

Main Idea: In Matthew 5:21-26, Jesus uses the example of anger to expose the danger of settling for external righteousness and showing us the need for the internal righteousness that He alone can give.

- I. Jesus exposes external righteousness (21).
  - A. Religion says that murder is wrong.
  - B. Religion says that murderers will be judged and found guilty.
- II. Jesus calls for internal righteousness (22).
  - A. He says that inappropriate anger is wrong.
  - B. He says that angry people are liable.
- III. Jesus shows angry people what they need to do (23-26).
  - A. Here's what to do if you have offended your brother (23-24).
  - B. Here's what to do if you have offended your adversary (25-26).

Make It Personal: Some questions to consider...

1. Do I have an anger problem?
2. What does my anger reveal about my heart?
3. What do I need to do this week according to Jesus?

"Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." King Jesus made this stunning declaration in His sermon on the mount, as we saw last week. It's stunning because the Pharisees were good people, right living kind of people. What was missing? What does righteousness that exceeds the Pharisee's righteousness look like? Jesus begins to answer that question for us in a clear and convicting way in today's text.

*Scripture Reading: Matthew 5:21-26*

Many years ago I was mowing the grass, while keeping an eye on our daughter, Julie, who was playing with a couple of the neighbor children. I have to laugh when I think of a conversation I had with a 4 year old (Joey) who happened to be visiting his grandparents next door. His mother was sitting on the porch next door. Seeing Julie riding on her "tike bike", with the tricycle unoccupied, Joey said to me, "I'm not allowed to ride the tricycle." But then he continued, "Let's go inside the garage, and then I can ride it." I thought about the contradiction between his words, and asked him "Why?" He replied, "Well, there my mommy won't be able to see me!"

It's amazing how quickly we develop the ability to hide, to put on a pretense so people think well of us while the truth in our hearts is a different story.

Jesus encountered a group of people in his day which were experts at hiding. They were known as the Pharisees, the religious leaders in Israel. The Pharisees had externalized God's Law. They developed a detailed list of guidelines for the Jewish people. I would assume their motives were good at first. They wanted to please God. They wanted to obey His Law, and help others do the same.

But they essentially "depersonalized" obedience by prescribing an endless list of legalistic rules. As time passed, they added to God's Law 248 commands and 365 prohibitions. And by the time they were done, they had an impressive system...without God.

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\*\*\* Note: This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church. It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

<sup>1</sup> For a previous look at this passage, see the series preached at WBC in 1988.

How did that happen? Let me illustrate the problem. God said, “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy (Ex 20:8).” He clearly told the Israelites that work was forbidden on the sabbath.

But what exactly is work? As I come home from worship on the sabbath, I see a dead leaf on a rose bush beside my house. I stop and pick off the dead leaf. Have I worked yet? Probably not. Then a twig. Is that work? Then a branch which is too big to break, so I use my pocket knife. Then a branch too large for my knife, so I get my pruning shears. Have I worked yet? The Pharisees put it down in writing, so everybody would know. If you want to know for sure that you’re keeping God’s Law, do this, and don’t do that.

The problem was, first of all, that God’s Law doesn’t need to be elaborated. The Lord told His people exactly what He wanted them to know. So if He didn’t say more, He must have given them some freedom in terms of application.

But there was a bigger problem. The approach of the Pharisees takes the *heart* out of obedience. The Pharisees externalized righteousness. Do this, don’t do that, and you’re okay with God. Of course, if your list includes 613 commands, you’re never quite sure where you stand with God because surely you slipped up somewhere this week.

But no problem, says the Pharisee. We have something else for you to do, to compensate for what you failed to do. Just do what we say, and you’re okay with God. We guarantee it.

It was into this spiritual environment Jesus preached this message we call the sermon on the mount. He’s just begun His public ministry in Matthew 4. He’s been traveling throughout Galilee, says 4:23, “teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction.”

He’s called His first disciples (4:18ff). His fame is spreading, says verse 25, with great crowds following Him. So He goes up on a mountain on the northeast side of the Sea of Galilee, sits down, and begins His message.

