

Living the Moral Law True Piety; Three-Way Service

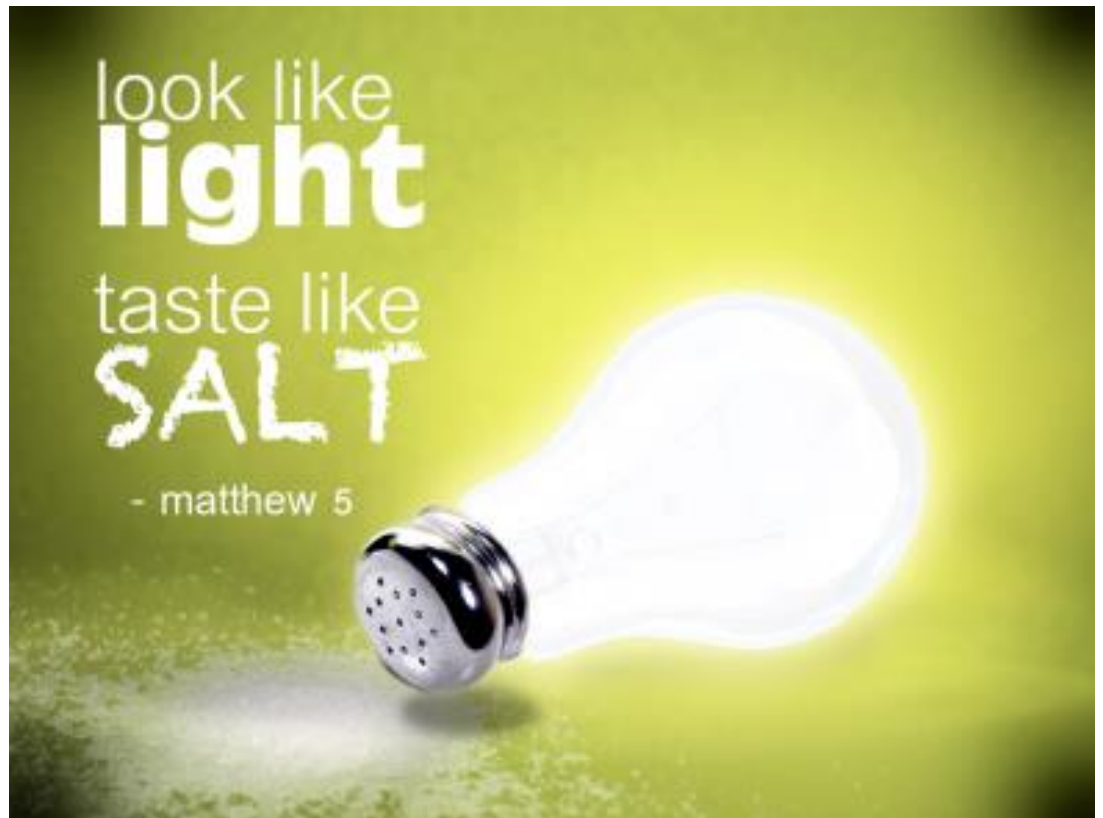
MATTHEW 5:17 – 6:18

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Heavenly King,
Advocate, Spirit of Truth,
Who are everywhere present and fill all things,
Treasury of Blessings, Bestower of Life,
Come, and dwell within us;
Cleanse us of all that defiles us,
And, O Good One, save our souls.

Be Salt and Light (Mt 5:13-16)

- ❑ Salt – associated with purity; preservation; flavouring
- ❑ Be the salt of the earth! *What does this mean?*
- ❑ Jerusalem was to be a lamp set on a hill
- ❑ Christians – called to be a lamp, bearing light
- ❑ **Images refer to Beatitudes and Moral Law**



