

Small Groups @ TBC Sermon Discussion Notes

Date of Sermon: 24th April 2016

Speaker: David Lawrence

Title: Sermon on the Mount: Kingdom of Reconciliation

Introduction: This talk looks at the first of six ‘antithesis’, where Jesus unpacks what it means for him to be the fulfilment of the law, and for his disciples to have a ‘righteousness that exceeds that of the Pharisees and teachers of the law’ (5:17-20). Each ‘antithesis’ starts with Jesus pointing to what people have always heard, or understood, the Law to require (see 21, 27, 31, 33, 38, 43) and then offers Jesus’ own teaching as the fulfillment of that law.

Review: (invite one or more who have heard the talk to give their own brief review)

Read: Matthew 5:21-26

Reflect:

- Why is it easier to outlaw murder than anger? (as the Pharisees seemed content to do)
- What are the causes and effects of anger in people’s daily lives? Do they fall in the category of ‘righteous anger’ or not (I defined ‘righteous anger as anger that is provoked by the suffering or injustices experienced *by others*).
- The Matthew passage reveals God’s hostility to anger and to his people living in un-reconciled relationships. Why is that? Is there any connection to Matthew 5:13-14 here?
- Read Ephesians 4:26,27:
 - ‘In your anger do not sin’. How does anger become sinful and what holy purposes can it be put to?
 - ‘Do not let the sun go down on your wrath’. What practical ways might there be to follow that wisdom?
- David quoted Romans 12:18 - “if it is possible, in as far as it lies with you, live at peace with all people”. Read the latter part of that chapter (Romans 12:9-21):
 - What are the practicalities of ‘living at peace’ with others?
 - What attitudes lie at the heart of ‘living at peace’ with others?
- “Offering forgiveness may not result in reconciliation”. Why not and if so, why bother to forgive anyway?

Leaders: feel free to be selective and creative with your use of these notes.

Don’t feel you have to use all of the material, but do try to keep the shape of Review – Read – Reflect – Respond and **DO make room for the ‘And Finally’ questions!**

Thornbury Baptist Church:

Following the Way of Jesus: Loving God - Loving One Another - Loving Neighbour & World

- What is people's experience of anger on their 'frontline' (their own and others anger)? What opportunity have they been to be a "mouthpiece of justice" or of "moulding culture" in that context?
- Read Galatians 5:16-26). Paul contrasts life in the flesh (note the 'anger' sins listed here) with life in the Spirit. His counsel is to 'crucify the flesh' and 'keep in step with the Spirit'. What does that advice mean in practical terms? Can anyone illustrate from their experience?

And finally:

As you conclude, ask each person:

- What is the main thing you are taking away as an action point?
- How can we pray for you?
- Is there anything we can check on next time we meet?

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