“Blessed are the *poor in spirit*, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,” He declares in 5:3. Do you want to belong to heaven’s kingdom? Then you must admit that you don’t deserve to be there, and you have no resources to change that. You are spiritually bankrupt.

And you *mourn* over that reality, says verse 4. You grieve over sin, what it’s done to your relationship with God, and to the world.

It’s the *meek* who will inherit the earth, declares Jesus in verse 5. The humble. The contrite. Those who recognize they are undeserving of the privileges their King offers.

They’re hungry too. Not for food. Indeed, not for the treasures of this world either. They *hunger for righteousness* (verse 6). They want to be right with God and others more than they want to take their next breath.

And they will be filled, says Jesus. He knows, for He will fill them. That’s why He’s come. To rescue the spiritually bankrupt, to give them what they could never achieve by their own attempts. He has come, “not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many,” says Matthew later in his gospel in 20:28.

In behalf of the spiritually bankrupt, Jesus made a ransom payment. How? Read the rest of Matthew’s gospel and you’ll see how He did it. You’ll see His perfect life, how He did what we could never do and yet are required to do, love God with all our

hearts, soul, mind, and strength, and love our neighbor as ourselves. And then, as you keep reading, you'll see Him purposefully go to Jerusalem and allow wicked men to nail Him to a cross, where He paid sin's penalty—not His own sins, for He had none. He died to pay the penalty for the sins of every person who would ever admit their spiritual bankruptcy, grieve over their sins, and put their total trust in Him.

To prove that His payment was enough, He conquered death, then a few weeks later, returned to heaven, after giving His disciples the charge, "Go, tell the world what I've done. Invite them to put their trust in Me, and follow Me, as you have done. I'll be back."

The gospel of God's free grace is an amazing message. God saves sinners by His grace through faith in His Son.

But there's a problem, and Jesus addresses it in this sermon. Hell-bound sinners think they know better than God. They naively think they're okay with God because of the good things they do.

Jesus has something to say to such people. "For I tell you," He says in verse 5:20, "unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."

Those are shocking words! When it came to good, clean living, the scribes and Pharisees had the most stars on the chart. They lived good lives. They kept the law. They paid their bills. They never missed a worship service.

But they're going to miss heaven, says Jesus. And so will you, unless your righteousness exceeds theirs.

So what does that look like, to have righteousness that *exceeds* that of the Pharisees? We don't need to wonder, for Jesus tells us plainly in the next part of His sermon. Verses 21-48 are Jesus' exposition of verse 20.

In the weeks ahead in our study of Jesus' teaching, we'll see tangible illustrations given by our Lord to demonstrate the difference between genuine righteousness and pharisaic, legalistic righteousness. Jesus will identify the surface problem, but then will pinpoint the real problem.

We'll see a phrase that Jesus uses six times to highlight the contrast. "*You have heard that it was said.*" He says that in verses 21, 27, 31, 33, 38, and 43. And He also says, "*But I say unto you,*" in verses 22, 28, 32, 34, 39, and 44.

Jesus is on a rescue mission in this section. He's trying to help "good" people see what God sees, that they're not good enough to make it to heaven. Six times He will cite what they have heard what God has said, and six times He will show them they've missed the heart of what God has said.<sup>2</sup>

He begins with murder. Pretty clear-cut, isn't it? We all know what murder is, don't we? Or do we? In Matthew 5:21-26, Jesus uses this command to expose the danger of settling for external righteousness and showing us the need for the internal righteousness that He alone can give.

### I. Jesus exposes external righteousness (21).

Verse 21 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.'"

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<sup>2</sup> 1. Killing/Anger (21-26) 2. Adultery/Lust and impurity (27-32) 3. Swearing/Honesty (33-37) 4. Eye for eye/Love (38-48)

*You have heard that it was said to those of old*, says Jesus. Indeed, His hearers had heard this. This is what was said to those of old, fourteen centuries prior.

Jesus is quoting the sixth commandment. Where do we find the Ten commandments? They are in the Law that God gave to Moses and the Israelites around 1400 BC. He's quoting the Torah, specifically, what's recorded in Exodus 20 and then repeated in Deuteronomy 5. In Exodus 20:13 we read, "Thou shalt not kill (AV)."

