

MATTHEW 5 vs 21

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²¹ **You have heard it was said by them long ago** / remember Jesus is dealing with people who didn't have personal bibles with chapters and verses to look up. They relied on the pharisaical teaching they heard. And some of that preaching was as crazy as the goofy and pointless messages we hear now days. Jesus said,

You have heard some poor teaching by people long ago... saying...You will not kill; and whoever kills will be in danger of the judgment:

²² **But I say to you** / pushing aside all that bad teaching,

that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause / that was Cain's problem with his brother Abel. **that angry one will be in danger of the judgment:**

and whoever will say to his brother, Raca, will be in danger of the council / in these verses, Jesus is dealing with the kind of people who say, Blockhead, I don't cuss. I don't do this... I didn't do that! They just quietly sit in judgment over others and condemn them; and Jesus raises the bar. He says,

but whoever will say, You fool / now, there are fools. **The psalmist sings about** the fool who says in his heart: there is no God! Fools exist. Jesus is not talking about that fool. He is talking about those who belittle, and say: you outcast and failure and good-for-nothing -- the one who thinks that way,

will be in danger of hell fire.

²³ **Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember your brother has something against you** / your brother has something against you...it's not even you have something against your brother.

Then Jesus says...

²⁴ **Leave your gift there before the altar** / your little valuable whatever that you give to God will be safe,

and go your way / take care of your business. **First... be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.**

²⁵ **Learn to agree with your adversary quickly, while you are with him on the way; lest at any time the adversary delivers you to the judge, and the judge to the officer** / literally, the under-rower; the lackey of the court; the bailiff with the handcuffs... and, you know the officer,

he is going to throw you into prison.



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²⁶ Truly, Amen! / count on it, **I say to you, You will not come out of there till you have paid the uttermost farthing** / till you paid the last penny.

²⁷ **You have heard it was said by them long ago: You will not adulterate** / you will not spoil the sexual relations intended to be enjoyed in marriage, whatever you've learned, push it aside!

²⁸ **I say to you, That whoever looks on a woman to lust after her** / to strongly desire her **has adulterated with her already in his heart.** / what?! Adding to that Jesus says...

²⁹ And **if your right eye offends you, pluck it out, and cast it from you** / throw it away: **for it is profitable for you that one of your members should perish, and not that your whole body should be cast into hell.**

³⁰ And **if your right hand offends you cut it off, and cast it from you:** / **if** that is the offending culprit, **for it is profitable for you that one of your members should perish, rather than your whole body should be cast into hell** / you know, I didn't notice many right-eye-less or right-hand-less folks today. Did you? Come to think of it, I never noticed any. Apparently, no one needs that lesson -- the wasted words of Jesus!

Now, I think out of 1,000 messages, 999 said, Jesus' words here are not supposed to be taken literally -- but I thought at least they were to be taken to heart! And I do remember reading about St. Boniface and the briar patch. Apparently he had this thing for the women. And instead of cutting it off, he thought, Let me throw myself into the briar patch; and after doing that a few times, he sort of cured himself. He didn't need to pray about it; and thankful to God, he didn't need to cut anything off.

But in fact, Jesus is not developing new rules and regulations to add to our legalistic tendencies; the **eye** may be the means that incited temptation; and the **hand** that committed a scandal, but Jesus is a good Teacher, He takes his students to the heart of the matter. Jesus just spoke of **the strong desires** -- good and bad desires... **already in the heart.** Jesus was talking about your right eye, or your right hand or whatever... not your neighbor's. Jesus says, Take care of yourself; what you are watching and wanting.

³¹ **It has been said: Whoever puts away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement** / by the way, documents were often written on leaves and tree bark; this was one of the favorite inventions of the Pharisees. They could go to the weekend convention in the next town; by Friday night be married; and by Saturday morning before breakfast... be divorced. Oh, the wonders of legalism.

