

Book of Matthew

Chapter 5:13-30

¹³ **You** are the salt of the earth; **but if the salt has become tasteless**, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by people.

Precept Austin > Citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven impact society because they are different (not weird or bizarre but distinct) from the Kingdom of this World. When salt and light try to accommodate to and/or be conformed by the Kingdom of this World, they lose their distinctiveness and their potential to impact the decay and the darkness of the this world which is passing away.

You > MacArthur > “you” is emphatic—namely, You, my followers and none others...

(In both verses 13 and 14 it is also plural)

But if the salt has become tasteless > Carson > most salt in the ancient world derived from salt marshes or the like rather than by evaporation of salt water, and therefore contained many impurities. The actual salt, being more soluble than the impurities, could be leached out, leaving a residue so dilute it was of little worth.

Tasteless > (interesting) > Strong’s > to be foolish. Usage > (a) I make foolish, turn to foolishness, (b) I taint, and thus: I am tasteless, make useless.

HELPS > *mōrainō* (from *mōrós*) – *dull, sluggish* ("without an edge"); (figuratively) acting "stupid or silly," "insipid, flat.

Deatrick > In modern Israel, weak salt still often ends up scattered on the soil that tops flat-roofed houses, which the residents sometimes use as patios. There it hardens the soil and so prevents leaks.

Neal Murphy > Actually, what the phrase “not worth his salt” means is to be worth one’s pay. Our word salary derives from the Latin word *salarium* (*sal* is the Latin word for salt), and literally means salt money. *Salarium* was the money paid to Roman soldiers that they used to purchase salt and other valuable items.

¹⁴ **You** are the light of the world. A city set on a **hill cannot** be hidden; ¹⁵ nor do people light a **lamp** and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.

Hill > Precept Austin > *oros* describes a relatively high elevation of land and contrasts with the Greek word *bounos* which also means 'hill' albeit somewhat lower. Jesus' point is that this is not a city down in the deepest valley but is clearly visible, in view of all to see.

Cannot > Precept Austin > s the combination of *not* (*ou* = absolutely not) + *can* (*dunamai*) which means to be able or to have power by virtue of inherent ability.

Lamp > Strong's > a (portable) lamp

¹⁶ *Your light must shine before people in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.*

Precept Austin > Paul adds "you were formerly darkness (not just "in" darkness, but actually "darkness!"), but now you are Light in the Lord

Ephesians 5:8-10 > ⁸for you were once *darkness*, but now you *are light* in the Lord; walk as children of light ⁹(for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), ¹⁰as you try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

¹⁷ ***Do not presume that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.***

Do not presume > Strobel > the word Jesus uses at the beginning of verse 17 is a portion of the verb *nomizō*, which means "to think or to suppose." It has a stronger significance than the simple translation "Do not think." Once when looking for a parking spot, I came across a sign that said, "Don't even think about parking here." It got the message across, and it conveys the force of what Jesus is saying here: "Do not let this kind of thinking ever enter your mind. Do not think that I have come to destroy the Law."

Utley > This is a (Greek grammar) which was a grammatical construction that meant "do not ever start!"

Abolish > Strong's > *kataluo* > (*kata* > down and *luo* > to loose, release, dissolve ... therefore, destroy, dissolve, lodge, come to nought)

That I came to abolish the Law > Utley > Jesus Himself was the fulfillment of the Old Covenant. The New Covenant is a person, not a set of required rules.

Jesus, in effect, expanded the scope of the Law from overt actions to mental thoughts. This takes the difficulty of true righteousness through the Old Covenant to a level of utter impossibility. This impossibility will be met by Christ Himself and given back to the repentant/believing faith community through imputed righteousness or justification by faith.

Fulfill > Strong's > From *pleres* > to *make replete*, that is, (literally) to *cram* (a net), *level up* (a hollow), or (figuratively) to *furnish* (or *imbue, diffuse, influence*), *satisfy, execute* (an office), *finish* (a period or task), *verify* (or *coincide* with a prediction), etc.: - accomplish, X after, (be) complete, end, expire, fill (up), fulfil, (be, make) full (come), fully preach, perfect, supply.

Constable > *The purpose of the Mosaic Law was revelatory and regulatory, but not redemptive.* That is, it revealed what God wanted people to know, and it regulated the life of the Israelites. But God never intended that people should view it as a way to earn salvation, namely, by keeping it perfectly.

