

Study Guide



Matthew 5:33-37 – Honesty in Speech October 15, 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 we want you to Identify. Begin making it a habit to ask God to help you *identify* people to invest in and invite. As you identify, pray for them.

Calendar

September 17th— [Connection Group](#)
September 17th— Kid's Shine
October 29th— [Fall Festival](#)
October 29th— Baptism Training
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 "[Cornerstone](#)":

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus blood and righteousness
I dare not trust the sweetest frame
But wholly trust in Jesus name

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus blood and righteousness
I dare not trust the sweetest frame
But wholly trust in Jesus name

Christ alone; cornerstone
Weak made strong; in the Savior's love
Through the storm, He is Lord
Lord of all

When Darkness seems to hide His face
I rest on His unchanging grace
In every high and stormy gale
My anchor holds within the veil
My anchor holds within the veil

Christ alone; cornerstone
Weak made strong; in the Savior's love
Through the storm, He is Lord
Lord of all
He is Lord
Lord of all

Christ alone; cornerstone
Weak made strong; in the Savior's love
Through the storm, He is Lord
Lord of all

Christ alone; cornerstone
Weak made strong; in the Savior's love
Through the storm, He is Lord
Lord of all

When He shall come with trumpet sound,
Oh, may I then in Him be found;
Dressed in His righteousness alone,
Faultless stand before the throne.

Commentary: Read Matthew 5:33-37

In Matthew 5:33-37 Jesus uses the same formula we have seen over and over in the previous passages. The formula he uses says, "You have heard it said... but I say." You have heard it said, do not murder, but I say do not be angry. You have heard it said, do not commit adultery, but I say do not lust. You have heard it said, do not divorce, but I say do not divorce except on the ground of sexual immorality. Jesus has been correcting the Pharisees lax interpretation of God's Word. Jesus makes it clear that we can not keep God's Word well enough to make ourselves righteous. We need the righteousness of God which is a gift of grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus continues and now turns to the Pharisees laxity in their teaching about oaths. They continue to misconstrue Old Testament Scripture in order to make it more manageable to obey.

Jesus says, "you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.'" The vows in question are 'oaths' in which the speaker calls upon God to witness his vow and to punish him if he breaks it. Moses spoke of the evil of false swearing and the duty to perform to the Lord your oath. Each passage prohibits false swearing, making a vow and then breaking it. Here are a few examples:

"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain (Exodus 20:7)."

"You shall not swear by my name falsely, and so profane the name of your God (Leviticus 19:12)."

"When a man vows a vow to the Lord your God, you shall not break his word (Numbers 30:2)."

"If you make a vow to the LORD your God, you shall not delay fulfilling it, for the LORD your God will surely require it of you, and you will be guilty of sin (Deuteronomy 23:21)."

What exactly were the Pharisees doing? They argued what the law was really prohibiting was not taking the Lord in vain or perjury (dishonestly breaking a vow), but "false swearing" actually meant to profane the Lord's name, to use the Lord's name in a profane way. So the Pharisees developed ways for taking oaths. They said if you use an oath with the Lord's name then that oath is binding, but all other oaths in which the Lord's name had not been used can be broken if needed.

Jesus responds to this saying, "but I say to you, do not swear at all...let what you say simply be 'Yes' or 'No' (Matt. 5:34-37; see also Matt. 23:16-22)." He begins by arguing that it's not about how the oath is formulated, it's not about if the oath mentions God or not, because no matter how hard you try, you will not be able to avoid some reference to God. The whole world is God's world and you cannot take him out of any of it. He says, "if you vow by heaven, it is God's throne; if you vow by earth it is his footstool; if by Jerusalem it is his city; even if you vow by your head, it is God's creation and under God's control. (Matt. 5:35-37)." No matter how you formulate your oath, the point is you must keep it. Jesus is saying, we as Christians, must keep our promises and be people of our word. Oaths should be unnecessary in our lives because our yes will be yes and our no will be no (James 5:12).

Does this mean we cannot take an oath or swear? No, Jesus is emphasizing that honest men do not need to resort to oaths, it is not that they should refuse to take an oath if required by some external authority. Christians should always say what they mean and mean what they say. Our word should be enough, there is no need to waste our breath by adding to it.

Discussion - Read Matthew 5:33-37

1. In these verses Jesus is addressing the issue of speaking simply and honestly. What are Jesus' two main points in these verses? What does he say we should not do and what does he say we should do?
2. In verse 33 Jesus quotes an old saying, "You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn." This saying does not exactly quote any commandments in the Bible, but which of the Ten Commandments do you think it is related to?
3. There are some other commandments given in the Pentateuch that are related to this saying in verse 33. Please read Leviticus 19:11-12, Numbers 30:2, Deuteronomy 23:21. What do you think is the message from these verses?
4. This issue of making oaths was addressed later on in Matthew chapter 23 (Matt 23:16-22). Here Jesus chides the Pharisees for the intricate and foolish rules that they had developed around making oaths. Do you think these rules described in Matthew 23 show that the Pharisees were loosening the rules from the Old Testament or making them stricter?
5. In light of the Matthew 23 passage and the Matthew 5:33-37 passage how would you summarize Jesus' teaching concerning oaths and concerning speaking simply and honestly? Do you think Jesus was forbidding oaths in all situations or was he teaching that they should not be necessary?
6. In light of Jesus teaching in these verses, what do you think about taking an oath "to tell the truth and nothing but the truth" with your hand upon the Bible when asked by a judge to testify in a trial? (You may want to consider Romans 13:1-7 before answering this question).
7. How often do you keep your word? Is there someone you need to confess, repent, and ask forgiveness to because you lied to them or didn't keep your word?

8. As we have been sitting under the feet of Jesus learning how to be disciples, we must also remember that we are called to make disciples. In this space below or in your journal identify people to invest in and invite. Has God placed anyone in your life who is not a Christian? Has he asked you to share the gospel with someone? Write down their names and pray for them as a Community Group.

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. **This week we want you to Identify.** Begin making it a habit to ask God to help you *identify* people to invest in and invite. First, prayerfully think through your patterns in life. Who do you run into regularly where you shop, where you eat, where you work, where you play, where you exercise, where you go to school, etc... Ask God to open your eyes to *identify* people He has placed or will place in your life. Pray in your Community Group specifically for these people by name. Write their names in your journal and feel free to write your prayers for them in your journal.

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

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