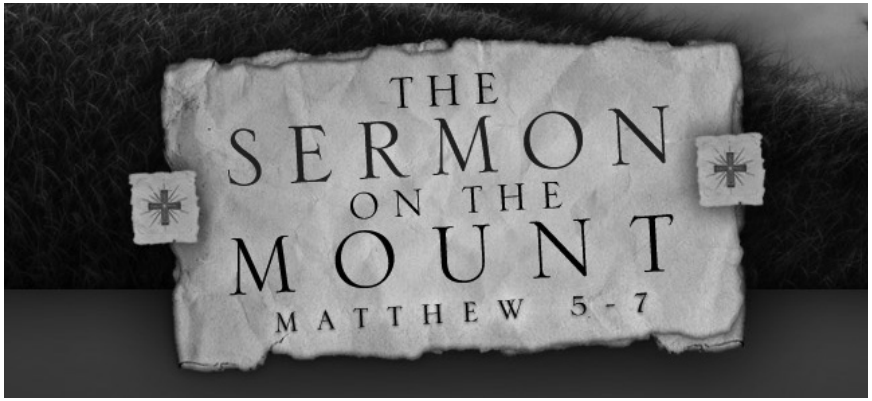

Sunday, June 27th, 2010 • Matthew 5:43-48

Jesus once again challenges the Pharisees' misunderstanding of the law, and calls for a hard and necessary stand in response to evil, but doing so with goodness and kindness instead of a desire to get even.

Observation

What does the text say?

1. Reread the passage from last week Matthew 5:38-42 to help understand the context for this week's verses.
2. What two principles did Jesus lay down when it comes to responding to evil?
3. In verse 5:43 Jesus again declares what was being said. Read Leviticus 19:18, Exodus 23:4-5; Proverbs 25:21-22 —what is really being taught here?

Interpretation

What does the text mean?

1. (5:44-48) In one sentence, explain how Jesus would have us treat our enemies?
2. Jesus describes four keys in these verses that teach how we are to effectively love our enemies? What are they and what are the 'antithesis' that we could do or will be done to us?
3. How are these keys an expansion of the principles that we learned in verse 38-42?
4. (5:46-47) When is our love for our Christian brothers and sisters in danger of being as shallow as pagan love? What must we do to prevent this from happening?
5. (5:45) Of course, we can't be sons of the Father in the unique sense that Jesus was. But how can we be "sons of your Father in heaven" in the sense spoken of in vs. 45? What essential element of God's character are we expected to emulate?
6. (5:48) In the context, what do you think vs. 48 means for the Christian? Is perfection taught here? Does maturity express the idea best? How about the doctrine of "sinless perfection"? How does vs. 48 relate to 45?

Application

What Does It Mean to Me?

1. Who is an "enemy" God is calling you to love? Write this person's name down here, and a practical way that you can take action to love them. Pray for this person every day for the next week.
2. How can you be generous to someone this week? Is there something you can give away this week? Consider giving your time or treasure (resources like money, possessions, etc.).

Message Notes

Print out this outline and consider additional notes or questions from the message this Sunday.