

Study Guide



Matthew 5:21-26 – Anger

September 24, 2017

Welcome (40 Minutes)

Be intentional to have authentic relationships...

Worship (5 Minutes)

As the group transitions from of a time of fellowship to a time of intentional study of the word, it is important to facilitate that transition with a time of worship. This can look like praying together, singing songs together, or rejoicing in what the Lord has done throughout the week.

Word (45 Minutes)

As we look at Jesus' five discourses in Matthew, we see Matthew and the other disciples "at the feet of Jesus." These teachings are in the context of Jesus' calling and equipping the twelve apostles to go and make disciples of all nations. In our nine months of studying Jesus' five discourses of Matthew we will be sitting at the feet of Jesus learning the ins-and-outs of being disciple-makers ourselves. Our prayer is that we will be challenged to understand that we were saved in order to be disciple-makers and that we will be inspired to sit at the feet of Jesus to be equipped for our calling to be disciple-makers.

For further study on this weeks study please check out the following pages...

Action Step

This week write out a simple and concise explanation of Matthew 5:20 in your own words. Share this with your group this week.

Calendar

September 17th— [Connection Group](#)
September 17th— Kid's Shine
October 7th— [Parenting Conference](#)
October 29th— [Fall Festival](#)
November 12th— Member's Meeting

Welcome (40 Minutes)

As you fellowship with one another, please be intentional about sharing what the Lord is doing in your lives. Get to know one another and encourage one another. Are your conversations pointing one another toward Christ?

Worship (5 Minutes)

If you are looking for a song to sing this week, here are the lyrics to "[Resurrecting](#)":

The head that once was crowned with thorns
Is crowned with glory now
The Savior knelt to wash our feet
Now at his feet we bow

The one who wore our sin and shame
Now robed in majesty
The radiance of perfect love
Now shines for all to see

Your name
Your name
Is victory
All praise
Will rise
To Christ our king
[x2]

The fear that held us now gives way
To him who is our peace
His final breath upon the cross
Is now alive in me

Your name
Your name
Is victory
All praise
Will rise
To Christ our king
[x2]

By Your spirit I will rise
From the ashes of defeat
The resurrected king
Is resurrecting me
In Your name I come alive
To declare your victory
The resurrected king
Is resurrecting me
[x3]

The tomb where soldiers watched in vain
Was borrowed for three days
His body there would not remain
Our God has robbed the grave
Our God has robbed the grave

Your name
Your name
Is victory
All praise
Will rise
To Christ our king
[x2]

By Your spirit I will rise
From the ashes of defeat
The resurrected king
Is resurrecting me
In your name I come alive
To declare Your victory
The resurrected king
Is resurrecting me
The resurrected king
Is resurrecting me

Commentary: Read Matthew 5:21-26

Last week we saw Jesus establish His ultimate authority as the One who fulfills the Scriptures. This week we see Jesus correcting the religious authorities' interpretation and application of the Scriptures. Matthew 5:21-26 is Jesus' first explanation of the Christian righteousness that surpasses that of the Scribes and Pharisees. We find in this passage Jesus' first case study has to do with the command not to murder. The original command was found in the sixth commandment which prohibited premeditated murder and under Old Testament law carried the death penalty (Ex. 20:13: "Thou shall not murder"; Num. 35:31). This commandment is grounded on the fact that man is created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27; 9:6). The Scribes and Pharisees had interpreted this in external behavioral terms only. They taught that this meant one will be liable to judgment in human court if they physically murder someone. They were restricting the commandment not to murder to the deed of murder alone, to the act of spilling human blood in homicide. If the Scribes and Pharisees refrained from this, they considered that they had kept the commandment. **They found ways to harbor bitterness and hatred toward their neighbor while remaining innocent in their own eyes with regard to murder. And this is what they were teaching the people. Jesus disagreed with them and shared that the true application was much wider and includes not only thoughts, words, and deeds, but anger and insults as well as murder.**

Jesus is not addressing righteous anger in this passage, he is referencing unrighteous anger, the anger of pride, vanity, hatred, malice, and revenge. **Now, angry thoughts and insulting words may never lead to the act of murder. But they are equivalent to murder in God's sight. As we see in 1 John 3:15, "Any one who hates his brother is a murderer."** Anger and insult are unloving symptoms of a desire to get rid of somebody who stands in our way. Our thoughts, looks, and words all indicate that, as we sometimes dare to say, we "wish they were dead." **Such an evil wish is a breach of the sixth commandment. And it causes the guilty person liable to the exact penalties the murderer exposes themselves, obviously not in each case in human court but before God.** In verse 22 we see not only are anger and insult equivalent to murder, but the punishment to which they render us liable is nothing less than the divine judgement of hell.

