

# Anger, Lust, Adultery, and Lies



Saturday, 2/15 at 4:00 | Sunday, 2/16 at 9:00

Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany – 2020



**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ: Our daily lives include many choices; sometimes each choice comes down to two options: *My way or God's way!*

- ➔ What to do? Our old nature says, “My way!” But our new nature says, “God’s way!” Our way can make sense and feel good, **but** *God’s way is right and best!*
- ➔ What should be our motivation? *Thanksgiving!* We deserve hell, *but God has given us the gift of heaven through Jesus!* Therefore, *we are so thankful!*

In today’s sermon text from **Matthew 5**, Jesus is talking to disciples, *thus to believers*. In regard to four known teachings, Jesus will state and then **expand upon** each one. Jesus’ hearers thought their sins were minor – *maybe even okay*, but Jesus wants us to know that every sin, even what we think is small, *makes us deserving of hell!*

1. **FIFTH COMMANDMENT – Anger:** <sup>21</sup> **“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’**  
<sup>22</sup> **But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire. //**  
Actual murder – *unlawfully ending another person’s life* – certainly breaks the Fifth Commandment; however, *so does anger and insult!* The latter two do not bring

temporal punishment, **but** they will bring eternal punishment! Also, let us realize that our unresolved conflict with others can separate us from God; therefore, Jesus told us what to do...

- a. Example 1: <sup>23</sup> **So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you,** <sup>24</sup> **leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.** // When we have *knowingly* done something against someone, that person should be glad when we come and confess, *and should gladly forgive us!* Then, *with a clear conscience*, we can offer our gift to God.
- b. Example 2: <sup>25</sup> **Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison.** <sup>26</sup> **Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.** // We should do everything we can to reconcile with our opponents *before* our case is handed over to a judge; *it is even much more important to be reconciled with God through Jesus before we die!*

2. **SIXTH COMMANDMENT – Lust:** <sup>27</sup> **“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’** <sup>28</sup> **But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent [thus looking at her with a sinful desire] has already committed adultery with her in his heart.** // In the eyes of the Almighty God, *sin in the heart is as serious as sin with the body!* It applies to both men

and women. BTW, *within a marriage*, sexual desire is not sin. // Jesus said: <sup>29</sup> **If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell.** <sup>30</sup> **And 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.** // Some people blame their eye or their hand, so Jesus said, “Tear it out... cut it off!” Though very extreme, *even that will not save anyone from hell; instead*, God calls for a pure heart, *which only He can give by grace through faith in Jesus!*

3. **DIVORCE – Adultery:** This is closely related to the Six Commandment; Jesus said: <sup>31</sup> **“It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ <sup>32</sup> **But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.** // Two key factors: (1) *adultery breaks a couple’s one flesh relationship (Gen. 2:24)* and (2) *divorce breaks a couple’s legal relationship*. Therefore, Jesus said that divorce is only proper when *adultery has already occurred*. **In other words:** Since the one flesh relationship has been broken, *you can also break the legal relationship* (though not required). When divorce takes place without adultery; then, though legally divorced, *the couple is still one flesh*, which causes adultery to occur when either spouse is with another person. **Dr. Luther wrote: “...it would be far better to admonish and urge both parties to stay****

together, and that the innocent spouse be reconciled to the guilty one” (as quoted by Kretzmann).

4. **OATH – Lies:** <sup>33</sup> “Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.’ <sup>34</sup> **But I say to you,** Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, <sup>35</sup> or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. <sup>36</sup> And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. <sup>37</sup> **Let what you say be simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything more than this comes from evil.”** // Regarding an oath, *all of the examples given by Jesus connect to God – heaven, earth, Jerusalem, and head. By speaking in such ways, we are giving the impression that our words are not reliable apart from such a connection. Instead, as ones who believe in Jesus, “Yes” or “No” is enough; then, let us do what we say! Are there exceptions? Yes; for example, in a courtroom setting, an oath is not a sin.*

**Conclusion:** Jesus received every sin and every eternal punishment for us; now, *through Word and Sacrament*, we are receiving the benefits, **so let us listen to Him!**

**This Week’s Challenge:** *We deserve hell, but, in Christ, we have heaven! Let us express our thanks by following God’s Word!*

**Let Us Pray:** Dear Father, since we are sinners from the inside out, we pray for Your continued mercy, Your continued forgiveness through Jesus, and Your help in how we live!

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