

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

SESSION 4

Matthew 5:31-48 - *Leader Guide*

WELCOME

Welcome back to the Sermon on the Mount – week 4. Last week, we were in [Matthew 5:13-30](#). *Today*, we are going to cover the rest of [Matthew 5](#). Now, as we move through the Sermon on the Mount, I don't want us to move on from a section [Beatitudes or [verses 13-30](#)] and forget that all of this Sermon was given at once. In light of this, we should continue to read the Sermon with the entirety of the Sermon in mind – make sense?

We need to know the Godly attributes we should possess as citizens of Heaven. Attributes – such as salt and light – that cause us to act different and contrast the world's blandness and darkness. And in each of these areas we have an opportunity to look different than the general way of society. But we're not looking different simply to be different or to be "better" than anyone else. We look different, because it gives glory to God and hopefully invite opportunities to talk about Him to others that don't know Him yet.

And this week, Jesus is going to be giving us some practical examples of how a Kingdom Citizen with a changed heart should be living – and definitely look different than the society around us.

SCRIPTURE

Have someone in the group look up and read [Matthew 5:31-32](#)

Last week, remember how we stated the religious leaders created all kinds of ingenious ways of working around the intentions of the Law and God's Word. Marriage was no different and really, they fell into two camps:

- **Divorce is [against the law](#):** You had some Jewish schools that taught basically what Jesus is teaching here – that a marriage should never be broken. The only exception they would consider divorce if there were some sexual sins that was committed by one of the spouses. They would argue that sexual sin is one of only two exceptions actually written into the Bible. BUT they would also argue that reconciliation could still be achieved.
- **Divorce is [permitted in the law](#):** Some schools argued [Deuteronomy 24:1](#), and without any real consideration of the rest of scripture, states that it is permissible to divorce your wife and they ran with it. They didn't consider other Scripture OR the heart of God in the law. They basically ended up saying that whatever reason that I feel like that we need to divorce over, I simply need to give a certificate of divorce, and everything is going to be ok in the eyes of God.

QUESTIONS

The Jewish schools had two different teachings on divorce. Which view of divorce and remarriage seems to have the most biblical support to you and why?

- Do you see a weakness in either one of their arguments?

Why are God's requirements for marriage so strict? *[The regulations for marriage are strict in order to discourage divorce. In a society with no regulations and no fault in regards to divorce, it has become rampant and an attractive option in a difficult marriage. Scripture teaches marriage is a covenant which should reflect God's covenant with us.]*

How should the church respond to those who have gotten a divorce? *[We should make clear that divorce is not an unforgivable sin. Christ died for every one of our sins, and God's love and grace are often experienced in even greater ways in our failures. As the church, Christ's body, we must love and comfort those who have suffered through a divorce. We must help them understand that God doesn't throw anything away. He uses everything for our good and his glory. Often from our greatest struggles, comes our greatest ministries.]*

SCRIPTURE

Have someone in the group look up and read **Matthew 5:33-37**

QUESTION

Why should our yes or no be more sufficient than making an oath? *[As we live our lives as the children of God - with the Holy Spirit guiding us – our transformed character should make our yes or no sufficient on its own. We have no authority to use God's name to attach to our own private affairs and declarations.]*

SCRIPTURE

Have someone in the group look up and read **Matthew 5:38-42**

This is an interesting point. Jesus is like previously you were told that every action got an equal and opposite reaction. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But He's telling us that it doesn't need to be that way any longer. And He's not saying, just let people beat up on you, and really that phrase "slap on the right cheek" was more of a phrase used to talk about a serious insult than it was an actual physical slap on the cheek. It's like when we say, when someone's insulting, "that's like a slap in the face". But Jesus is like, let's think about these things differently. We're not just trying to get back at people, we're not just trying to claim all of our personal rights, we're living hopefully to make a difference for the cause of Christ. And that should be our motivating factor to consider and follow these things.

QUESTIONS

Why did the law create punishments "an eye for an eye"? *[The original law was good in that it was guard against excessive retribution. It meant the people could live their lives knowing that an orderly system of law and order applied to their society. However, over time this was twisted to become a form of right to bring retribution to one's enemies.]*

In verse 39 does Jesus mean even if the person is harming another person, such as a child, or mother, or brother?

In verse 42, are we to give everything we own away if we are asked?

- If not, what does this imply?

SCRIPTURE

Have someone in the group look up and read **Matthew 5:43-48**

Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, pray for those that use you, and persecute you. Jesus has been escalating the requirements of our character throughout this entire passage. Again, this goes entirely against anything that we would probably do naturally. People are going to treat you wrong at times, people treated Jesus wrong too, and He left us an incredible example!!

QUESTIONS

Where does the Bible say “Hate your enemies”? *[There is no such scripture, but Israel nevertheless claimed that there is such an underlying assertion in the law.]*

Who would the Jews have said was their neighbor?

- Who would have been their enemy?

Who does Jesus say is our neighbor?

- Who would be our enemy?

“Love your neighbor” is a quote from the Old Testament [Leviticus 19:18].

- What practical things were they called upon to do to love their neighbor?

What was our status with God before we became a Christian? [Romans 5:10]

- If God did not love His enemies would there be any Christians?

Is Jesus asking the impossible in Matthew 5:48?

- Define sanctification. How does sanctification help you understand **verse 48**?

CONCLUSION

Outline for how we will study of the Sermon on the Mount:

- **March 17th: Hangout Night**
- **April 7th: Matthew 6:1-18**
- **April 14th: Matthew 6:19-34**
- **April 21st: Matthew 7:1-12**
- **April 28th: Matthew 7:13-29**
- **May 5th: Hangout Night or Content Make-Up**