Wait a minute. No killing at all? But there are all kinds of killing in the Old Testament. The Israelites were instructed to go to war, and take the promised land. What's more, God had prescribed the death penalty for willful defiance of His Law.

The word "kill" is better translated "murder". As we read in the ESV and NIV, "You shall not murder." In the sixth commandment God prohibited the criminal activity of taking an innocent life. We call that homicide.

Thou shalt not do that, says the Law of God. No murder. And whoever murders shall be in danger of judgment.

In every Jewish town there was a court comprised of the local village elders. They were responsible for the legal proceedings of their community. And they would deal with the murderers.

This is what they had heard. It's what their Book said. It's also how religion operates. Do this, expect this. Don't do this, expect this.

**A. Religion says that murder is wrong.** Furthermore...

**B. Religion says that murderers will be judged and found guilty.**

Jesus isn't criticizing the Law. He had just told His hearers in verse 17 that He had not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it. But the problem was, they themselves had destroyed the Law with their religious system.

God gave Ten Commands. Eight of them are negative (have no other gods; no idols, no swearing, no adultery, no stealing, no lying, no coveting), and this one, no murder.

Behind each negative command is a positive expectation. Do not murder, that's the negative. Protect and promote life, that's the positive expectation. Do that with the lives of those who are weak and vulnerable. Do that with the elderly. Do it with the helpless child. Do it with the child that's still in its mother's womb.

But the Pharisees did what manmade religion always does. They restricted and twisted the commandment of God to the point where its true intent was lost. They minimized God's command. They focused on the action of murder, but completely missed the intent behind the action.

The problem is not with the finger that pulls the trigger of the deadly gun. The real problem is what's going on in the heart of the person holding the gun.

## II. Jesus calls for internal righteousness (22).

Verse 22 "But I say to you." Whoa! Who is this who dares to cite the Law of God and then says, "But I say"? That's what the crowd is wondering when Jesus finishes, for they "were astonished" because He taught them "as one who had authority" (7:29). They don't know it yet, but the One who gave the Law fourteen centuries earlier is now correcting their faulty notions regarding His Law.

“But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire.”

Here’s external righteousness? *Don’t murder*. Okay, got that. I haven’t killed anybody, so I’m doing pretty well. God must be pleased.

Hold on, says Jesus. *Everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment*. Uh oh. Angry? Wow, Jesus takes righteousness to another level, doesn’t He?

This world is filled with angry people. Let’s be honest. Our churches and homes are often filled with angry people. Oh, we may not recognize the anger, and even if we do, we tend to minimize the problem. It’s just the way life works, we say.

Road rage. Shouting matches. Outbursts. The anger of the blow-upper.

And then there’s the more subtle anger of the clam-upper. The silent treatment. The teen who broods and sulks. The husband who says to his wife, “I’m fine, just leave me alone,” even though he’s churning in his soul. I know that man well.

Back in 2017 Ed Welch wrote a book entitled, *A Small Book about a Big Problem*. The title says it well. According to Jesus, anger is a big problem.

“How many times today have you been irritated? Frustrated?” asks Welch. “While you might not think about it often, if you look closely at any day most everyone can find anger in their actions and attitudes. Something spills or goes missing, we get stuck in traffic or someone cuts us off on the road, or we feel like the people we live and work with are only making our lives more difficult. And while no one wants to get angry, what happens when our irritations and frustrations rise yet again? Anger is so common.”<sup>3</sup>

And this makes today’s message so vital for all of us. I’ve chosen the title, “*If Looks Could Kill—Jesus Said They Do*.” That’s exactly what He said. Angry looks *do* kill, as far as God is concerned.

No murder. That’s a given. *But I say unto you*, says the One who said He came to fulfill the Law. Jesus does fulfill the Law. He fulfills it by His perfect life. Here He is fulfilling it by His instruction, as He takes the words from the Law and shows us the fullness of what God intended.

