

**CONTEXT FOR YOU**

Last week we were in the Sermon on the Mount, when Jesus was giving the beatitudes. We talked all about what Jesus says about blessing, who is blessed, and about the character of Jesus. Blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are those who hunger for righteousness. The beatitudes provide a countercultural way of living. Jesus wants us to live differently than the world does, and that theme continues in today’s passage.

Today we will look at how Jesus came to accomplish his mission, and how he continues to call us live counterculturally. Jesus tells us he comes to fulfill the law, not abolish it. Jesus’ life is an example of how we are called to live; he satisfies the law. Jesus then talks about sin in our heart. He talks about how murder stems from anger in the heart, how lust in the heart is the same as committing adultery and more. When we follow Christ, we are supposed to obey him, stop and repent of our sin when it happens and not let it grow.

**Have you ever considered how amazing it is that Jesus fulfilled the law for us? His perfect life, and his sacrificial death on the cross gave us eternal life in him and satisfied the law. Ponder that as you prepare for this lesson.**

**What does it look like to deal with sin in your heart this week? Jesus takes sin very seriously, and we should too. This week pray and ask the Lord would help you recognize any sin in your life and seek forgiveness with Him.**

**OPEN THE CONVERSATION**

**Have you ever had a list of rules put before you, that you knew no matter how hard you tried you couldn’t do all of them? -** Share a memory of a time where the rules were so complicated you couldn’t do it. The law that the Israelites had was good, but the Pharisees kept adding to it to make them look “holier”. The real purpose was to set them apart and make them realize their need for God’s mercy. How amazing that Jesus fulfilled the law and died for us!

**Have you ever let something sit so long and you didn’t think it mattered, but it ended up being bad?** – Jesus says that sin we don’t deal with will continue to grow. Anger leads to murder. Lust in your heart is the same as adultery. Share how we need to deal with sin when it happens.

***READ MATTHEW 5:17-20***

1. **What does it mean that Jesus fulfilled the law?**
2. **Why is it so important that we trust in Jesus for salvation, not just what we do or the rules we follow?**

***READ MATTHEW 5:21-22***

1. **Why does Jesus condemn anger so strongly?**
2. **How is anger dangerous in the life of a believer?**
3. **Jesus doesn’t just say do not murder. He says to deal with your anger. Why do you think He focuses so much on the heart instead of just the actions?**
4. **How can we deal with anger when we start feeling it, and not let it grow in our hearts?**

**WRAP UP**

**What is one thing in this lesson that really stood out to you, and how can you apply it to your life?**
*Ask for any prayer requests and pray for one another.*

**EXTENDED CUT**

In Matthew 5:17–20 Jesus clarifies that He did not come to throw out the Law but to fulfill it. At that time, many people believed that righteousness came from following the rules outwardly. The Pharisees were known for their precision, but Jesus exposed the deeper issue: following rules without heart change was not enough. He shows that the Law always pointed to something deeper, a changed heart that only God can create. When He tells His listeners that their righteousness must surpass the Pharisees, He is not calling for more rule‑keeping. He is inviting them to a new way of life shaped by grace, not performance.

Verses 21–48 give real‑life examples of what that looks like. Jesus does not just say, “Do not murder.” He says to deal with anger and bitterness. He does not just say, “Do not commit adultery.” He says to honor people with your thoughts and desires. He calls for honesty, forgiveness, and love for enemies. These teachings are not about adding more rules. They describe the kind of life that flows from a transformed heart.

In Matthew 6:1–4 Jesus turns to motivation. Giving, praying, and doing good things are all good practices, but if the goal is to be noticed, the heart is in the wrong place. Jesus reminds His followers that the Father sees what is done in secret. That perspective changes everything. True discipleship is not about performance or public image. It is about living honestly before God, even when no one else sees.

This section of the Sermon on the Mount is not meant to crush people with impossible standards. It shows the gap between outward behavior and inner reality, and points to the only one who can close that gap. Real change happens through the Spirit. Jesus is calling His followers to live from the inside out; to let Him transform their hearts so their actions flow from love and trust, not from trying to earn approval.