

## I. Review SOTM

- A. The SOTM is the unveiling of the heart of the King and an invitation to walk in the fullness of the life of the Kingdom that God made available to us through the New Covenant. Jesus gives us 8 aspects (the beatitudes) of the fullness of life and love that He walks in and encourages us to position our hearts to be transformed into His likeness. (Rom 8:1-6; Heb. 9:1-14)
- B. In His relentless pursuit of the fullness of love, not only did Jesus die and rise again on our behalf to free us from death within, but continues to expose areas of death in our heart that hinder us in growing into the fullness. (Heb. 12:25-29; Rev. 1:14)
- C. Six Weeds - Jesus puts forward six particular aspects of the law in which the outward action of obedience was being walked out by the scribes and Pharisees, but the death within the heart still remained. Jesus places the priority on righteousness in the inward parts that produces outward righteousness. (Matt. 5:17-20)
  - 1. Spirit of murder - Thoughts and words that come forth in our disdain for certain individuals and our desire be free of them is the same spirit of murder as the actual action of murder. (Matt. 5:21-26)
  - 2. Spirit of covetousness – Evil desires to have what is forbidden for us to have. Covetousness is rooted in selfishness and fueled by sight and sensual interaction. (Matt. 5:27-30)
  - 3. Spirit of Treachery – The desire to use relational covenants for our personal gain or benefit. (Matt. 5:31-32)

## II. Exposing the spirit of Manipulation (Duet 10:20; Matt. 5:33-37)

- A. The religious leaders created various levels of the seriousness of your oath based upon how sacred the thing you swore by was to God. Jesus confronts their faulty teaching that certain things are more sacred to God than others by showing that all things are sacred because He is the God over all creation. (Matt. 23:16-22)
  - 1. Outlawing oaths – There are more than a few groups of Christians through the years who have interpreted this section to be an outlawing of oaths all together. Unfortunately, they miss the entire point in my opinion. Jesus is going after a fallen aspect of our hearts just as He has been doing throughout this discourse. The scriptures clearly teach that swearing an oath is permitted and good; it's the abuse of using oaths to

deceive and lie that Jesus is confronting. (Matt. 26:63-64; Lk. 1:73; Rom. 1:9; 2 Cor. 1:23; Gal. 1:20; Heb. 6:13; 2 Thess. 2:5)

- B. In the last verse of this section Jesus reveals the root issue of the heart that leads to swearing oaths in the first place. Our desire to manipulate, lie, and exaggerate stems from the sin nature in our hearts and when we participate with it, it opens the door to greater levels of darkness and demonic influence that kills and destroys our hearts.

***“But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes’, and your ‘No’, ‘No’. For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.” (Matt. 5:37)***

1. The statement that anything more than a “yes” or “no” is partnering with Satan should cause us to seriously examine the motives of our speech. Why do we feel the need to go beyond ‘yes’ and ‘no’ and into various excuses, exaggerations, or flat-out lies when we are in dialogue with others? (John 8:44)

*“On average people tell at least 2 lies per day and you can expect to be lied to around 175 times per day through relational and media interaction.” – Psychology Today*

*“Research has linked telling lies to an increased risk of cancer, obesity, anxiety, depression, addiction, gambling, poor work satisfaction, and poor relationships. Many think there is a difference between a ‘harmless’ lie and a ‘serious’ lie. Our research shows the negative results are similar.” - Deirdre Lee Fitzgerald, PhD, Professor of Psychology*

*“Remarkably there seems to be a “one size fits all” between those of the non-religious community verses the religious community in a recent poll concerning views on lying. For example, 49% of non-religious and 45% of the religious community believe it is okay to exaggerate facts to make a story more interesting. 55% of non-religious and 41% of religious community believe its okay to call in sick for work when you’re not. The results were similar in questions of honesty when talking about your past, inflating resumes to get jobs, and photo-shopping pictures to look younger. Interestingly, the only issues that both the religious and non-religious community believe it’s never okay to lie concerning a relational affair or cheating on your taxes.” – Jennifer Graham Independent Researcher*

2. At the heart of every word that goes beyond ‘yes’ or ‘no’ is the desire to control or manipulate that person’s view of you, and is always trying to elevate that view or results towards the positive.

- C. A closer examination of the apostolic writings reveals the intentionality that Jesus instilled in His disciples concerning confronting the spirit of manipulation that exists in our hearts and manifests in our conversations. It is clear that the fathers of our faith were absolutely convinced of the death and wickedness that manipulation and lying produced. (Acts. 5:3-4; Eph. 4:25-32; Col. 3:5-11; 1 Tim. 4:1-3; Jam. 3:1-5:12; Rev. 21:8, 22:15)

### **III. Transformation**

- A. Just as with all the other weeds Jesus has exposed in this sermon, the way to remove them from your heart is through the transformational work of the Holy Spirit. This particular weed is rooted out as you behold Jesus in His truthfulness, meekness, pure-heartedness, and freedom from fear of man. (Num. 23:19; Matt. 22:16, 26:59-64, 27:11-14; John 7:18)