

Theme: God knows our hearts, and all that is in them that would condemn us. The Law of God will never change, convicting us of sin. But we may escape the judgment it brings if we will press into the Kingdom of God through the good news of Jesus Christ.

Background and Introduction: A quick review is in order.

- Use the wealth of this world to make friends in heaven
- You can't serve God *and* money! Period!
- What's this got to do with “divorce”?

I. The Kingdom of Man (14 & 15)

A. The way of death

1. Lovers of money
 - Jesus confronts the Pharisees
 - They judged the righteousness by their wealth
 - But they didn't love God!!

2. Mocking the Lord

- a. We often mock what we find a threat!
- b. Jesus had *nothing!*
 - Who was He to instruct them?

Application: Do I pass the test? Am I a lover of money? Concerned?

3. Self justification

- Compared to who?
- **God sees your heart!**

4. Exalting the profane

- a. The idols of mankind
- b. *What the world prizes God despises!*

B. A devastating rebuke! (15)

1. Their Position??

- **God knows your hearts!**
- Seeking to save themselves
- The honor of their peers was a curse

2. Our Position??

- a. Trying to justify ourselves?
- b. He *knows our hearts*, too.
 - The problem is *inside* the church - not outside
- c. Is there any hope for us?

II. The Kingdom of God

A. Until John?

1. The true turning point!

- Greatest of Old Testament prophets! (WCF 7.5)
- John's message: Repent and believe in the Gospel (Mark 1:15)

2. After him? The *Good News* is preached!
 - The *substance* of the law and the Prophets in Jesus Christ
 - Jesus says, repent and believe – *in Me!*

B. The Law still stands!

1. The Gospel *doesn't destroy the law*
 - a. It is still needed and valid
 - Not a “dot” will be removed (Matthew 5:17,18)
 - b. Jesus believed and upheld the law
2. The “example” of divorce! (18)
 - a. Relaxing the standard
 - Permitted by Moses reluctantly (Matthew 19:7,8)
 - b. Jesus is not “teaching” on divorce in this passage
(See Matthew 5:32; 19:9; 1 Corinthians 7:15 for places where he instructs us in regard to marriage and divorce)
 - c. The Pharisees “interpretation” of the law
 - Trivial grounds would suffice
 - Women had no voice

NOTE: This is the natural outworking of “legalism”, seeking our justification by the law.

3. Our own use (or abuse) of the law?

C. The Good News

1. Forcing His way in
 - Jesus' *effort* to “make a way”
2. Forcing your way in?
 - a. Parables of Chapter 16?
 - Put your effort into a heavenly welcome!
 - b. Repent!!
 - *Destroy* the things that hold you back!
 - Put to death what is earthly in you (Colossians 3:5)

III. Entering the Kingdom

- A. The Good News is preached
 - The Kingdom of God *has* come!
 - Forgiveness and Life is offered in Jesus Christ
- B. It must be believed!
 - You can't “force” your way in – not without his help
 - But you can fail to enter for lack of trying

Repent – as a Way of Life. Believe – in the Lord, Jesus Christ. Strive – to enter with your whole life.