

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.

July 2013

The Sermon on the Mount

Lesson #4: Personal Relationships (Part 1)

INTRODUCTION

Media coverage implies that sexual assaults in the military are on the rise. Why?

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Read Matt 5:21-26

Note: "Jesus quoted some of the Ten Commandment but they are purely illustrative examples. So Jesus, by the examples He chose, endorsed the whole fabric of scriptural law."¹ The anger described here is long term, smoldering feeling rather than a rapid emotional response. It cherishes resentment and shuns reconciliation. "Judgment" of verse 21 refers to the local court and the Jewish Sanhedrin, the highest court of the land. "Raca" is a term of slander and contempt, similar to saying "good for nothing." Raca is also known as the clearing of the throat before spitting on someone. Jesus may have been referring to owing taxes in verses 25-26 since he talks about Roman coinage. The penalty for murder (Gen 9:6) is serious because it is an assault on the sacredness of the image of God.

1. People were expecting Jesus to free them from the burden of the Pharisee's long list of do's and don'ts. How does Jesus redefine the Exodus 20:13 command of murder? Is it easier or harder? Why?
2. The illusion that sin is only an external issue is damning. The rabbis thought despising someone's moral worth put you in danger of eternal judgment. A true believer understands the value of a human soul and God's power to transform. Should Matt 7:17-20 and 2 Cor 13:5 be considered as a reference to someone's true belief?
3. Why is God concerned with our relationship to other believers (brothers) when we give an offering?
4. How would Jesus describe an income tax evader (even if he could get away with it)?

Read Matt 5:27-30

Note: Jesus was showing that we must not see others as objects to be used. In Jewish culture, the right eye implied one's best vision and skills.

5. Unexpected exposure to sexual temptation is a part of life. 2 Sam 11:1-4 Jesus' mutilation solution to the sinful heart seems radical. What is He saying? How do you short circuit sin and not lust?
6. Hedonists of Biblical days said that sex was just a biological function like eating and sleeping. What does Jesus think about sex? How do you respond to people's Hedonist thoughts today?
1 Cor 6:18; Heb 13:4; 1 Cor 7:3, 5; Proverbs 5:18-19

APPLICATION

- How are your actions reflecting the desires of your heart?

A Jewish legend tells of a young rabbi named Simon Ben Eleazar who had just come from a session with his famous teacher. The young man felt especially proud about how he handled himself before the teacher. As he basked in his feelings of erudition, wisdom, and holiness, he passed a man who was especially unattractive. When the man greeted Simon, the rabbi responded, "You Raca! How ugly you are. Are all men of your town as ugly as you?" "That I do not know," the man answered, "but go and tell the Maker who created me how ugly is the creature He has made."²

¹ Mills, M. S. (1999). *The Life of Christ: A Study Guide to the Gospel Record* (Mt 5:21-48). Dallas, TX: 3E Ministries.

² MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1985). *Matthew*. MacArthur New Testament Commentary (295). Chicago: Moody Press.