. First we have the five declarations for ‘exceeding righteousness’ where He says, “I haven’t come to abolish the Law and the prophets and if you’re righteousness doesn’t exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees then you’ll not inherit the Kingdom.” So what is this exceeding righteousness that we receive from Christ and that we pursue for Christ? He gives us five things to declare and teach us these things and that is found in Matthew 5:21-47 and it concludes with Matthew 5:48.

Matthew 5:48 which says, “*You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*” This doesn’t mean I have to be perfect to get to heaven. It gives you the heart desire of those who are on the way to heaven. Who do you want to be like as a Christian? This is easy. It’s not a squirrel. It is Jesus. Jesus said, “When you have seen Me you have seen the Father.” So if I’m following Jesus then I am following the perfections of the Father. So, “*You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect*”, out of your love to Me, the One who has loved you, and won’t let you go.

Those five declarations are then covered by five directives for ‘practicing righteousness.’ We are not to practice like the scribes and Pharisees but you practice it differently which is covered in Matthew 6:1-7:11. Matthew 6:1 says, “*Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.*” So this exceeding righteousness that we want to do for Christ who has given us a perfect righteousness to take us to heaven, what does that look like? He gives us five directives of how to practice righteousness in a way that denies yourself and lifts us God, in a way that glorifies God and not yourself, not to practice it before me but to practice it before the Father that He might glorify Himself in and through you. This section will conclude in Matthew 7:12-14. Matthew 7:12 says “*So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.*” Remember I have not come

to abolish the Law and the prophets but fulfill them and here's how it works out in your life as you do them and live for Me. He finishes it up with that particular statement in what we call the golden rule and that's what we are on our way to.

Right now we are in the second of Jesus' commandments. Each time He does these five declarations He does it the same way. He says, "You have heard that it was said...but I say to you..." So He will give us the Law that we already have from the Old Covenant from the Law and the Prophets then He will give you that Law in its Gospel understanding saying, "I say to you..." Then He will give us that Law in how it is to be embraced. So He will give us the Law, then the Law in its Gospel expansion, then He gives us the Law not only expanded but how we can embrace it.

Number one is what is the Law? The second law we are studying today is 'you shall not commit adultery.' Matthew 5:27 says, "*You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.'*" Now that's the Law that you've heard. The first one we studied was the sixth commandment that said 'you shall not murder.' He says, "I have not come to abolish that. I have come to fulfill that. I'll pay for all of your sins in regard to that but I want to show you what's behind that." Do you remember what was behind that commandment 'you shall not murder'? It wasn't simply that you shall not murder but it was you will commit life. You not only won't stick a sword in the heart of your brother but you won't even stab them with the words of your mouth. You will go after what is at the embryonic work of every matter which is anger and root it out. So He has already told us that the law wasn't there simply to keep us from killing each other but it was there so that you would pursue life and understand it.

Now the seventh commandment is 'you shall not commit adultery'. What is that telling us? So now He takes it from the Law that you have heard from the Old Covenant and now the One who went to Mount Sinai now goes to Mount Calvary for us to tell us what this Law looks like in our life. Matthew 5:27, 28 says **27** "*You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.'* **28** *But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.* Parenthetically you can't miss this. This is so clear, obvious and before us that we always think in terms of externals and Jesus is telling us that sin is always birthed internally. Murder, anger – adultery, lust. I have this yard that's not a big one but a small one and I have about a 1500 foot cliff at the end of my yard. The people that built the house before us planted these bushes that grow like crazy. I know why they did that and that's so there won't be any erosion and if someone runs over the side of the cliff it will stop them because it's so thick. But it blocks my view and I want to see that view. So every year we're debating whether to cut it down or not, because it blocks the view. These bushes are so rooted it in you can't even really get rid of it. So every three years it all gets cut down and in about a year it's back up. That is the way many of us are living our Christian life. We keep cutting off the top from the consequences of sin and don't go to the root of it.