The Law



THE LAW = Ten Commandments; Pentateuch; Oral or Scribal Law

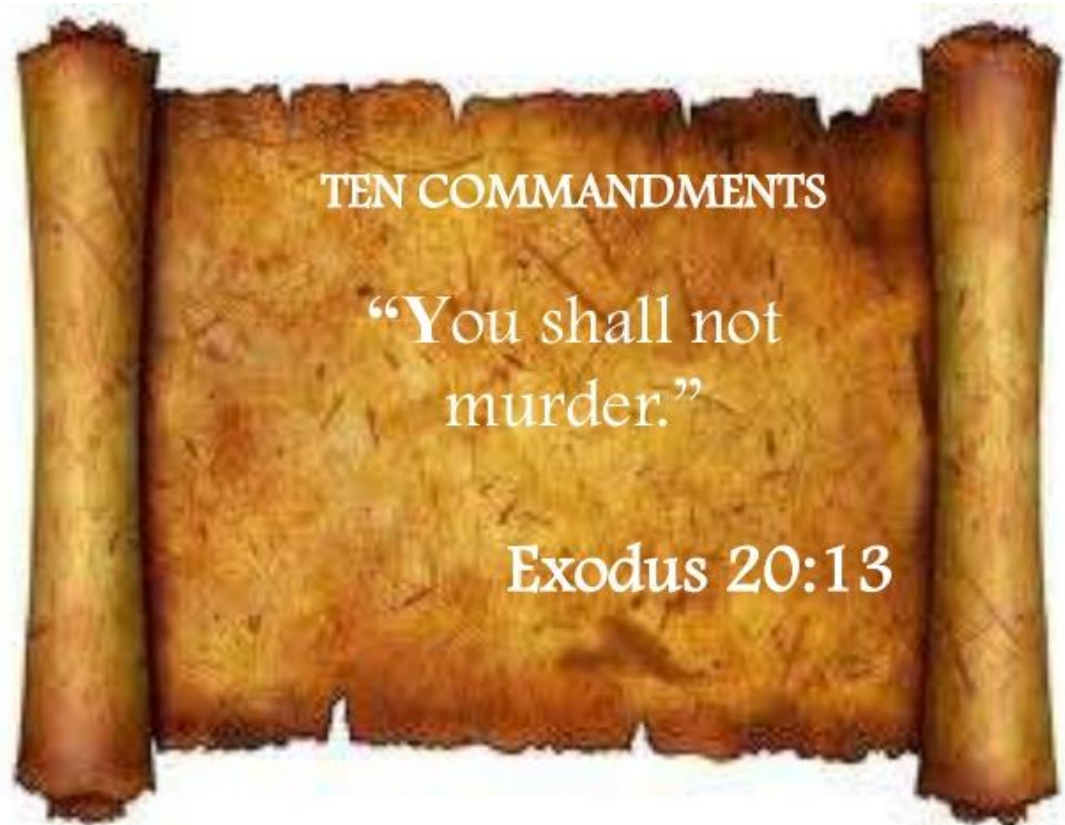
THE LAW & PROPHETS = Old Testament

LAW – Consisted of Ten Commandments; moral laws; civil laws; dietary laws; worship laws; curses and blessings

The Old Testament Law	The Sermon on the Mount
The Ten Commandments	The Beatitudes
The Case Laws	The Case Laws
Laws regarding worship	Teachings regarding worship
Cursings and Blessings	Judgment and Salvation