**A. He says that inappropriate anger is wrong.**

**B. He says that angry people are liable.**

To say it again, Jesus isn’t really saying anything new, for this was the intent of God’s law all along. Behind every negative commandment of God is a positive expectation. Such as...

\*Negative--No other gods before me // Positive--love God with all your heart

\*Negative--No adultery // Positive--Be faithful to your spouse

\*Negative--No coveting // Positive--Be content

\*Negative--Don't kill. // Positive--Do all you can to promote life.

Jesus puts the spotlight on the heart. If the heart is right, the action will be right. But if the heart is wrong, the action is unacceptable to a holy God.

Jesus gives us three examples of inappropriate anger in verse 22. First, He says that whoever is angry with his brother [the AV adds, “without a cause”] shall be in danger of judgment.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ccef.org/book/small-book-big-problem/>

There are actually two types of anger, as indicated by two different Greek words in the NT. The first (*thumos*) describes an anger which blazes up quickly and dies quickly. It's the hothead. It's the intense person who has a short fuse that is easily lit.

But there's a second Greek word used for anger (*orge*). This is a long-lived anger, sort of like a volcano, or a pressure cooker. This is the type of anger that a person nurses along to keep it warm. If you have *orge* in your heart, others probably don't see it. But it's there, festering, churning, building, scheming, brooding, until just the right time. And when it surfaces, you may not even raise your voice. It may be simply a condescending look of irritation.

This is all of us, isn't it? Which of us hasn't been angry with someone this week?

At this point, we need to clarify something. Not all anger is sin. Ephesians 4:26 says, "Be angry, and do not sin." Anger is an emotion. It's an emotion that kicks in when something isn't right. So when something happens that's not pleasing to the Lord, He's given us this emotion that prompts us to action to deal with the problem (see Jesus as He turns over the tables in the temple).<sup>4</sup>

However, most of the time it's not the violation of God's standard that bothers us. It's our own. You're in *my* space on this road. You've offended *my* reputation. You're wasting *my* time. And...I am ANGRY!

What does Jesus say will happen to the person who's angry with his brother? He says the person is "liable to judgment." To be liable means "to be responsible by law, legally responsible". A murderer goes before a judge and is found guilty and sentenced to a just punishment. Here Jesus says that so will we if we harbor anger in our hearts. And whereas no human court of law is competent to judge a person who has an angry heart, God is. And God does.

God has much to say about anger in the Bible. He forbids unjustifiable anger.

--James 1:19-20 "Be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; For the wrath of man does not work the righteousness of God."

--Colossians 3:8 "But now, put off all these: anger, wrath, malice..."

--1 John 3:15 "Whosoever hates his brother is a murderer!"

Next, Jesus gives a second inappropriate example of anger. Verse 22b, "Whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council." In the AV, "Whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council." This is what anger so often does. It expresses itself in words.

Jesus describes the conversation between an angry person and his brother. He calls him, "Raca". The word is untranslatable by any one English word. But the very sound of the word clues us in on its meaning. RACA! Raca was a derogatory, harsh term of abuse. The man who says it is filled with arrogant contempt.

In our vernacular we might say something like fool or blockhead or idiot or bozo. Ever lashed out at anyone with a word like that?

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<sup>4</sup> The words "without a cause" appear in the AV but are not in the best manuscripts of v 22. The implication is there, however. Jesus Himself demonstrated justified anger at times. He was angry at sin, especially at hypocrisy. In Matthew 21:12-13, Jesus overturned the money tables in the temple, and cast out the self seeking racketeers, and announced, "It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves". Jesus was angry!

What does Jesus say will happen to the person who uses such insulting, derogatory language? Once again, He says the person will be *liable*, this time to the "council". Not mans' council, but God's.

God does not excuse condescending language, whether it's politicians talking about their opponents, or employees talking about their employers, or students talking about each other, or whether it's pastors talking about other pastors. According to Jesus, God hears that kind of speech, and holds the person who says it accountable.

Then a third example, at the end of verse 22. In the AV, "Whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire". If calling a person "Raca" is an insult to someone's intelligence, calling the person a "fool" is a severe insult to his character. In the Greek, it's *moros*, or moron. Ever called anybody a moron?