Jesus says, "Let's go to the root. The heart of the problem is the problem of the heart. So let's go after it. Let's go to it. Let Me tell you where the act of adultery and fornication starts." By the way, He is not limiting this to heterosexual adultery initiated by a male. He is just using what would clearly be before us in the culture to deal with the whole issue as we will see in the next study of sexual immorality. That would include heterosexual immorality, homosexual immorality, pansexual immorality and every kind

of sexual immorality. He is going after every piece of it but He is bringing this before us so that He can get to something very specific that we will understand. He is not saying here that sex is evil. Sex is a good gift from God that is there to enjoy companionship in marriage, intimacy in marriage and in fact it's the very sign and seal of the marriage covenant. When I do a marriage ceremony at the end of the service I don't say, "By the Laws of the state of Alabama..." I don't mind saying that but that's not what I say. I say, "As a minister of the Gospel, you having taken covenant pledges and covenant vows before these witnesses and before the One true and living God, upon the consummation of this union I pronounce you man and wife." It is the marriage bed that seals it. What we just did was covenantally established that night and not as a bed of adultery but as a bed sacred and holy. Fornicators and adulterers God will judge, let the marriage bed be holy (Hebrews 13:4). There the relationship is signed and sealed.

The sacredness of sex within marriage is what Jesus is affirming. 'Do not commit adultery' is there to affirm marriage and Biblical sexuality is within marriage. It's not premarital and it's not extra-marital. I assure you if you decide to make sexuality an act premarital, it is not a hard step to engage in extra-marital sex. I try to explain this to young people all the time. If you are dating someone who has had a habit of sexuality prior to marriage the same rational will be used after marriage. If marriage is not a boundary prior to marriage it won't be after marriage unless God grants repentance to the heart and there's a heart change. Jesus is saying, "Sex is a great gift within marriage. Covenantal, heterosexual marital sex is what I have given to you. I have given it to you that you might give to each other with this wonderful act that I've put in place but let Me tell you where adultery is born whether it is pre-marital or extra-marital. Let Me tell you where all sexual immorality is born. It is born out of the heart. A man has looked in his heart and has committed adultery in his heart." That's not saying that thought adultery is as heinous as the act of adultery but it is still as culpable.

He also just showed us something else. The Gospel just showed us that not only is the act of adultery begin in the heart but it started with the eyes. It says when a man looks upon a woman with lustful intent. Jesus is not telling us you can't look at women. He is telling them you don't look at them lustfully. I don't think He is telling us you can't enjoy and affirm visually the fact of the beauty of Biblical femininity. That's really interesting because all the species that are out there, meaning lions, bears, tigers, birds, ducks and everything, which one is always the most pretty? It is the male until you get to one species and that's us. Men, if you don't know it I will clue you in – you're ugly. Your wife says, "You're handsome" and that's because she loves you and only a wife could tell you that. Let me tell you the truth, you, like me, are ugly but beauty God has invested in femininity. He's not telling us we can't appreciate that but He is telling you, "It's not there as an object of idolatry for your gratification. It is there for you to give glory to Me. When you see any beauty of femininity what ought to come into your mind is glory to Me and then your wife. This is the Gospel use of don't commit adultery." We go to the heart.

Here is something else that Jesus has just informed us of. The key to the heart is the eye gate. Matthew 5:28 says, "*But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent...*" He looked at the woman. Do you remember King David? There was sin, Bathsheba, murder and adultery. Both of them we have covered. Where did it begin? 2 Samuel 11:2 says, "*It happened, late one afternoon, when David arose from his*

*couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house, that **he saw** from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful.”* He went out and looked with lust upon Bathsheba. The look went to the heart and the heart created the idol. Then the idolatry of the moment sent him into adultery and then into murder to get rid of her husband. Jesus is telling me to look at my eyes. Be careful where your eyes are looking.

The third thing Jesus says is after He has given us the Law as it comes to us from the prophets, He then tells us the sanctity of that Law which is marriage and Biblical sexuality and He gives us a peak underneath that the sin originates in the heart and the heart is fueled by the eye. Then He says in Matthew 5:29, 30, **29** *If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell.* **30** *And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.* In other words, He is saying, “In your love for Me and your desire to embrace that which I call holy and righteous say ‘no’ to adultery, say ‘no’ to thought adultery in the heart, say ‘no’ to the pursuit of thought adultery which will lead to adultery with your eyes and this ought to be so important to you that you’re willing to tear out your eye that would see it and cut off your hand that would reach for it. Remove it.”