Romans 8:3-4 > ³ *For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh,* ⁴ *so that the requirement of the Law might be **fulfilled*** (same Greek word) *in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*

ABRAHAMIC COVENANT	PROMISE of Jesus Christ
OLD COVENANT	PICTURE of Jesus Christ
NEW COVENANT	PERSON of Jesus Christ

¹⁸ *For **truly** I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, **not the smallest letter** or stroke of a letter shall pass from the Law, until all is accomplished!*

Truly > Strobel > Often in the New Testament we find Jesus saying, "Truly I say to you. . ." In some cases we read, "Truly, truly I say to you..." The translation comes from the Hebrew word for "truth," which in Aramaic is rendered by the term *amēn*. Jesus begins His pronouncements with the word "amen." In doing so He is saying, "This truth that I am about to say to you is absolutely certain." He introduces this segment of the sermon with that heavy language.

France > The phrase "truly I say to you," or "I tell you the truth" (NIV), indicates that what follows is extremely important.

Not the smallest letter > Broadus > *Jot*, in the Greek *iota*, signifies the Hebrew letter *iod* (pronounced *yôd*), corresponding to the Eng. *i*. It is much smaller than the other Hebrew letters, so that it is liable to be overlooked; and besides, in many words it can be either inserted or omitted without affecting the sound or the sense, somewhat like the *u* in *favour* or *honour*.

¹⁹ *Therefore, whoever nullifies one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*

Nullifies > Strong's > to loose, to release, to dissolve

Called > Broadus > Not only shall be such, but shall be so called, i. e. declared, recognized to be such. (Compare on Matthew 5:9)

Least > HELPS > the superlative (-est form) of *mikrós* ("small") meaning "*the very least, smallest.*"

McNeile > The Jewish rabbis had graded the Old Testament commands according to which ones they believed were more authoritative and which ones less: the heavy and the light.

Constable > Jesus corrected this view. He taught that all were equally authoritative.

(So ... where would "It's only a little white lie" be placed in this discussion?)

²⁰ *For I say to you that unless your righteousness far surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.*

Alford > The rest of this sermon elaborates on this fundamental proposition.

McPheeters > This pericope deals with various attitudes toward the Law: destroying it or fulfilling it (v. 17) and doing it and teaching it (v. 19). Jesus proceeded to clarify exactly what the law did require in verses 21- 48.

Constable > He selected six subjects (Murder, Adultery, Divorce, Oaths, Revenge, Love/Hate).. He was not contrasting His interpretation with Moses' teaching, but with the interpretation of the scribes and Pharisees. He was expounding the meaning of the text that God originally intended.

You will not enter the kingdom of heaven > Wuest gives the emphasis of the Greek grammar > *not in any case will you enter the kingdom of heaven*

²¹ ***You have heard that the ancients were told,** 'You shall not murder,' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be answerable to the court.'*

You have heard that the ancients were told > Strobel > Every Jew would have understood the formula, "*You have heard that it was said.*" In using it Jesus was referencing the halakha, the oral tradition of the rabbis that was passed down from generation to generation, and it is this superficial understanding of God's law that Jesus is criticizing.

²² **But I say to you** that everyone who is **angry** with his brother shall be answerable to the court; and whoever says to his brother, '**You good-for-nothing,**' shall be answerable to the supreme court; and whoever says, '**You fool,**' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell.

But I say unto you > Broadus > But I say unto you. 'I' is here separately expressed in the Greek, and is therefore emphatic, contrasting his teachings with the law, and the traditional interpretations. The same contrast recurs in every instance. throughout the series, (Matthew 5:28, Matthew 5:32, Matthew 5:34, Matthew 5:39, Matthew 5:44, and compare on Matthew 5:18) He "taught them as one having authority." (Matthew 7:29)

MacArthur > In every case, Jesus contrasts the people's misunderstanding of the law with the true direction in which the law points,

(Barnes makes the following comment ... your thoughts? "But I say unto you - Jesus being God as well as man John 1:1, John 1:14, and therefore, being the original giver of the law, had a right to expound it or change it as he pleased.")

Angry > HELPS > *orgízō* – be angry, as expressing a "fixed anger" (settled opposition)

Wiersbe > The word He used in Matthew 5:22 means "a settled anger, malice that is nursed inwardly."

