

## ***“What does God have to say?”***

Jesus has gone up onto the mountain, and His disciples come and sit at His feet – to listen, and to learn. In the same way the Lord has gathered us here today, to sit at the feet of Jesus – to listen and to learn.

He begins to teach us saying, “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder ...’” The disciples are listening – “yes, we’ve heard the Fifth Commandment” – “we know it is a sin to take someone’s life.”

“But I say to you” is Jesus’ response! Listen up, you who think you’ve kept this commandment because you have not murdered anyone – for “everyone who is angry with his brother” – or says, “you fool” – has not only hurt and harmed your neighbor by sinning against him in this way – but such a one is worthy of the hell of fire.

In the same way, Jesus destroys His disciples’ beliefs on adultery – and divorce – and swearing oaths in the Lord’s name. All too often we minimize our sin and their consequences. The truth is that we have sinned – in thought, word and deed. We are guilty of murder, and adultery, and taking the Lord’s name in vain.

The truth is that God’s Word condemns us all as sinners. There is no denying it. No escaping it. Our sin is deserving of hell.

You who are gathered here today spend more time sitting at the feet of the world with its teachings – than you do, sitting here with Jesus. “YOU have heard that it IS said ...” You hear the sermons that the world preaches. You live in a world that has abandoned what the Lord has to say.

The Lord speaks to His disciples about the Ten Commandments – but the world has its own commandments. “You shall not suffer.” “You shall not judge.” “Do whatever your eye, or hand, or heart, or tongue desires. Just do it. No judgment.”

But there is judgment! There is sin, and consequences for sin. People often suffer because of their sin. But the world blames those who walk in God’s ways – who say, “that your words hurt and harm your neighbor” – “your unfaithfulness to your wife separates what God has joined together” – and similar judgments upon sin.

The world's response is – “I wouldn't feel bad if you'd just be quiet!” “You are the source of my suffering” – which is to say – God is to blame!

“You have heard that it IS said” ... by the world around you – that you can chose to be whatever your heart desires. You can be a boy or a girl – a man or a woman – or no gender at all. No judgment.

You can have whatever kind of sex you desire (as long as its consensual). No judgment. No harm.

You can say whatever harmful, sharp words you want – as long as you are oppressed. You can lie and cheat to get ahead. You can covet and scheme to get what does not belong to you. No judgment. No harm.

Adults should know better – that the world is deceiving, preaching lies – but they have spent too much time sitting at the feet of the world, listening and learning. Meanwhile, our children are being sacrificed.

We remain quiet because we don't want to be accused of judging, and oppressing – and we let our children's eyes and hands and hearts and tongues, and their whole bodies be cast into hell.

It's time to stand up and tell the truth. It's time to sit at the feet of the Lord – and listen, and learn.

“See, [the Lord says], I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you today, by loving the Lord your God, by walking in His ways, and by keeping His commandments and His statutes and rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish.” (Deuteronomy 30:15-18)

The Lord speaks His truth to you this very day. There IS “life and good, death and evil.”

You are not afraid to make your children wear their seatbelts because you love them and want to protect them – so why are they free to do whatever they want with their friends?

Well, “they should know better,” you say. But why!?!? Have you told them? They sit at the feet of the world – they hear what the world has to say – and parents remain quiet, and so does the church. What are they to think?

Jesus says, “If your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.” The truth is that if we start cutting off each part of our body that causes us to sin – there would be nothing left – for we are sinful through and through.

As you sit and listen to Jesus today, He is calling you to repentance. Cut off the tongue and the mouth that keeps quiet. Cut out the heart that suffers in silence. Throw away the eye that leads you astray. Cut off the hand that does not discipline.

The Lord is cutting off your sinful desires – which follows the world’s laws, and sermons – instead of following your heavenly Father who leads you into life and all that is good. He cuts off your sin which leads you to hell. He leads you to confess your sins – forgives you, and leads you to your heavenly home.

Dearly beloved, you have heard what the Lord has to say. “You shall not ...” Repentant sinner, hear what the Lord says. “It is finished.” “I forgive you.” He has given His Son into death – so that you may have life and all the good the Lord desires for you. He has given His Son to save you – your body and soul – so that the whole of you might be saved.

Hear Him who says, “I am with you always” – to guard and protect you – to lead you through this wilderness of sin – to the land He has promised to you – the land of “life and good.” Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding, guards your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.