

Overcoming Destructive Behavior!
(Refuse the Easy Way Out!)
Matthew 5:31-48
The Savior and His Spiritual Sword, part 5

- Do you desire to be truly HAPPY & PERFECT, and SALT & LIGHT for Christ? Then follow the teachings of Jesus in Matthew 5!
- The words “blessed” (happy) and “perfect” are rooted deeply in the Old and New Testaments.
- The way to be happy & perfect is to avoid the easy way out! The easy way out is only for a moment, and it is actually self-destructive behavior in the long run!

1. Stay in your Marriage, v.31,32

- Divorce seems like the easy way out but it is self-destructive behavior.
- Jesus’ teaching was radical and it cut against popular culture and even the religious teachers of his day. Jesus refers to Deuteronomy 24:1-4.
 - A. Divorce is easy and staying married is difficult. In marriage there will be seasons of boredom, loneliness, bitterness, rejection, and a lack of communication.
 - B. You must work through those times with pardon, patience, and prayer. We need to have a high view of marriage and a strict view on divorce.

2. Speak Simple Truth

- Lying and swearing seems like the easy way out, but it is self-destructive behavior. (Just ask Peter as he warmed his hands around the fire. He swore that he did not know Jesus.)

Matthew 26:74; Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew.

- A. Jesus refers to Leviticus 19:12:
And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of the thy God: I am the LORD. (Also Numbers 30:2; Deut.23:21)
- B. Our personal conversation should not be laced with cursing and with “I swear to...”

3. Say No to Revenge, v.38-42

- Personal Revenge is the easy way out (don't get mad, get even!) But this too is self-destructive behavior.

A. Jesus refers to Exodus 21:24,25: this was a legal proceeding and not personal revenge (also Lev.24:20; Deut.19:21).

B. To turn the other cheek means you neither run nor take revenge in personal conflict, but that you are willing to suffer loss of hurt.

C. Going the extra mile may give you the opportunity to carry the cross for Jesus' sake, Matthew 27:32.

4. Show Love to Everyone, v.43-46

- Hating those unlike you or people who disagree with you is the easy way out, but this is destructive behavior.

A. Jesus' startling teaching is that our neighbor is any and every human being.

B. Jesus says:

- 1.) Love your enemies
- 2.) Bless them that curse
- 3.) Do good to them that hate you
- 4.) Pray for those who use you.