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## The Role of The Sermon on the Mount in Christianity

The text described in the bible in Matthew 5:1-2 - Matthew 8:1 titled "The Sermon on the Mount" was written in 1-300 century BCE. It describes a series of Jesus's teachings, which he delivered from a mountain, called after the blessings given there, The Mount of Beatitudes. The teachings are given to a large group of his followers gathered around him, but can still be applied today by modern people. Many believe these teachings to be a revolutionary monotheistic text, as it redefines the previous, jewish teachings and expands them, creating the most important pillars of christianity by building on the old canon. I will further evaluate upon this theory by comparing "The Sermon on the Mount" to the ten commandments, coming from the old testament, which till this day are to one the most significant sets of monotheistic beliefs. I will argue, that "The Sermon on the Mount" does not change the main ideas of commandments, but expands them in order to fit into the more spiritual and personal approach to religion, that focuses on the mind and thoughts, not only body and actions. It could also be argued, these sources can be considered as an adequate metaphorical representation of the relation between christianity and judaism.

"The Sermon on the Mount", coming from the new testament, instead of creating anew set of beliefs, it expands and deepens the meaning of the concepts reflected before, in the decalogue. The third commandment states "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain." instructing the believers to respect God's name by not using it in strong emotions, for example anger. In Jesus's teachings this idea is also reflected in two cases. In line 33 in "The Sermon on the Mount" the mesajah speaks about swearing oaths, which used to be a popular form of making an official promise. One would have most commonly sworn the vow upon the name of God, to reassure others about his truthfulness. However in the teachings Jesus says " But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is God's throne; 35 or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King.". Jesus implies that God's name does not need to be used in human promises. he also expresses, that a word of a godly man should always be truth, so it does not need to be backed up by the name of Lord. This teaching expands the understanding of the concept of the disrespect in overusing the name of God, presented in the ten commandments and explores them further, rather than changing them.

Another part of the teachings from "The Sermon on the Mount", which addresses the idea reflected in the third commandment "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain." is located in line 2, where Christ speaks about True and False Disciples - "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven." Here, Jesus not only mentions the same idea and finds another application for it, but also explores the consequences of saying it. this factor could be crucial to the religious people, as it provides them with far less abstract motivations and requirements of their religion, as it states a clear result of their actions. By foreshadowing the outcome of sins, Jesus makes his listeners much more likely to follow christianity, because he supplements a widely recognized, significant rule with new meaning, rather than introducing a new one.

Another idea reflected in both texts, which shows, how "The Sermon on the Mount" applies the key moral concepts known from the previous religious texts, is the issue of murder.

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Assassination in the decalogue is being reflected upon in the sixth commandment - "You shall not murder.". This is a clear instruction expressed to the people in a simple, short sentence reminding the reader an order or a decree. It is very plain and is not followed by any further explanations or consequences of this action, leaving the reader with no arguments nor reasons to support and apply this rule in their life. In the "The Sermon on the Mount" Jesus repeats this rule, however adds, that anger is almost as hateful as murder saying - " But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment." He adds that the consequence of breaking these instructions is hell, which makes the result of this action an obvious threat. This gives people a clear motive to be religious, and paints a sorry vision of tragic consequences, which attracts them more than an order, - "You shall not murder.". Again Jesus expands the idea and here also provides the reader with a strong reason behind following christian beliefs, but still uses a well-known concept from torah.

Later on in the paragraph on murder Jesus explores further the newly introduced idea about anger and conflict being as evil as murder. He says - "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, 24 leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift." In this quotation Jesus recognizes an internal conflict in a person, that wants to be religious, however has enemies at the same time. He links back to the threat of hell and warns people to stay true to themselves, as to be a faithful believer one has to be free of sin. Triggered by the vision of tragic consequences people start to think about religion as a lifestyle rather than a habit or series of actions, taking it to a more spiritual, mindful level. This is very revolutionary as the concept of God as a spiritual guide, which is present in the ideal of monotheism is being fulfilled due to expanding and adding new layers of meaning to the old beliefs, making the new ones more fulfilling.

The sin of adultery is also mentioned in "The Sermon on the Mount" as an expanded version of the seventh commandment. In the decalogue it states - "You shall not commit adultery.". Similarly to the case of murder, the restriction is stated in a form of an order or a rule, rather than a specific instruction, which makes it more open to different interpretations, which makes it also very vague and almost impossible to be commonly understood in a universal way. Adultery is not defined, what might result with a lot of misconceptions concerning this sensitive topic. On the other hand in "The Sermon on the Mount" in his teachings Jesus is more specific in his instructions according adultery as he adds, yet another dimension to it by saying - "But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.". Jesus's teachings consequently revolve around the spirit and mentality, so here as well he expands the sin of adultery, that hitherto was treated only as physical, also to the level of thoughts. By the implementation of his teachings to believers' internal thinking processes, they are more conscious about their religion and it becomes far more personal. Here Jesus made the smallest change out of all examples presented till now, but moving the obligation to follow this rule to the minds of the believers he made a huge difference.

Moreover, Jesus clarifies the sin of adultery even further in the context of divorce. In his teachings he recognizes that divorce itself is not a crime and that a godly man is obliged to allow his wife to divorce him and have an official document, which confirms it, nonetheless Jesus claims, that if one's marriage stops existing, it never was true in the eyes of God and one has committed adultery, while sleeping with their wife during marriage. the text says - "But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of

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adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.". The teaching also points out, that the next person, who marries a divorced woman and lays with her makes her a victim of adultery and he himself is guilty of it. Again Christ uses the old commandment - "You shall not commit adultery." and adds another meaning to it making it more specific, therefore more applicable. Also in a smooth way he avoids directly banning divorce, which would have probably been quite controversial.

In conclusion the series of Jesus's teachings delivered by him from a mountain known as "The Sermon on the Mount" may be considered extremely influential and revolutionary, as it has formed christianity as we know it today, by exploring and deepening the concept of spirituality and soul in the context of simpler moral rules. It uses the well-known ideas from the old monotheistic, jewish canon and instead of abolishing or changing them he builds and explores those further, which allowed christianity to gain a so many supporters and followers over the ages. The relation of "The Sermon on the Mount" and the decalogue may also be translated into christianity and judaism and be a metaphorical representation of massive global christianisation, that happened over the course of human history. Christ's religion very quickly grew in popularity building on the ideas from the old, jewish testament also known as torah.

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