



International Bible Lesson
Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series
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Thinking Further

Translations Offer Interpretations July 14, 2019 Matthew 5:21-32

“But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, ‘You fool,’ you will be liable to the hell of fire” (Matthew 5:22).

By comparing different Bible translations, we can better understand Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount. Regarding “angry,” the King James Version reads, “angry with his brother without a cause.” Because of bad behavior, the KJV rightly recognizes the Biblical truth that God’s children can sometimes become angry with one another “with cause.” In Ephesians 4:26, Paul recognized what some call “justifiable anger” or “anger with cause” and wrote, “Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath.” We will suffer physically, mentally, and spiritually if we feed the fires of anger or resentment after dark; furthermore, our anger may motivate us to act unjustly and become liable to judgment. In Matthew 5:22, the KJV retains the Greek word “Raca,” which the New Revised Standard Version translates as “insult.” Not knowing the exact meaning of “Raca,” some have suggested that in Jesus’ day it was a disgusting guttural sound made against someone to their face to express contempt for them. The New American Standard Bible translates “Raca” to mean, “You good-for-nothing,” an obvious insult! People could face serious charges in court for saying “Raca” to ridicule someone. Every translation I saw agrees that believers should never say “You fool” to someone no matter how foolishly they believe or behave. The Proverbs include many sayings about “fools;” for example, consider Proverbs 29:11, “A fool gives full vent to anger, but the wise quietly holds it back.”

1. How might our culture (or our churches) be different if more people practiced Jesus’ teachings to His followers in Matthew 5:21-32?
2. What can anger lead to? Look closely at Matthew 5:22.
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?
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?
5. How can Mark 10:4 and Mark 10:11-12 help you understand Matthew 5:31-32?

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