

The Disciple's Righteousness

(Matthew 5:17-20)

- Introduction:
1. The disciple's righteousness is, I suppose, stands as the central theme of the Sermon on the Mount.
 2. Jesus called his disciples to a higher degree of righteousness than that which was displayed by the Pharisees of Jesus' day.
 3. The difference between the righteousness Jesus was commanding and the "righteousness" possessed by the Pharisees is the difference between outward action and inward character.

I. Two Kinds of Righteousness

- A. At the heart of the Sermon on the Mount is Jesus' statement that our righteousness must surpass the righteousness of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law.
- B. The rest of this sermon illustrates just what that means in a practical way.
 1. The remainder of chapter 5 offers six applications of this superior righteousness (5:21-26; 5:27-30; 5:31-32; 5:33-37; 5:38-42; 5:43-48).
 2. Each of these applications come with a contrast between what they had heard and what he was now saying.
- C. Just what was it that Jesus was contrasting?
 1. The teachings of Jesus over the teachings of Moses?
 - a. We sometimes do a disservice to the Old Testament by saying that it dealt with externals while the New Testament deals with the heart.
 - b. The problem with that is that the same God is behind both testaments.
 - c. Do you really think that God was not interested in the heart during the Old Testament time? (Deuteronomy 6:4-6).
 2. The teachings of Jesus over a perverted interpretation of Moses.

II. The Righteousness Desired by Jesus

- A. There were at least two problems with the righteousness of the Pharisees.
 1. Nearly everything the Pharisees did, was done for the wrong motive (Matthew. 23:5).
 - a. Right actions must be coupled with right motives.
 2. Misplaced values.
 - a. They had elevated opinions of men to the doctrine of God (Matthew. 15:8-9).
 - b. They had minimized weightier matters and had elevated matters of lesser weight (Matthew 23:23).
 3. Lack of character.
 - a. They were doing, but lacked the inner desire to please the Lord above all else.

- Conclusion:
1. The Sermon on the Mount isn't a sermon that is designed to get people to do more, but to get people to transform their lives into the image of Jesus (Romans 8:29).
 2. Could it be that we have reduced following Jesus to church attendance?
 3. Have we found it easier to be busy, than to go about the much more difficult task

4. of transforming our lives?
If so, we have some work yet to do.