Now let me give you some good news. He is not recommending this as a means of sanctification. He is telling you of the unstoppable commitment that you are to have for your sanctification. That you are willing to part with right eyes and right hands rather than keep an alliance with sin or encourage it in your life. I would rather pluck out my eye than to have it look lustfully. I would rather cut off my hand than have it reach illicitly. It is that we will hate sin that much. Let me assure you that Jesus is not telling us the way you get to heaven is that in thought, word and deed you’re always pure. Listen to me carefully. He is telling us that the road to hell is paved with the stones of sin and one of the key stone pavements is sexual immorality. I don’t want to be on that road that leads to hell. He’s not telling you that you will lose your salvation but He is telling you that His people who have been saved hate the stones that pave that road. We hate sexual immorality. We know it’s an empty idol of Satan that destroys. No matter what it looks like or how it appears whether on a computer screen or airbrushed laser enhanced photograph on a magazine or a movie, play or song, it’s death and I don’t want it. I want life for Christ and the life that He calls me to, not simply that I have kept from the act of adultery but pull the roots out of my heart by doing what Job says and making a covenant with my eyes (Job 31:1). I will look upon no unholy thing.

He is not telling us the means we’re to deal with of our sin but He is telling us the intensity. We would rather part with right hands and right eyes and throw them away than to embrace the very acts that lead to an eternal condemnation of hell. Don’t miss this. We are in this first sermon of Jesus and in the space of a very few verses, three times He has already brought to us the reality that hell is a place that is eternal, inevitable for all who are apart from Christ and inescapable. So today is the day of salvation. Where does this that Jesus has taught us lead us to?

I want to give you some takeaways for our life in the Lord. The first thing Jesus has done in which I have already been so challenged by it in my own heart and life, is revealed the anatomy of sin itself. What about this anatomy of sin itself? Do you know where we think sin is? First of all we won’t really call it sin but we’ll call it a mistake, a

frailty but something other than sin. Sin is a transgression against God in thought, word or deed. The words of anger, the thought of lust, the act of murder, the act of adultery, etc, in all these we avoid the understanding of sin which is the transgression of God's law and if we do recognize that something bad has happened then we always try to find the answer outside of ourselves. It's a genetic problem. I must have a gene that's making me do this or we'll go to religion saying, "I have the spirit of drunkenness or the spirit of lasciviousness" where we are always looking outside of our selves to explain the presence of sin in us. It's a sickness. I'm the victim of a demon. It's society's problem. If society would put more lights out I wouldn't steal. No, you would just shoot the lights out so you could steal, that's what you'd do because the explanation to sin is not out here or in your neighborhood or in your culture. My culture and neighborhood have sin. The answer is not in my family. I have a family that sin. That's an amazing insight that I have a father and a mother who sin. Jesus is telling you that the issue is inside; the heart of the problem is the problem with the heart.

Therefore where does this Gospel use of the Law send me? It sends me right back to Jesus who alone can forgive me, who alone can change me, who alone can fulfill this righteousness, who alone can move in my life. So this understanding of the use of the Law in the Gospels says to me, "Go to Him who has loved you and loosened you from your sins. Then when you go to Him, He will give you the one hatred He allows." Wouldn't it be wonderful for all of us to hate nothing but sin and love nothing and no one more than Jesus? He says, "This will send you to Me who loves you and will not let you go and I'm going to send you back. Out of love for Me I want you to hate sin so much that you're willing to part with right hands and right eyes." Today it seems as if we grasp the fullness of grace we think we manifest and honor the Lord by entering into life in some cavalier way with sin. If I have tasted of the goodness and grace of God who paid for my sins that doesn't mean I can commit a little adultery or immerse myself in some pornography because I have forgiveness, you know.

That forgiveness cost the blood of Jesus, God, His Son, how I hate that sin that put Him there who loved me. I would rather lose my hand and my eye than play with the stones that pave the road to hell. I know I'm saved. I know I'm secured in Him but how can I live in that? I would rather part with members of my body than mess around with that which leads people and their whole body into an eternal condemnation. God, would You grant within me that work of grace to love Christ and rest fully in Him and to hate sin and never rest while I've seen it in me but to constantly assault it. It is that which Christ has brought before us. It is this understanding and the anatomy of sin and how it works from the inside out.

Let me put it this way. We not only want to look outside to explain our sin, where Jesus is telling us to look inside and come to Him who will give us not simply a new life but a new heart from which that new life will come. The physical acts of sin originate from the idolatry of the heart which is an unstoppable idol factory, Calvin says. He's right. Our heart incessantly wants to say this food will make you happy, this sex will make you happy, this marriage will make you happy, this man, this woman will make you happy, this drink will make you happy and there's all this idolatry where we are seeking significance, security and reality of life in that which cannot give life. We are even taking the good things of God and perverting it into idolatry such as this wonderful gift of sexuality within marriage. So we take the original acts of sin that originate from

the idolatry of the heart because the heart has become infatuated through the fascination of the eye.

