

“For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Matthew 5:20

Life in the Kingdom

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In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus reveals what life in His kingdom is all about.

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The Beatitudes

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Goes from “Blessed are the (those)” to
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See Matthew 5:3-10

Life in the Kingdom

Now it gets personal...

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“Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

Matthew 5:11-12

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“You are the salt of the earth” - Matthew 5:13a

“You are the light of the world” – Matthew 5:14a

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Matthew 5:16

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Matthew 5:16

Life in the Kingdom

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“For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.”

Matthew 5:18

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Anger, Murder, and Worship – 5:21-26

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Love, Acceptance, and Forgiveness – 5:43-47

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“Therefore (accordingly, based on what Jesus just said) you shall be perfect (*téleios* - complete, finished, brought to an end, having achieved its goal, lacking nothing), just as your Father in heaven is perfect (*téleios*).”

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Teaching About Anger and Murder

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Teaching About Anger and Murder

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Matthew 5:21

Note: “those” is plural and not singular. Jesus is therefore not speaking of Moses or God.

Life in the Kingdom

Who were the “those of old”?

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When the Jews returned from Babylon, they had largely forgotten their own language and could not read the Hebrew text for themselves.

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Sound familiar?

Life in the Kingdom

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Instead of providing a simple translation for them, the rabbis added their own interpretation to the text to the point the people could not tell the difference between the two.

Life in the Kingdom

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Instead of providing a simple translation for them, the rabbis added their own interpretation to the text to the point the people could not tell the difference between the two.

It was the same tactic used by the Catholic church in the dark ages to keep the people ignorant of God’s Word and under the control of the church.

Life in the Kingdom

Who were the “those of old”?

That’s why Jesus, in His sermon, first sought to bring authority and integrity back to the Word of God.

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Jesus was speaking of the traditions of men.

Life in the Kingdom

Old Testament Teaching on Murder and Judgment

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Let’s look at what the Scriptures said about murder.

Life in the Kingdom

Old Testament Teaching on Murder and Judgment

“You shall not murder (*rāṣaḥ*).”

Exodus 20:13

Life in the Kingdom

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The commandment is against the intentional killing of another human being for purely personal reasons, whatever those reasons might be.

Life in the Kingdom

Old Testament Teaching on Murder and Judgment

Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

Genesis 4:8

Life in the Kingdom

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“Whoever sheds man’s blood, by man his blood shall be shed; (why) for in the image of God He made man.”

Genesis 9:6

Life in the Kingdom

Old Testament Teaching on Murder and Judgment

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God made man in the image of Himself.

Life in the Kingdom

“Whoever kills (*nāḱāh* – to beat, strike, wound) a person, the murderer (*rāṣaḥ*) shall be put to death (*rāṣaḥ*) on the testimony of witnesses; but one witness is not sufficient testimony against a person for the death penalty. Moreover you shall take no ransom for the life of a murderer (*rāṣaḥ*) who is guilty of death, but he shall surely be put to death (*rāṣaḥ*).”

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1. They did not prescribe the Scriptural penalty of death.

2. God's character wasn't even considered.

3. Nothing was said about the inner attitude or heart conditions regarding murder.

Life in the Kingdom

Life in the Kingdom

“But I say to you (contrasting, not with Scripture, but with the traditional teachings of the rabbis) that whoever is angry (to provoke or arouse with anger, wrath) with his brother (denotes unity, members of the same family, tribe, countrymen, nature) without a cause (or just, righteous cause) shall be in danger (to hold, be ensnared, liable of the punishment inflicted by a tribunal) of the judgment (court, tribunal, the college of judges).”

Matthew 5:22a

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Life in the Kingdom

The Scriptures speak of a righteous anger:

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Jesus cleansed the Temple – Matt. 21:12-13

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Faithfulness to Christ often demands righteous anger.

But Jesus is talking about selfish, brooding, simmering anger against a brother that we will not let die.

Life in the Kingdom

Life in the Kingdom

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

1 John 3:15

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1 John 3:15

Let's look at this verse in context.

Life in the Kingdom

For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love (*agapaō*) one another, not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his (Cain) works were evil and his brother's (Able) righteous. Do not marvel (wonder, be surprised, astonished), my brethren (fellow believers), if the world (*kósmos*) hates (to detest, an active ill will in words and conduct, a persecution spirit) you.

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“And whoever says to his brother, ‘Raca!’ (word of contempt or malicious abuse meaning empty, worthless, foolish) shall be in danger of the council (*sunédrión* – the supreme council of the Jews, the Sanhedrin).”

Matthew 5:22b

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To slander a creature made in God’s image is to slander God Himself and is equivalent to murder.

Life in the Kingdom

“But whoever says, ‘You fool!’ (*mōros* – impious, godless, silly stupid, a moron in heart and character) shall be in danger of hell fire.”

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To call someone, “You fool” was to accuse them of being both stupid and godless.

Life in the Kingdom

“To be angry is the basic evil behind murder; to slander a person with a term such as Raca is even more serious, because it gives expression to that anger; and to condemn a person’s character by calling him a fool is more slanderous still.”

John MacArthur

Life in the Kingdom

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What are you prepared to do about it?

