Living Under the Direction of the King

Introduction:

1. In the previous study we gave consideration to the Teaching of Jesus.

2. One of the points in that study was that the object of the teaching of Jesus is to give direction rather than directions, to point to the goal of good living rather than to merely legislate for particular cases.

3. This has many implications. One is that when we are teaching Jesus we are teaching submission to the purpose of God. We are not just teaching good morals and high ethical standards. We are teaching submission, the submission of our will to the will of the King.

4. Obedience to His Word is therefore the chief mark of our loyalty to Him

5. In this study we will look at some evidence where Jesus focuses on direction rather than directions.

Discussion:

I. Three observations before we do that.

 A. The moral requirements of the law of God’s kingdom are prescribed by Him.

 1. These moral injunctions are founded upon the character of God and find their

 origin in Him.

 2. It is all summed up in the statement: “You shall be holy for I am holy.” See Lev.

 11:44; 1 Pet. 1:16; et al.

 3. The demand is that our character comes into alignment with God’s character.

 “Be holy yourselves in all your behavior,” Peter said (1 Pet. 1:15).

 B. God’s holiness is revealed through His servants.

 1. In the O.T. this included the priests and the prophets (Deut. 18:9-22; Mal. 2:4-7).

 2. In the N.T. the message of Jesus, the apostles and other inspired persons reveal

 His holiness (Eph. 2:20-21; Heb. 1:1-2; 2:2-4).

 C. This message of God’s character laid upon God’s people unconditional obligation

 that set them apart from all other peoples. Note Lev. 18:1-30 as an example of this

 uniqueness. Note the repeated emphasis—“I am the Lord your God.” Contrast this

 with what was done in Egypt and Canaan (18:3-5).

 D. In summary then—the teaching of Jesus, especially that part of it which involves

 ethical and moral obligations proceed from God through Him and to the community

 of His followers. Note the authority with which Jesus speaks. “I say unto you . . . “

 (Matt. 5:27ff, 29) rests on God speaking through Him.

II. Evidence of direction rather than merely directions in the Sermon on the Mount.

 A. Murder (Matt. 5:21ff).

 1. Not a mere avoidance of homicide.

 2. But right relations with others. Direction oriented!

 B. Adultery (Matt. 5:27-30).

 1. Not mere physical act.

 2. But goes to intent. Direction oriented!

 C. Marriage (Matt. 5:31-32; 19:9ff).

 1. Not looking for a way out.

 2. But loyalty. God’s intent. Direction oriented!

 D. Vows (Matt. 5:33-37).

 1. Not varying degrees of bindingness.

 2. But tell the truth. Direction oriented!

 E. Vengeance vs. grace (Matt. 5:38-42). Vengeance is one direction, grace is the other.

 F. Love.

 1. Love neighbor, hate enemy.

 2. Love all to be like your Father. Direction oriented!

 G. Righteousness (6:1-18); Wealth (6:19-24).

III. This direction reorients us. God’s instruction is more of a compass than a map. The compass of God defines our direction.

 A. Our calling defines our direction.

 1. Formerly we walked according to the course of this world (Eph. 2:2).

 2. But we have been called out of this darkness and into His light (1 Pet. 2:9-12; cf.

 Matt. 6:22-23).

 3. So we must walk in a manner worthy of our calling (Eph. 4:1ff).

 4. Not as the Gentiles (Eph. 4:17-24).

 5. Some of the details of this walk are fleshed out in Eph. 4:25-6:9.

 B. We tend to ask, “What do I do when . . . ?” God’s instruction is, “Go this way.

 Follow Me!”

 C. Note 1 Jn. 1:5-2:6.

 1. Concept of walking in the light (1:6-7).

 2. Coming to know Him involves keeping His commandments (2:3-6).

 3. What does it mean to be a child of God? We bear the image of the Father (3:1-

 10).

Conclusion:

1. What is your direction? What is your orientation?

2. Is it to be like Him, to submit to His direction in your life?

3. Or to do certain things so you can escape hell and instead go to heaven?

4. Are you asking for His direction or merely trying to ask for directions?

5. When you are teaching others are you teaching Jesus or giving directions, what to do when . . .? Repentance is a change of direction, not simply a change on this topic or that.

Most are asking for directions. And argue over the directions. Fact is they have not submitted their will to the King. Once my will is submitted to the King the details fall into line.