As children, we used to chant a little rhyme, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never harm me." It's catchy. But nothing could be further from the truth. Words can be deadly. For the person hearing them, but also for the person *saying* them. Jesus says that calling someone a moron places us in "danger of hell fire".

On the south side of Jerusalem was a ravine once associated with the worship of the pagan god Molech. King Josiah brought great reforms in Israel. One was to defile this sight previously devoted to Molech. He turned it into a rubbish pit. Even in Jesus' day, the valley of Hinnom was the city dump for the city of Jerusalem. Trash, filth, and corpses of criminals were burned in the valley of Hinnom. As a result, there was a continual smoldering, a continual stench.

The Bible applies this horrible picture to the place of judgment reserved for those who reject and disobey God. It's called "hell", and later, the "lake of fire." In Mark 9:44, 46 (AV) hell is described as the place "where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

Please let this sink in. What is Jesus saying in verse 22? He's saying that we may be here today, having never pulled the trigger which killed another person. We have never stabbed a deadly knife into another man's chest. And we may be feeling pretty good about ourselves. Just like the Pharisees did.

But Jesus says this is external righteousness, and it's inadequate. He says that anger is just as serious of a problem with God as murder. If we're here today, and we've ever harbored anger in our hearts, we are liable before a holy God.

Jesus is talking to all of us, isn't He? We're all guilty as charged. But He's not telling us this because He hates us, but because He loves us.

You say, "How is telling us that we've violated God's command an act of love?"

It's because if we agree with Him, there is a remedy. He is the remedy. He came to this world to rescue us from the hell we deserve for our violation of the sixth command, and every other commandment. That's why He went to the cross, and conquered the grave. If we repent and believe in Him, God forgives us and gives us eternal life.

But Jesus shows His love for angry people in another way. It's the very next point He makes in His sermon.

### | III. Jesus shows angry people what they need to do (23-26).

King Jesus is so practical. He gives His followers two anger scenarios. In the first, He shows us what to do if our anger has affected a fellow Christian, a “brother” (23-24). In the second, it’s a non-Christian, “an accuser” or adversary (25-26).

**A. Here’s what to do if you have offended your brother (23-24).** “So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, <sup>24</sup>leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.”

Jesus begins with what’s been called the case of the offended brother. Picture the scene. A man enters the temple carrying his offering. He goes into the court of priests, and is joined by a priest. He has come to offer his sacrifice to God, just as the Lord commanded.

But all of a sudden, he turns to the priest, and says, “Here, hold my animal! I’ve got to go. I’ve got some important business to attend to before I can offer my sacrifice. I’ll be back as soon as I can!”

What was it that interrupted this man’s worship, and should urgently interrupt our own worship? What is it that should be causing people to leave church services all over America this morning?

Here’s the answer, according to Jesus. The worshipper remembers that his brother has something against him. Please notice carefully. Jesus is not talking about a problem that we may have with our brother, but a problem our brother has with us.

That’s strange. We are far more likely to remember when somebody has wronged us, than when we have wronged somebody else. But worship has this kind of effect on the person who is worshipping in spirit and in truth (as Jesus describes it in John 4:23-24). When we’re adoring the One who forgives us, we pay careful attention to how we have treated others.

So, let’s take this instruction to heart. You’ve come to a worship service, that’s good. You’re enjoying God and the blessings of His forgiveness. All good. And perhaps, right now, this God you are worshipping is reminding you of something. You have a brother that you’ve offended, and the offense is just hanging there. Perhaps it’s a careless word to your spouse last night. Maybe a broken promise to a business partner regarding some money. Or possibly you blew up at a church member, and your brother is still hurting. And right now the Holy Spirit is reminding you of that offense, because He loves you.

Will you do what Jesus said? A Pharisee will never do this. He’s not in the wrong. It’s the other person’s fault. But Jesus’ followers are not Pharisees. Yes, we do sin at times, but when we do, by His help, we go and pursue reconciliation. We seek forgiveness, and we grant it too. Just like our Father did with us, for Jesus’ sake.

