



Today's Sermons

Morning: Blind, Begging, But Blessed
 Evening: Small Things

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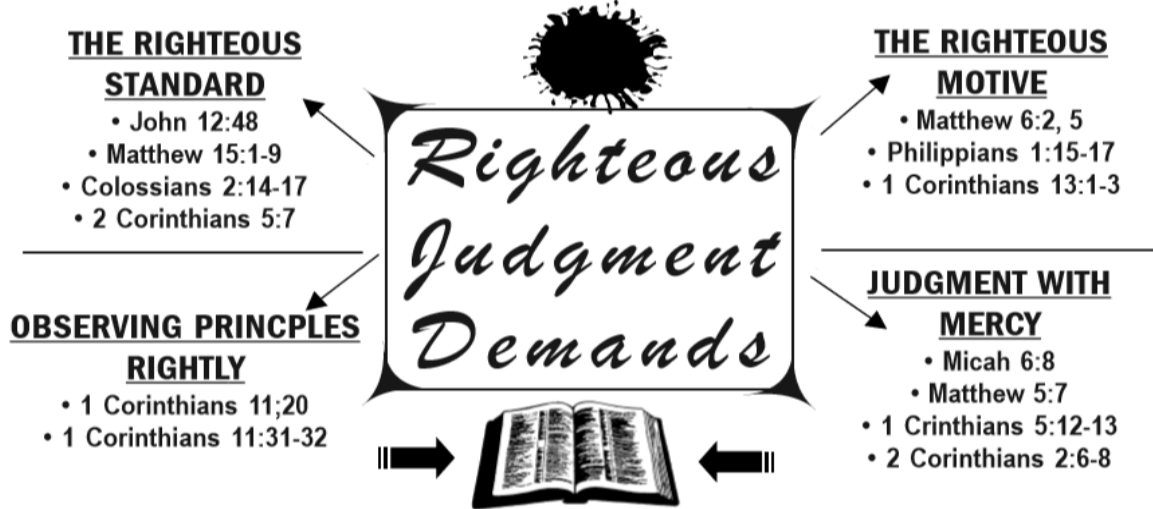
FOR THE RECORD

Sunday Bible Study	45
Sunday AM Worship	64
Sunday PM Worship	22
Wed. Bible Study	33
Offering	\$1604

“But Judge Righteous Judgment”

John 7:24

“Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.”



DO YOU MANIFEST RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT?



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Times of Services:
Sunday
 Bible Study:... 10:00am
 AM Worship...11:00am
 PM Worship:...6:00pm
 2nd Sunday:.....1:30pm

Wednesday
 Bible Study:.....7:00pm

Radio Program
 Sunday:.....7:30am
 “Back to the Bible”
 AM 580 WSKS
 93.5 FM

**We Extend A
 Warm & Cordial
 Welcome
 To All Our
 Visitors!**

DOES JESUS’ TEACHING ABOUT MDR APPLY TO THOSE THAT ARE NOT CHRISTIANS?
 Roger D. Campbell

By "MDR," I mean Marriage, Divorce, and Re-Marriage. It is a fact that the Christ spoke about marriage, putting away or divorce, and entering into a subsequent marriage. We read of His teaching on these important matters in Matthew 5:31-32, Matthew 19:3-12, Mark 10:2-12, and Luke 16:18. Not every word that is recorded in these passages was spoken by Jesus, but all of the verses referenced show the contexts or conversations in which Jesus taught on these subjects.

Sometimes the thought is expressed that what Jesus had to say about MDR only applies to those that have obeyed the gospel. That is, as long as one has not become a Christian, then he is not accountable to Jesus’ doctrine on MDR. One implication of such a theory is that a man who is not yet in the Christ could marry, divorce his wife for any reason he wanted, then marry a second woman without that second relationship constituting adultery. And, per this theory, the fellow (because he is not yet a child of God) could repeat this cycle of marry again, divorce without scriptural cause again, and marry again as many times as his heart desired. Why is such action supposedly not unlawful? Because he is not yet a Christian, so it is said.

Though this position has a number of vocal advocates, and despite the fact that to some it has an avoid-some-sticky-situations appeal to it, it is false. Jesus’ message is for all people everywhere, meaning that all are subject or amenable

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to His teaching. Jesus told His apostles to preach the gospel to every person, with the truth being that those who respond to the gospel by believing it and being baptized, shall be saved (Mark 16:15,16). What kind of person needs to be saved? One that has sinned. Sin is lawlessness or transgression of the Lord's law (1 John 3:4). The only way that one can be counted as a violator of a law or instruction is for him to be under or accountable to such. Thus, the fact that the message of the gospel must be preached to lost people shows that they are, indeed, held accountable for violating the message of the gospel.