Jesus doesn't just want his disciples to avoid murdering each other. Jesus wants his disciples to be so radically changed from the inside out that they love one another, and that they even love those who consider themselves to be their enemies. So what does he call us (disciples) to do? to be? **We are to be peacemakers (Matt. 5:9). We are to seek reconciliation immediately. We must avoid anger and insult and immediately take action to reconcile ourselves with the person we have harmed.** As soon as we are conscious of a broken relationship, we must take the initiative to mend it, to apologize, to pay the debt we owe. As Pastor Tracy shared, **Jesus makes it clear that the offering of worship is not acceptable from a disciple who harbors a heart of anger and who refuses to make peace with others. Jesus prioritizes repentance and reconciliation for this is a greater act of worship than merely physically going through the motions of worship. Jesus expects his disciples to immediately address any heart issues toward others.** Jesus loves us and at great cost to himself made peace with us and if we are followers of Jesus His Spirit will transform us into peacemakers.

Discussion - Read Matthew 5:21-26

1. How do you think the Pharisees interpreted this commandment? How did Jesus interpret this commandment? Did Jesus believe the commandment was simply aimed at outward behavior? How was Jesus' interpretation of this commandment different from the Pharisees?
2. What does Jesus say our heart attitude should be toward our brother as part of this commandment? What negative things does he say we should avoid in our attitude toward our brother? What positive steps does he say we should take in our attitude toward our brother?
3. In verses 23 and 24 the offering of a gift at the altar is a type of religious act or obligation. What do these verses imply about the relative importance of doing a religious activity compared to seeking reconciliation with your brother?
4. Verses 25 and 26 talk about settling disputes (financial and legal) with others. What is the principle Jesus is driving at in the settling of disputes with others? What attitude should we have toward others who believe we have not treated them fairly?
5. And so Jesus says that keeping this commandment involves not only outward behavior, but also involves inward heart attitudes that govern our actions toward others. How would you summarize the heart attitude that Jesus is urging in these verses?
6. Is it easier to obey the Pharisees' interpretation of this commandment or Jesus' interpretation of it?

7. To obey Jesus interpretation of this commandment requires a heart transformation. Is that something we can achieve on our own? How does this truth relate to the first 4 beatitudes in verses 3-6?

8. How does this passage (verses 21-26) illustrate Jesus statement in Matthew 5:20?

9. Examine your own relationships and heart attitudes toward others. Are there areas where you need to repent and pray for God's help to heal relationships?

Action Step

We must never forget that we have been sent by the Son of God to make disciples who make disciples. Each week we are giving you action steps to take. Jesus has sent you out to make disciples and it begins by learning God's Word and engaging people. **Last week we worked on memorizing Matthew 5:20. This week write out a simple and concise explanation of Matthew 5:20 in your own words. Share this with your group this week.**

Matthew 5:20:

"For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."

Walk (30 minutes)

After enjoying fellowship, worship, and time in God's word together, it is now time to pray together as a group and encourage one another in the faith. It is very easy for this portion of the group time to be consumed by the other portions. However, this segment of the group time is crucially important. It answers the question, how do we apply what we are learning in Matthew to our lives today?

Many groups have found that it is helpful to sometimes break up into a men's group and a women's group for the purpose of being able to be more transparent and honest as we encourage one another and keep one another accountable. I encourage you to try this in your groups.

In addition to praying for, and encouraging, one another, this portion of the group time should also be used for planning how your group can participate in God's work outside the walls of our church – "neighbors and nations." Discuss with your group some ideas on how you can be intentional with building relationships with your neighbors and co-workers. What can your Community Group do to impact the area around you?

Here is a list of local ministries Norris Ferry is actively involved in:

Hub/purchased
Young life
Heart of hope
First priority
Ark-la-Tex crisis pregnancy center
Community renewal
Grief counseling
Celebrate recovery
Samaritan counseling
Last call ministries
Golden age ministries
Rescue mission
Luke's lighthouse
FCA

May the Lord bless and encourage you as you are in your groups this week! Know that we are praying for you on a weekly basis and that we are here to help you in any way that we can!

Walk Prayer & Missions

For further information visit
norrisferrychurch.org or contact Jared
Clary (clary@norrisferrychurch.org)

Calendar

September— Hurricane Relief
October— Serve Shreveport
November— South Sudan
March— NOLA
June— Serve Shreveport
July— Central America