But Jesus doesn’t stop there. Sometimes our anger affects a brother. Sometimes it goes outside the church. Then what?

**B. Here’s what to do if you have offended your adversary (25-26).** “Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. <sup>26</sup>Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.”

This has been called, the case of the opposing adversary. Jesus seems to be describing a non-Christian whom we have wronged. He’s our “accuser,” which indicates



he's been pointing out to us something that's not right. But apparently, we've ignored him, or perhaps blame-shifted. *It's his fault. He misunderstood me*, we say.

So, he's taking us to court. Just think of it. Here's a non-Jesus-follower taking a Jesus-follower to appear before a secular court of law. Not exactly the kind of publicity that's going to make people think well of Jesus, is it?

Does this ever happen? Do Christians ever get angry and sin against people outside the church? In the real world, yes, we do at times. We're not perfect.

But since we belong to One who is, and since He lives in us, we know what to do when that happens. He tells us. He says, instead of denying the problem, or blaming it on the other person, or on someone else, we are to take the initiative and settle this dispute before it even gets to the courtroom.

The key word here is "quickly." In verse 25 Jesus tells us to "come to terms *quickly*" with the one accusing us. To say, "Sir, please listen. I was wrong for what I did to you. I want to make it right. I want to clear this up now."

If we do, Jesus says we'll avoid some serious consequences. And if we don't, we'll face those consequences. We'll be handed over to the judge, then to the guard, then put in prison, and we'll stay there until the debt is paid to the last penny.<sup>5</sup> That's how it worked in the first century.

And even if the specific consequences differ for us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the point is the same. According to Jesus, it's not enough merely *not* to murder people. What's needed is to pursue right relationships with people, no matter the cost. If we've offended a brother, we go and pursue reconciliation with that brother. If we've wronged someone, even a non-believer, we do all we can to make that right, and we do it quickly.

This is righteousness that exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. It's the righteousness that Jesus places into the hearts of people when they repent and receive Him as their Savior and Lord, and it shows up for all to see.

Once again, the Pharisee doesn't have this kind of righteousness. You might say, he doesn't have the heart for it. When he's wrong, he'd lawyer-up and save his own neck, no matter what it takes. He's got a reputation to protect. His own. Not to mention a bank account. And his actions reveal where he really stands with God. His righteousness, if he has any, is all external.

#### Make It Personal: Some questions to consider...

1. *Do I have an anger problem?* According to Jesus, we all do. And it's serious. Looks do kill. And this makes all of us guilty of breaking God's law.

2. *What does my anger reveal about my heart?* If I am an angry person, what I need isn't merely an anger management course. I need a heart change. And there's only one surgeon who can transform an angry heart.

3. *What do I need to do this week according to Jesus?* You may need to pursue reconciliation with a brother. You may need to make things right with someone you've wronged. You may need a new heart. Don't wait. Do it quickly.

**Closing Song:** #438 "Cleanse Me" (verses 1, 2, 3)

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<sup>5</sup> He's describing how things worked in first century Israel, when debtors were jailed until debts were paid. It's hard to earn money to pay off a debt while sitting in prison.

Community Group Discussion:

1. This morning's message was entitled, "*If Looks Could Kill—Jesus Said They Do.*" Take time as a group to re-read this section from the Sermon on the Mount, in Matthew 5:21-26. What effect do you think these words of Jesus had on the first hearers? What effect do they have on you?
2. What was the commonly accepted teaching in Jesus' day according to verse 21? In verses 22-23, Jesus said that God's standard is much higher. How much so?
3. How important is it to deal with our anger, according to what Jesus said in this passage? What often happens when we become angry, according to verse 22?
4. According to verses 23-25, what should happen if Jesus' followers have exhibited inappropriate anger and hurt other people? Unfortunately, instead of this what do we often do with our anger?
5. In verses 25-26, what does Jesus say will happen to us if we fail to deal with our interpersonal conflict? Why do you think Jesus uses such strong language?
6. What is something you personally plan to do this week in light of what you have learned today from God's Word? Spend time as a group praying for one another regarding these commitments.