

BBC SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE △▽◀▷

Sermon on the Mount: The Destructive Nature of Anger & Lust - Matthew 5:21-30

How to use this guide: This fall we invite you to join our church family in digging deeper into the Scripture(s) preached each Sunday. We believe life change happens best in the context of small community where you can engage God's Word while inviting people into your life to encourage you to continue growing in Christ-likeness.

Background: In the first century the religious leaders calculated that there were 248 commandments and 365 prohibitions. Among the great rabbis there was debate over how to follow these laws. But when Jesus appeared and began to teach His disciples, He revealed that the application of the law did not merely relate to external action, but to internal motivation. In this passage Jesus explains the true meaning of the sixth and seventh commandments from Exodus 20.

Getting Started: Personal Study

1. While the scribes and pharisees examined actions in light of the law, what standard did Jesus use to determine whether an individual was right or wrong before God?
2. In verses 21-22 Jesus likens murder to unrighteous anger. How are they related?
3. Jesus said calling someone "Raca," (Aramaic word meaning "empty headed idiot") constituted murder in the eyes of God. How was this the equivalent of murder?
4. What causes you to lose your temper?
5. In verses 23-26 why is Jesus concerned for reconciliation and forgiveness to be made quickly?
6. What is the full meaning of the seventh commandment according to Jesus in verses 27-28?
7. Some Christians have taken verses 29-30 literally and mutilated their bodies, which is a violation of Old Testament laws. What was Jesus trying to communicate in His language to the disciples?

Digging Deeper: Scripture Connections

Read *Genesis 4:1-16* and interact with the account of the first recorded murder:

1. What is the reason for Cain's anger?
2. What is God's caution to Cain?
3. What evidence is there for Cain's premeditation and God's mercy toward Him?

What does *Genesis 9:4-6; Exodus 21:12-14; Numbers 35:9-34* reveal to us about God?

God also took great offense to adultery, read and interact with:

Genesis 39:6-10; Deuteronomy 22:22-27; Proverbs 6:20-35; and Job 31:1-12

What do those passages teach us about God and what can we learn from Job's example?

Getting Together: Group Study & Discussion

1. Read Matthew 5:21-30.
2. What is the law addressing according to Jesus?
3. When was the last time you had anger in a relationship? Did you reconcile?
4. What practical instruction is available for us in verses 23-26 regarding relationships?
5. What difference does it make to remember that other people that we look at - either with anger or with lust in our heart - our created in the image of God?
6. When have you been glad you settled a conflict quickly?
7. Why is lust destructive to our relationships?
8. Temptations to sin often originate through our eyes. In the military it is common to post sentries to be on guard against subtle enemy movements. What are some practical ways you can post sentries in your life to guard you from temptation?
9. Pray for one another as a group that God would be strengthening the new disposition inside of you that is being formed and built up by the Holy Spirit as you follow Jesus.