



Sunday, January 23, 2011: Murder and the Heart

Scripture: Matthew 5:21-26

Speaker: Joe Boot

Sermon Notes:

1. Jesus confirms the law of God as the ethic of His kingdom.
2. When the church abandons the Word of God, it abandons the source of life.
3. As the sovereign interpreter of His law, Jesus offers an unmediated exposition, correcting its perversion by the Pharisees.
4. The negative references to the law in the New Testament refer to errors involving obsolete ceremonies and salvation by works.
5. The law of Moses condemned murder (Exodus 20:13; 21:12-15).
6. We live in a period of history characterized by unbelief, where people are influenced by demonic impulses to murder.
7. Where the law is perverted into a way of salvation, the law becomes a curse; where it is a standard of loving God, it is a blessing in the life of faith.
8. The only way we can live righteously is by delighting in the commandments of God (Gal. 5:19-23).
9. The commandment of God doesn't forbid legal wars, certain concepts of self-defense, or the punishment of murder.
10. To take life lawlessly or to refuse to take life when necessary is to put yourself in the place of God.
11. Jesus forbids the root cause of murder: improper angry passions and insults. The law is to govern our passions by the spirit of God.
12. We can slay people indirectly through slander and fraud.
13. We are called to pursue the life and blessing of others by apprehending murderers and advancing the well-being of others.
14. Neglect of our physical health, self-cutting, and self-mutilation all demonstrate a murderous spirit.
15. We live in a murderous culture where violence and suicide are leading causes of death.

16. Addictions such as drunkenness, sloth, and gluttony are a violation of the spirit of this law.
17. A person who can't control his passions is in the grip of the spirit of murder.
18. The enemy of our souls, Satan, comes to steal, kill and destroy.
19. Jesus, by contrast, comes "that you might have life."
20. The gospel is about life and health and peace.
21. The church is a ministry of life to the world. In God's authority we have the power to announce forgiveness in Christ (Matt. 18:18).
22. We have a duty to protect innocent life and to help orphans and widows (Ex. 22:22-24).
23. God's law addresses the issues of justice (Deut. 24:17); oppression (Deut. 27:19); concern for life and property of others (Lev. 19:13); love of one's neighbour, vengeance and grudges (Lev. 19:17,18); care for the poor, lending without interest to the poverty-stricken (Lev. 25:35); idleness (all of Proverbs); respect for creation (Lev. 22:28, 28:11; Deut 25:4).
24. If we have slandered or been murderous, we're to be reconciled.
25. Put right the broken and violated relationship with a brother, and even with an enemy. Seek peace and pursue it.
26. We have only satisfied the law's commands when we promote agreement and brotherly kindness.
27. The church is the place where Christ's blood is applied, cleansing and liberating us from our life destroying sins.

Application Questions:

1. What are the broad implications of the command "do not murder?"
2. What erroneous treatment of His law does Jesus oppose in Mark 7 and Matthew 15?
3. What effect does slander have on others?
4. Are you in the grip of some addiction which is destroying your life?
5. Are you in the grip of pornography or other violent passions?
6. Do you have a violent temper? Is sloth or indolence governing your life?
7. Do I harbour anger against a brother or sister?
8. Do I need to take steps to reconcile a broken relationship?
9. How can I render aid to those who are in physical need?
10. What hope does the gospel offer for people whose hearts are prone to the spirit of murder?