

Weekly Study Guide

The week of September 22, 2013

Daily Readings

Monday	Matthew 5:17-20	Tuesday	Matthew 5:21-26	Wednesday	Matthew 5:27-30
Thursday	Matthew 5:31-32	Friday	Galatians 5:13-26	Saturday	Ephesians 4:26-27

My notes on this week's readings...

Next Week in Worship

Next week's message: *A Better Way to Live Together: Children of the Father*

Next week's readings: Matthew 5:33-47

We all learned life from someone. Jesus teaches us that we are children in the family of God, and that our family believes and lives by some wonderfully different truths. Join us next week as we learn to grow up as children of our heavenly father.



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Group Discussion

Connect	When do you think that rules and laws are really helpful? How can rules fail us?
Learn	<p>These sections of Jesus' teaching are meant to communicate Jesus' vision for life together. He gives us concrete examples to set our direction and stimulate our moral imagination. But we will stumble and run into problems if we treat them as a new set of laws or legalisms.</p> <p>Read Matthew 5:21-26.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do you think Jesus is saying about the relationship between murder and anger?• We can tell from elsewhere in Jesus' life that not all anger is always wrong, but it is always dangerous. What makes anger dangerous?• What does Jesus tell us to do about our anger? <p>Read Matthew 5:27-30</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What does Jesus say about the relationship between the physical act of adultery and looking with lust?• In interpreting this passage, Martin Luther said, "It is impossible to keep the devil from shooting evil thoughts and lusts into your heart. But see to it that you do not let such arrows stick there and take root, but tear them out and throw them away." Why do you think that looking lustfully is dangerous?• What does Jesus tell us to do instead? Assume for a moment that Jesus doesn't actually mean physical mutilation (which probably wouldn't really help anyway); what does this mean in practice? <p>Read Matthew 5:31-32</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Christians have often read this passage with an attempt to craft specific regulations for marriage and divorce, but that hasn't been Jesus' pattern in the Sermon on the Mount. What do you think Jesus wants us to see in our approach to divorce?
Apply	Jesus has taught us the importance of seeing and loving our neighbor, through reconciled relationships, through respect instead of objectification, and through care and faithfulness in marriage. Is God speaking to you about loving your neighbor in any of these specific areas? How will you respond?
Pray	Christians follow Jesus, not laws; but this requires a heart shaped by the Spirit of God. Pray for converted hearts that will turn in love toward one another.