Seeing the World through Jesus-Colored Glasses, Part 1

[The three lessons in the following short series come from a series of lessons that I preached many years ago and are not to be confused with other articles of the same (or similar) titles by other authors. - djb]

A good example of the different views through these glasses is the comment Jesus made in Matthew 22:36-40 in response to a question concerning the Old Law: "'Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?' And He said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets." The religious leaders of the day had never considered love as the basis of the Law of Moses. Even today, we consider the basis of the Old Law to be, well…law. That's what the Law meant, right? It was a list of physical requirements for everyday life. It didn't involve the spiritual side of man, did it?

What the Jews didn't understand, and what we still don't seem to understand, is that God has always directed His efforts toward the hearts of mankind. Jesus said it plainly: the basis of the Law was love. He was even more specific in Matthew 5:21-48. When Jesus went up on that mountain in Galilee, He preached a sermon so simple that we usually overlook its significance. These three chapters (Matthew 5-7) give us a summary of what God expects of us. Most of us have heard of the Sermon on the Mount. We teach our children to memorize the Beatitudes. We're familiar with the Lord's Prayer and at least the young people know the song, "Seek Ye First…" And everyone knows "Judge not that ye be not judged…" (And if you don't think everyone knows that verse, just see how many times it gets quoted when someone is criticized.) But we don't really seem to understand the Sermon. In the last 28 verses of Matthew 5, Jesus addressed misconceptions of the Old Law. He told His audience that all of those physical requirements were designed to create a spiritual attitude. By emphasizing only the physical, the religious leaders had substantially weakened the Law. For example, when God said, "Thou shalt not kill," Jesus said He meant, "You don't kill your neighbor, you love him!" What man had done was add a legal consequence for one's actions, making it a completely physical law. In effect, the law now read: "Do not kill your neighbor, but you can think anything you want about him."

If we're going to see the world through Jesus-colored glasses, we're going to have to re-read the Sermon on the Mount and then start living it. When Christianity begins to transform an individual, his influence on all of society is changed. Thus, seeing the world through Jesus-colored glasses is not a private affair.

When today's modern fighter plane takes off for action, several on-board computers constantly check the speed and attitude of the craft in order to keep the tremendous aerodynamic forces involved from ripping the plane to pieces. Only constant re-evaluation and adjustment keep the

plane in the air. Is the Christian life any different? So often these high-performance jet fighters (our spiritual lives) are left flying with no one at the controls and when the on-board computer (the Word of God implanted, James 1:21) gives a course correction and attitude change, no one is there to make the adjustment and a precious soul flies into a mountain and is lost forever. Constant self-examination and constant self-realignment with the standard is the only thing that will keep us in the air.

It is my sincere hope and prayer that in this coming week, you will check in frequently with the Word of God and make the adjustments you need to match up with the pattern of sound doctrine found in the Holy Scriptures and thus enjoy the blessings of fellowship in God's grace. That fellowship is available to you no matter what happens that tries to throw you off course, because God loves you. And so, by the way, do I.

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