Along this same line of thought, Paul told the Athenians that God commands all men everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30). Again, sinners – those that have violated God's law, they are the ones that need to repent. So, it must be the case that people outside of the Christ violate His teaching when they do not live in harmony with it. They are subject to what the Master says on every subject, including who has the right before Him to marry, divorce, and enter into a subsequent marriage.

"But Jesus said to preach *the gospel* to lost people, not *doctrine* about other stuff. The *gospel* is the good news of salvation through Jesus and has nothing to do with *doctrine*." In the past there have been those who expressed such an idea – that "gospel" can only be preached to non-Christians, while "doctrine" is only for Christians. First of all, the word "doctrine" simply means teaching. Second, we read that Paul told those who were already saints of God, "*So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also*" (Romans 1:16). He later told those same Christians, ". . . *but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you*" (Romans 6:17). But these two thoughts together and it is obvious that (1) These people, in order to be saved and become Christians, obeyed "doctrine," then (2) After they were already Christians, Paul or others could preach "the gospel" to them. Thus, it is false to claim that you cannot preach doctrine to those that have not yet obeyed the gospel. Since that is the case, the Lord's doctrine – what He taught about any topic, including MDR, is what all people are obligated to obey.

"But what about things like the Lord's Supper or prayer? If non-Christians are responsible for living by Jesus' law, then you ought to encourage them to break bread with us and pray to God for forgiveness." All sinners have the *duty* before God to obey Him in all things. There are some items, however, that a person is *privileged* to participate in only when he/she is already a spiritual child of God. All spiritual blessings are in the Christ (Ephesians 1:3), and only those that are in Him have access to such, including the privilege of partaking of the communion and the blessing of being able to address God in prayer as their heavenly Father.

The message of 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 also helps us see that those who have not yet obeyed the gospel are subject to Jesus' teaching on MDR – that is, His doctrine on MDR applies to non-saints, just as it does to His disciples. The message of 1 Corinthians 6:9,10 is that "*the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God*." Included in the category of "the unrighteous" are "adulterers," and verse 11 says "*And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified . . .*" When the Holy Spirit declares through Paul that some of the saints in Corinth "were" (past tense) adulterers, he is speaking about

the time before their conversion.

So, some in the church at Corinth used to be adulterers before they became Christians. The fact that they were adulterers means that they violated the Lord's law on marriage and sexual rights. But, again, when were they guilty of breaking the Master's teaching on such matters? Answer: before they obeyed the gospel. The conclusion is inescapable: if they violated the Lord's doctrine and stood condemned as a result, then they must have been amenable to or under His law at the time. Yes, Jesus' teaching on MDR *does* apply to those that are not Christians, just as it does to those that are in the Lord. Folks, marriage is not a church ordinance. The Lord God established marriage long before there were Christians, and Jesus' universal law applies to all people of all nations, whether they be in or out of the Christ.

What about homosexuality? Well, what about it? Would our Lord's doctrine about this evil activity apply only to Christians, or would non-saints also be accountable to Jesus' message on this topic? Is homosexuality condemned in Christians, but counted as an acceptable activity among non-saints? God forbid. In that same passage in 1 Corinthians, we read that in their pre-Christian days, some of the brethren in Corinth had been "*effeminate*" or "*abusers of themselves with mankind*" (6:9) – they were homosexuals, and by being such they transgressed Jesus' teaching on morality. The law of the Christ applied to them even before they were baptized into Him.

We have no intention of trying to identify and label the motives of those brethren that suggest that Jesus' teaching about MDR does not "count" when it comes to those that have not yet become members of His church. However, we can see the consequences of such a false message, can we not?

Many marriages in our society are in a horrible mess. The sad reality is that great masses of our population have no clue what the New Testament says about MDR. We have got to become more diligent in educating them! It is also a great tragedy that others know exactly what God's word says about MDR, but they simply do not care. They have made up their minds how they want to live, and they do not want to hear anything about their need to change their course of action. That is their choice to make, but on Judgment Day they will not be able to hide from the truth that Jesus' teaching on MDR applies to all people, whether they accept it or not.

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"Pray without ceasing." (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Aug 5 – Men's Business Meeting & Ladies' Bible Class
- Aug 9-11 – Tent Meeting in Lansing
- Aug 12 – Preach-N-Eat & 1:30 Worship
- Please give support money for Chinese orphans to Minnie Kennell