

Matthew 5:21-32

International Bible Lesson Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further

Some Bible study groups or classes can further discussion by asking some or all the **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** below. Others may want to send the bulletin size *International Bible Lesson* home with their students for further study in the coming week to encourage continuing Bible study. The ***Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further*** below are not actually intended to be *the answers* to the discussion questions. These indeed are “hints” a teacher may use to help students think through and discuss the questions in class. The *Class Preparation Guide* includes the questions below, and it can be given to students at the end of the previous class; then, they can pray, read, and think ahead to prepare for the next week’s Bible lesson. And/Or, consider giving each student the *International Bible Lesson Study Guide*, which includes the Bible verses to be studied before class and other questions.

1. How might our culture (or our churches) be different if more people practiced Jesus’ teachings to His followers in Matthew 5:21-32?

People would love one another from their hearts, and many countries and their leaders would have friendly relationships. The kingdoms of this world would become more like the kingdom of God, where people truly do the will of God because they love God and others. There would be far less sin.

2. What can anger lead to? Look closely at Matthew 5:22.

Anger can destroy a person inside if they do not follow the Bible’s teachings. Anger can lead to increasingly worse behavior, and increasingly worse consequences that can make a difference in this life and throughout eternity.

3. Are we supposed to try to make peace with everyone who unjustly holds something against us before we go to worship God? What did Jesus mean by Matthew 5:23-24?

No, because that may be impossible. But, if someone legitimately has something against us, we need to make the effort to make things right with them if possible. In Romans 12:18, Paul gave a good explanation for this verse, “If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.” We are not supposed to think that following a religious ritual or weekly worship can take the place of living the way God wants us to with others.

4. How would you help someone who read Matthew 5:29-30, and then thought that Jesus meant for habitual sinners to mutilate or dismember themselves?

Try to tell them that Jesus was not being literal but using hyperbole. Jesus’ teaching reveals how people can still sin in their minds even when they do not have the ability or opportunity to commit sin physically. A person without a hand or an eye can still sin in their mind. Jesus was making this strong and startling statement to convince people about the importance of turning from sin and not doing things that can tempt people to sin. It is better to stop sinning and tempting yourself to sin than spend eternity regretting your separation from our Holy, Loving God and Savior.

5. How can Mark 10:4 and Mark 10:11-12 help you understand Matthew 5:31-32?

God gave this command through Moses because people tend to be hard-hearted instead of loving. When a man or woman divorces their wife or husband, they are committing adultery against their wife or husband, especially if they are doing so to marry someone else. In Jesus’ day, a divorced woman could easily starve to death and might not overcome the temptation to become adulterous to stay alive physically.

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