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The Mind of Christ vs. The Ways of the World Matthew 5:20-48 NLT

Jesus calls His followers to a new way of thinking and living that is called out (Holy) from the world's mindset.

I. True Righteousness (v.20)

"Unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven."

- The world's best effort can only manage bad behavior.
- The Spirit of Christ addresses the condition of our hearts and causes transformation.

II. Anger and Reconciliation (vv.21-26)

- The world says, "Don't murder."
- Jesus says, *"If you harbor anger, you have murder in your heart."*

The world is satisfied as long as you stay within the law, but it often justifies grudges, bitterness, and holding anger.

But Christ calls us to intently pursue peace, forgiveness, and reconciliation, humbling ourselves, even when we're not at fault.

III. Purity of Heart (vv.27-30)

- The world and the law says, "Do not commit adultery," or "You can look, but don't touch."
- Jesus says, *"If you look with desire and lust, you are already in adultery."*

In the world, lust is viewed as a "trivial", even praised and celebrated. But in the Kingdom, the mind of Christ sees every person as a precious child of God, not as an object for self-gratification.

IV. Marital Faithfulness and Commitment (vv.31-32)

- The world treats commitment lightly: "If it doesn't work, walk away."
- But Jesus calls us to faithfulness.

The Kingdom mind values covenant over contract.

V. Truthfulness (vv.33-37)

- The world is filled with half-truths, loopholes, and empty promises.
- Jesus says, *"Let your 'yes' be yes, and your 'no,' no."*

In the Kingdom, integrity needs no elaborate vow, because the mind of Christ is trustworthy.

VI. Radical Forgiveness (vv.38-42)

- The world says, "Get even. Demand your rights. Retaliate."
- But Jesus teaches the opposite: *"Do not resist an evil person. Turn the other cheek. Go the extra mile."*

This isn't a weakness. It's the Spirit-led strength to choose mercy over vengeance, grace over penalty, and patience to allow growth.

VII. Love for Enemies (vv.43-47)

- The world's love is conditional: "Love your friends, hate your enemies."
- But Jesus teaches that love is a better way: *"Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."*

The mind of Christ sees every person as loved by God and worthy of compassion.

The "Perfect" Call (v.48)

"Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

He is not necessarily demanding "flawlessness", but completeness - to grow in love, mercy, purity, and truth until we reflect God's character.

To follow Jesus is to reject the world's mindsets and embrace the mind of Christ, the perspective of the Kingdom, which is unmerited love.

Read Aloud Together:

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends...

1 Corinthians 13:4-8a ESV