³² But **I say to you, Whoever puts away his wife, except for the cause of fornication, causes her to adulterate: and whoever marries her who is divorced adulterates.**

³³ **Again, you have heard it said by them of old time: You will not disavow yourself** / you will not falsely perjure yourself when you make a promise,

but will perform your oaths as to the Lord:

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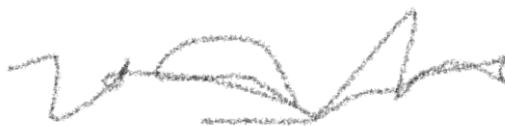
³⁴ But **I say to you**, Swear not at all / and now, Jesus sweeps away lots of drama;

Swear not by heaven; for it is God's throne:

³⁵ nor by the earth; for it is His footstool: nor by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.

³⁶ Nor will you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black.

³⁷ But let your communication, your **Yes, be yes;**



your **No, be no** / and can you hear all the men say: **What?!** Could you repeat that? while scribbling notes on leaves. Since the days of Abraham and his servant, and Israel and his son Joseph... when giving a solemn oath -- for 2,000 years, they placed their hand under the blessed circumcised man's scrotum... They did what?! They didn't have bibles to put their right hand on... when they were making oaths.

Jesus said...

let your communication, your Yes, be yes; your No, be no / in other words: eliminate the theatrics; say what you mean; and mean what you say:

for whatever is more than these comes from evil / from: poneros; from laboring to pain each other; from poneros, little ones... big ones. They're all... pains in the ass!

³⁸ You have heard that it was said: **An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth** / this law of retribution... is still deeply rooted in the world culture today.

³⁹ But **I say to you**, **Do not resist evil** / do not resist poneros... do not resist not those laboring to pain you; those daily pains-in-the-ass!

Now, is Jesus saying, Do not resist Hitler? Do not resist Goliath? The mother whose baby is being abused... do not resist that pervert? **NO!** That's not what He's saying. We not only resist; we come against them with full force in the name of the Lord!

We always resist the devil! He's a chicken-bleep; he'll flee! Dr. Gene Scott once said, **I'm all for peace... when the enemy is dead!** And he's absolutely right.

Jesus talks about **poneros** / evil in our daily walk; what we receive... what we give to friends and family... those we associate with... even the strangers among us. So, listen to the next four examples the Lord gives of poneros -- pains in the ass! And notice how they vary in degree from the intense to the most benign.

I say to you... whoever strikes you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also / like Dr. Dallas Willard has said, If you don't always fight back... you might confuse them; and they might have to think differently how they're going to respond.

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Here's another poneros opportunity to think differently...

40 And if anyone will sue you at the law, and take away your coat, let them have your cloak also / give him your shirt also; think differently, and cause others to think differently! Think correctly!

Jesus says...

41 And whoever will compel you to go a mile, go with him two / throw him off! Confuse them! Change their thinking... change our thinking! And finally, here's an opportunity about the bum on our street... or the stranger in our midst; all poneros... pains in the ass! But let's take them to heart!

42 Give to him who asks you, and from him who borrows of you do not turn away / instead of pridefully sulking... and thanking our God we are not like them; if you have it available, give a shirt, shoes, some money, some food; it's okay for you to remember what it means to be poor and hungry.

43 You have heard it said: You will love your neighbor, and hate your enemy / well, go push that faulty thinking out the door!

44 But I say to you, Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you,

and persecute you / Jesus says: instead of thinking the way the world thinks; think differently; listen to Him, take our ideas from Him; learn from Him;

45 that you are the children of your Father who is in heaven: for He makes His sun to rise on the evil and the good; for He sends rain on the just and the unjust.

46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the publicans / the tax collectors... also do the same?

47 And if you greet your brothers only, what more do you do than others? Do not even the publicans do the same?

48 Therefore, you be perfect even as your heavenly Father is perfect / what?! In other words, Jesus says: Our Father is not going to lower His standards, even for us in this very broken, imperfect world. As the children of God... **reach your maturity**. Don't settle for less. **Grow up**, keep Him in focus.

You be perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect.

This is My Father's World