Uteley > This was the Greek term for a settled, nurtured, non-forgiving, long term anger. This person continued to be intensely angry.

You good-for-nothing > Barnes > *Raca* - This is a Syriac word, expressive of great contempt. It comes from a verb signifying to be empty, vain; and hence, as a word of contempt, denotes senseless, stupid, shallow-brains.

The Nelson > The scribes and Pharisees taught that a person who referred to someone as a "Raca" was in danger of being sued for libel before the Sanhedrin.

You fool > Barnes > Thou fool - The Greek term, *mōros*, translated "fool," was meant to reflect the Aramaic term *raca*. However, Jesus' word play was not to the Greek word *mōros*, but the primarily Hebrew word *mōreh*, which meant "rebel against God. Jesus called the Pharisees by this very term in **Matt. 23:17**.

Matthew 23:17 > ¹⁷ *You fools and blind men! Which is more important, the gold or the temple that sanctified the gold?*

²³ *Therefore, if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there **you remember that your brother has something against you**, ²⁴ leave your offering there before the altar and go; **first be reconciled** to your brother, and then come and present your offering.*

You remember that your brother has something against you > Carson > Remarkably, neither illustration (vss. 23, 25) deals with “your” anger but with “your” offense that has prompted the brother’s or the adversary’s rancor.

First be reconciled > Barnes > This means to settle the difficulty; to make proper acknowledgment or satisfaction for the injury. If you have wronged him, make restitution. If you owe him a debt which ought to be paid, pay it. If you have injured his character, confess it and seek pardon. If he is under an erroneous impression, if your conduct has been such as to lead him to suspect that you have injured him, make an explanation. Do all in your power; and all you ought to do, to have the matter settled.

²⁵ *Come to good terms with your accuser quickly, while you are with him on the way to court, so that your accuser will not hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you will not be thrown into prison.*

Come to good terms with your accuser quickly > Remember, they are the offended

Strong’s > to think kindly of, to be favorable

While you are with him on the way to court > Barnes > It is remarkable that this very direction is found in the Roman law of the Twelve Tables, which expressly directed the plaintiff and defendant to make up the matter while they were in the way, or going to the praetor

²⁶ *Truly I say to you, you will not come out of there until you have paid up the last quadrans.*

Truly > Remember this > France > The phrase “truly I say to you,” or “I tell you the truth” (NIV), indicates that what follows is extremely important.

²⁷ ***You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery’; ²⁸ but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.***

Adultery > Utley > Here the term is *moichaomai*. It is a quote from the Ten Commandments found in Exod. 20:14 and Deut. 5:18. The Greek term from the Septuagint is *porneia*.

Constable > Certainly the spirit of the command would prohibit lusting after any woman, not just a married woman.

Looks at a woman with lust for her > HELPS > properly, to see, be *observant* (watchful).

Wiersbe > The “look” that Jesus mentioned was not a casual glance, but a constant stare with the purpose of lusting

Lust > Precept Austin > (*epithumeo* from *epí* = upon, used intensively + *thumós* = *passion*) means literally to fix the desire upon (object could be good or bad). It means to have a strong desire to do or secure something. To desire greatly. To long for. Note that the preposition *epi* can express motion toward or upon and thus one lexicon defines it as to set one's heart upon. In sum, *epithumeo* describes a strong impulse toward something so that one's passions or affections directed toward some object, thing or person.

Heart > Robertson > Not just the centre of the blood circulation though it means that. Not just the emotional part of man's nature, but here the inner man including the intellect, the affections, the will.

Precept Austin > *kardia* > does not refer to the physical organ in Scripture but is always used figuratively to refer to the seat and center of human life, the wellspring of man's spiritual life. The heart is the center of the personality, and it controls the intellect, emotions, and will.

²⁹ Now if your right eye is causing you to sin, tear it out and throw it away from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰ And if your right hand is causing you to sin, cut it off and throw it away from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into hell.

Sin > Strong's > to put a snare (in the way), to cause to stumble, to give offense

Utley > Since all humans are affected by sin (different ones for different individuals), we must take personal responsibility to remove ourselves from places/things/occasions of temptation. We will not be able to blame Satan, or heredity, or circumstances for our sins when we all stand before God and give an account of the gift of life. We are free moral agents made in God's image, accountable to Him for our lives!