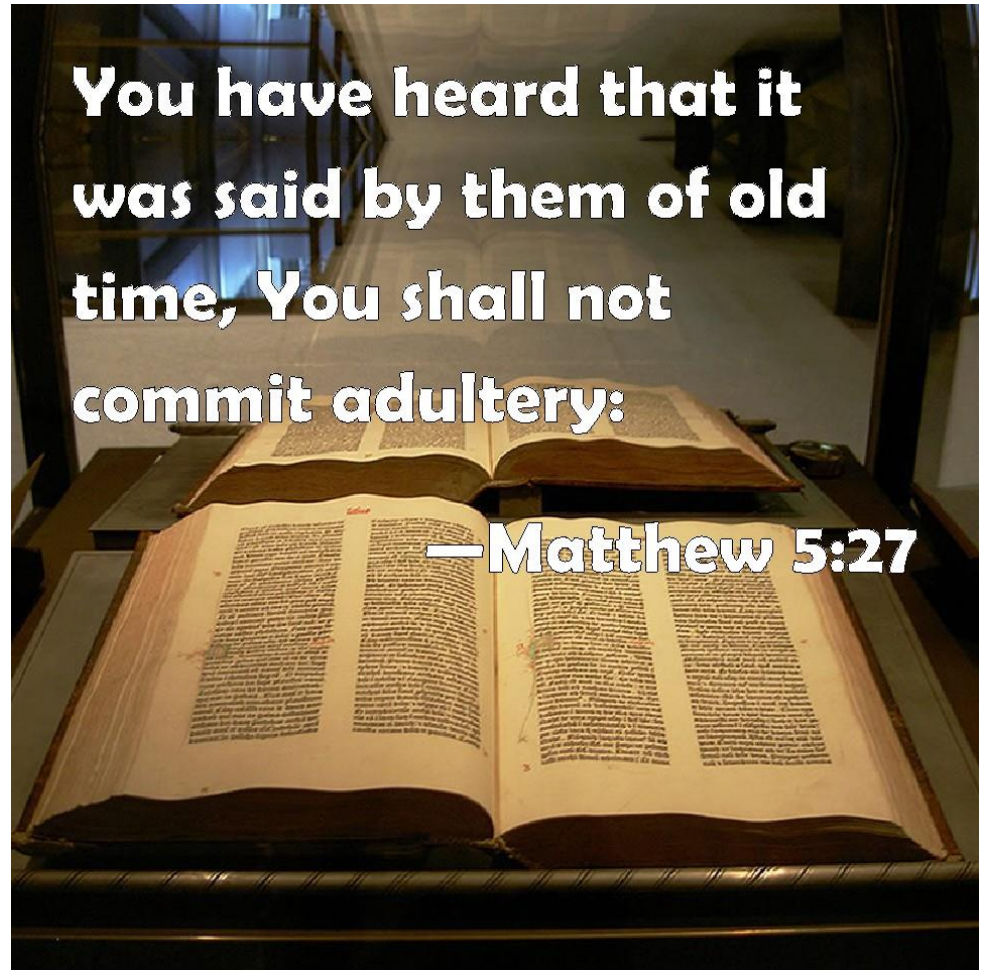
You shall not murder

- ❑ Jesus reaffirms the 5th Commandment; raises bar to include **“character assassination”**
- ❑ Three kinds of life: *spiritual, physical and social*
- ❑ **Be attentive to the heart**
- ❑ Deal with hatred, resentment, unforgiveness
- ❑ Accountable for everything



You shall not commit adultery

- ❑ Jesus reaffirms the 6th Commandment; widens boundary; brings the battle to a new frontier...
- ❑ Raising awareness, not guilt
- ❑ Need to be attentive to the heart...
- ❑ **Deal with temptations and occasions of sin**
- ❑ Question of divorce and re-marriage



Concerning Oaths

- ❑ Law commanded that oaths be fulfilled (see Numbers 30:2; Deut. 23:21-22)
- ❑ Abuse of Oaths
- ❑ Public Oaths are important
- ❑ **Disciples of Jesus are not to make private oaths**
- ❑ Word should be good enough; trustworthy. Why?
- ❑ **YES or NO.** Never “Maybe”



Retribution Laws

- ❑ *What is vengeance?*
- ❑ Law imposed *just retribution*, to limit vengeance
- ❑ **One step further...**
- ❑ ***Turn the other cheek?***
- ❑ If some one sues you and takes your coat..
- ❑ If forced to go one mile, go two...
- ❑ Give to the one who asks...
- ❑ Do not refuse him who wants to borrow...
- ❑ *But if I borrow? If I ask?*



Love your neighbour, love your enemy

- ❑ See Leviticus 19:17-18
- ❑ Jewish interpretation: neighbour = Israelite
- ❑ One step further...
- ❑ ***Neighbour = every human being***
- ❑ One step further... that includes your **enemies**
- ❑ *Agape* love
- ❑ Jesus raises the standard: *Love another as I have loved you.*



Piety (Mt 6:1)



Jesus reaffirms the importance of good works

- ❑ **Piety** – the habit of doing good works: prayer, almsgiving (acts of mercy), fasting
- ❑ **True Piety** – is driven by genuine love, reverence and obedience to God
- ❑ **False Piety** – motivated by self-interest, public attention & approval

Almsgiving (6:2-4)



- ❑ **Goal – not to attract attention.** *What is my motive?*
- ❑ *Doing good in secret... Is it always possible?*
- ❑ *What about bulletin announcements, plaques and program acknowledgments?*
- ❑ Ultimately, who is the recipient of our good deeds?
- ❑ *Do we expect something back in return? – Example from the Lives of the Saints*
- ❑ *What about requests for alms on the street? What about scams? What about tithing?*
- ❑ **Being generous when it comes to alms and acts of mercy**

Prayer

- What is a *hypocrite*?
- Who are the people standing on street corners and in synagogues to pray and be seen?
- The advantages and disadvantages of routine
- Go into your room and shut the door...* Which room?
- Balance in prayer
- Pagan prayer?
- Being generous in prayer**



Fasting

- ❑ Fasting vs. Abstinence?
- ❑ Fasting – a sacrifice made to God; especially if we feel the pain
- ❑ Fasting – a powerful spiritual tool
- ❑ Fasting needs to be done for the right reasons...
- ❑ *What if you come to someone's house for dinner?*
- ❑ *What about Wednesdays and Fridays?*



For Reflection and Consideration

- When was the last time I was guilty of “killing” someone’s good name? Have I labelled someone as being “stupid”? Does this happen often?
- Are there any occasions of sin or temptation in my life that need to be “cut off”?
- Am I a person that is faithful to my words and promises? How important is this to me? Am I afraid to say NO? How often do I answer “MAYBLE”?
- Would I consider myself to be generous? Do I have expectations when I do something good for others? Are there “strings attached”?
- If I borrow things from others, in what shape do I return them? If I sold my house, in what condition would I leave it?
- How do I react to those who offend me or insult me?
- How generous am I when it comes to prayer, almsgiving, and fasting?