



### Central Idea

Jesus teaches that righteousness is not limited to outward obedience but must transform the heart, especially in how we treat others. When Christ's light governs our attitudes, words, and actions, our relationships will reflect God's will and bring glory to Him.

### INTRODUCTION

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus calls His followers the "light of the world," but He quickly clarifies that this light isn't just a glow we carry—it is a standard by which we live. True discipleship is not measured merely by our ritual worship, but by the transformative way we treat the people around us.

### Matthew 5:21–26 ESV

“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire. So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

### I. THE DANGER OF INTERNAL DARKNESS ([Matthew 5:21-22](#))

- Jesus moves beyond simply the "letter of the law"; He teaches that anger and contempt are just as serious in God's eyes as the act of murder itself.

### **1 John 3:15** ESV

Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

- Light cannot coexist with a heart full of "Raca" (empty-headed contempt) or "You fool" (moral disdain).
- Practical Example: Choosing to hold your tongue when a spouse or coworker frustrates you, refusing to let an annoyance turn into a "slow-burn" grudge or a character assassination behind their back.

### **Proverbs 29:11** ESV

A fool gives full vent to his spirit, but a wise man quietly holds it back.

### **Ephesians 4:26–27** ESV

Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil.

## **II. THE PRIORITY OF RECONCILIATION** ([Matthew 5:23-24](#))

- Jesus presents a radical scenario: even if you are at the altar ready to worship God, if you remember a brother has something against you, the worship must wait. Horizontal relationships affect our vertical relationship with the Father.

### **1 John 4:20** ESV

If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.

- We emphasize that "true worship" involves both the correct form and a correct heart. God values a restored relationship more than a ritualistic gift.
- Practical Example: Before taking the Lord's Supper on Sunday morning, reaching out to a fellow member you've been avoiding to apologize for a misunderstanding, ensuring there is nothing blocking your fellowship.

### **Colossians 3:13** ESV

bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

### III. THE URGENCY OF RESOLVING CONFLICT ([Matthew 5:25-26](#))

#### Matthew 5:25–26 ESV

Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

- Jesus uses a legal metaphor—settling with an adversary on the way to court—to emphasize that conflict should be handled quickly. Delaying reconciliation often leads to harder hearts and more severe consequences.
- Proactive peacemaking prevents a small spark of disagreement from becoming a wildfire of legal or spiritual judgment.
- Practical Example: Having the "awkward conversation" today to clear the air about a debt or a slight, rather than letting it fester into a permanent rift that ruins your influence in the community.

#### Romans 12:18 ESV

If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

### CONCLUSION

- Letting your light shine is not a passive act; it is the active work of bringing peace into a dark, conflicted world.
- When we prioritize people over our own pride, we show the world the true nature of the Kingdom of Heaven.