I have tried to word this carefully. The physical acts of sin originate from the idolatry of the heart and the idol making heart is infatuated with that upon which the eye has become fascinated. You can murder without a sword. It's not as heinous but its murder. You can murder with your tongue. You can commit adultery without an act of sex in the heart. It's not as heinous but it's still culpable before God. So work backwards. If I don't want the sin then what I need is my new heart. If I have a new heart then I want to keep it filled with Jesus Christ and that means I want to put my eyes where they belong.

I have people say to me all the time, "Pastor can you tell me God's will for my life?" I know what they are asking but I tell them, "I don't really know God's secret will for your life but I do know things about God's revealed will for your life." 1 Thessalonians 4:1 says, "*Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more.*" If I'm to do so more and more then I have room to grow so I'm failing. In my heart and my eye in this issue I have failed before God but I'm not going to give in to the sin. I want to give myself to the Savior who forgives me, works in my life, who gives me a heart and fills my heart with that which is good, pure and excellent.

Then he says a few verses later in 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5, **3** *For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; 4 that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, 5 not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God.* Where do these acts of sin come from including adultery? It comes from the unguarded heart and the heart was unguarded because I let me eye go where it shouldn't go. Therefore when my eye went there my heart went there and then sin comes out here. He is giving us this inside look at the anatomy of sin. So what do I want to do? Do I just want to keep cutting the bush down or pull it out by the roots? God, work in my heart. Give me a new heart. Fill my heart and then O God, help me put my eyes where they ought to be.

Men, let me tell you something with all my heart and I'm speaking more to me than you but I want to speak to you to. I know you will be ridiculed but in the name of entertainment we don't just watch any movie. In the name of rest we don't just sit down and swallow anything that comes out of a television. In our fatigue we don't medicate ourselves in front of a computer, going to those places that bring idolatry, that's not true and makes us see women in a way that dishonors them and most of all blasphemes God who made them beautiful for His glory, not for our idolatry. God, will You give me such a love for You that my eyes will go toward that which is good and pure and my heart will dwell upon that which is excellent.

I am a very simple person so I want to try and put it another way. If I don't want to be obsessed with sin, the best route for me is to be obsessed with Jesus and not sin. If I get obsessed with Jesus I will have an obsession for my wife where I will honor Him and not an idolatry for my wife. I can't put the weight on my wife to make my life. She is my wife but You're my life Jesus. Now that You're my life let me honor my wife and whenever I see femininity that's beautiful may my mind, heart and eyes praise You and go to her (my wife), right then. God, would You allow me not to look upon that or

contemplate that which would bring to my heart this unbelievable descent into this salacious cesspool of immorality? Your children this month will be bombarded by 30,000 illicit allurements to sexual immorality just through a television. Clearly, I can't get rid of everything but I can make sure I don't get in the way of the wrong thing and I can fill my heart and my eyes with that which is good, right, beautiful and true before the Lord. That's what I can do.

Ladies I want to speak to you for a moment. This text is not telling you that if you're Godly then go look ugly. It's not telling you to dress in the clothes from the 1930's. I think it's just as sinful against the Lord for us to deny beauty and I think it's right and appropriate that you look beautiful. But there are two things I want to say to you. One, is in the dressing and the appearance of beauty you never do it for allurements or seduction. God, do not allow me to dress seductively or with allurements or to draw my brothers onto the pavement that leads to hell. Don't let me do that. Secondly, there is not enough cosmetic surgery to maintain the way you look now. It's just not there. I've got news for you, gravity wins. It will win all the way until it drags you six feet under the ground but in your age when you have understood the beauty of a heart given to Christ, they will declare, the charms of the world and the beauty of the world is vain but a woman that fears the Lord shall be praised (Proverbs 31:30). It will be more in her age than in her youth for that which is truly beautiful from her heart has shown. Her conduct and her life have not been to draw the idolatry of men out of the idolatry of herself but she has dressed in a way that has honored the Lord who has made her beautiful and pointed others to the Lord and not to herself. She has said 'no' to allurements and seduction to manipulate others and 'yes' to the majesty of grace even displayed in appearance.

The second takeaway is the sober reality is that hell is a place that is eternal and inescapable and so you and I ought to call upon the Lord for His saving grace in our life and to be used of the Lord to lead others to His grace and then to live in a way that shows people the road we are on in not the road paved to hell of sexual immorality. The road we are on is the one paved to heaven which is whether you eat or drink or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:13). God, thank You so much for the wonderful gift of sexuality. Before marriage I want purity, I want chastity and in marriage I want purity. Father, would You give me a heart only for the one whom You have given me in the context of marriage? I want to simply say only to this matter that as God has worked in your life and in my life that God would allow us to see the utter reality of hell and never make sin a playground or our body a playground for sin because we love Christ. That brings me to the last takeaway.

The third and final takeaway is the better way. I don't know about you but I'm going through this and I look at my life and I know I have fallen short. So where do I go? The better way is not to leave here to go there and say, "I'm going to do better." Your first step is "I'm going to Jesus. Wash me Savior in thought, word and deed. Cleanse me. Thank You so much that You have provided the impeccable, pure, exceeding righteousness that brings me to heaven. I receive that." Romans 1:16, 17 says, *16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."* Thank You for that Divine righteousness. I thank You also that the Gospel not only gives me a

righteousness but it gives me a power to grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ so that my life might not be drawn down into this swamp of despair that my culture is drowning in and that all around me might drown in and that will pull me within it. O God I now pray that You would not only give me the full knowledge of my forgiveness and the righteousness of Christ but now set me on a way in which I might honor You with my life.

I'm going to conclude with this thought which I think would be somewhat helpful, at least it has been for me. This last week we looked at the fact that if I am coming to worship and I know my brother has sinned against me I'm supposed to go to him because I have a responsibility to my brother. I want to turn it around this week. 28 years ago I sat down with three men and we began to meet together and hold each other accountable. We made ten commitments then and one of the commitments was that since we were all pastors at that time in the PCA we said, "If any of us fall into sexual immorality we will work to restore each other back to the Lord and back to fellowship but you can't stay in the ministry." One might think, "Harry, are you saying that people who fall into sin can't be restored to ministry?" I'm not saying that. I'm trying to tell you how weak we were and are. We are so weak that while we knew we could be forgiven and we knew you could be restored but we thought if the privilege of leadership in Christ's church could be walked in and out of then we'd probably try it. So here is the idea. When you are sitting there thinking about it, remember not only do you put your marriage at stake but your ministry is gone. Is that idolatry worth it?

In other words, I'm trying to tell you that I believe there are things out of love to Christ that you can put in your life that are obstacles to sin that become stepping stones back to Jesus. One of those great things are brothers and sisters whom you have given the green light where they can ask you anything and tell me anything. There are some other things we made commitments to. When we go to a motel room we ask them to cut off certain channels on the television because we don't even want to surf through them. There are all kinds of things we can do there that are obstacles to sin which become stepping stones to the Lord but I can't tell you how important it's been that I have three brothers that pray for me, encourage me, uphold me and ask me the tough questions. We have the green light in each other's lives to ask those questions. Who do you have in your life? I know this text brings you to where it's brought me. I am so thankful I have a Savior because I have sinned in thought, word and deed. It also brings me to the point that I am so glad that my Savior can keep me, grow me and use His people to uphold me. It is that way that Jesus has now called us to – a better way. He is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the time we could be together. Thank You for the privilege to examine this passage of Scripture. You may be reading this today and have come seeking to know that better way. The way obviously can't be religion and righteousness for who can have this exceeding righteousness that's perfect? There is a Savior who has died for you that you might come to Him and live. He will give you a new record that's perfect. He will give you a new heart that can be filled with that which is good and right – a way of life that is joyful in Christ even in a broken world. Come and make that commitment. Dear Jesus, kind Savior, thank You for Your patience with me. Thank You

for forgiving me. Thank You for convicting me. Thank You for calling me and for what You have done in me, for me, to me and what You're going to do, I know You are doing right now in the lives of Your people. May they now fix their eyes on Jesus and follow His way for You. God, may we reclaim the joy of covenantal sexuality within our marriages. We thank You for forgiveness of thought, word and deed sins in these areas but we don't want to simply rest with forgiveness. Make us new creations, the old pass away, the new has come. Thank You for Gospel forgiveness and a Gospel life, in Jesus' Name, Amen.

An outline for the Sermon on the Mount:

Introduction: (Matthew 5:1-2)

I. The Christian, The Gospel and our Character (5:3-12)

II. The Christian, The Gospel and our Ministry (5:13-16)

III. The Christian, The Gospel and the Law (5:17-48)

IV. The Christian, The Gospel and our New Life (6:1-18)

V. The Christian, The Gospel and our Perspective (6:19-34)

VI. The Christian, The Gospel and our Relationships (7:1-20)

VII. The Christian, The Gospel and Commitment (7:21-27)

Conclusion: (7:28-29)