

Leader Guide

Simple Gospel

Fall 2025 | Week 5

Message Date 10/12/2025

THE GOAL

I hope Life Group quarter is going well for you and that you're being blessed by this journey through the words of Jesus. Each week, we're being reminded that the Gospel is simple but not easy—it requires a heart that's surrendered to Christ. This week continues that thought as Jesus moves from general truth to personal transformation. He takes us beyond behavior into the motives of the heart. The goal this week is to understand that Jesus came not to abolish the Law but to fulfill it, and that true righteousness flows from a changed heart. Our call is to live in God's clarity, to trust His view of anger, and to let reconciliation be the fruit of His righteousness working in us.

MY STORY

- 1) If you could teleport anywhere but only as fast as a brisk walk, where would you go most often?
- 2) You can instantly make one everyday task disappear from your life forever — what are you deleting?

QUICK REVIEW

- 3) What caught your attention from Sunday's message?

DIGGING DEEPER / TAKING IT HOME

Matthew 5:17–26 (NLT)

¹⁷“Don’t misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose. ¹⁸I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God’s law will disappear until its purpose is achieved. ¹⁹So if you ignore the least commandment and teach others to do the same, you will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But anyone who obeys God’s laws and teaches them will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.

²⁰*“But I warn you—unless your righteousness is better than the righteousness of the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven!*

²¹*“You have heard that our ancestors were told, ‘You must not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.’ ²²But I say, if you are even angry with someone, you are subject to judgment! If you call someone an idiot, you are in danger of being brought before the court. And if you curse someone, you are in danger of the fires of hell.*

²³*“So if you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, ²⁴leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God.*

²⁵*“When you are on the way to court with your adversary, settle your differences quickly. Otherwise, your accuser may hand you over to the judge, who will hand you over to an officer, and you will be thrown into prison. ²⁶And if that happens, you surely won’t be free again until you have paid the last penny.*

4) What does it mean that Jesus “fulfilled” the Law and Prophets?

Simply, it means that Jesus did everything according to the law in such a way that He lived a perfect life. And fulfilling the law there is a key thought here that He satisfied it’s requirements and justice and was able to inaugurate a new covenant. This new covenant gives us new regulations. And it also releases us from the grip of the law, meaning we no longer need to abide by cleanliness laws, worship laws, sacrificial laws, communal laws, or Levitical laws. This does not mean that there are not ethics that we learned. For example, the Ten Commandments are very much still a part of ethics that Jesus teaches elsewhere.

5) What does verse 20 mean by “*unless your righteousness is better than the teachers of the law and the Pharisees*”? What is better righteousness according to Jesus?

Better righteousness is about a relationship with Jesus and not outward expression of the dos in the don’ts of the law. The Pharisees were focused on external compliance, but did not give any attention to the most important things for the matters of the heart. Jesus wants us to be in relationship with Him, and through that relationship allow His transforming work to bring out righteousness that only He can bring.

6) Why does Jesus equate anger to murder? What are some types of anger that people justify because it’s “not that serious”?

Anger and murder both come from the same root. They come from contempt, but most importantly they come out of the heart. That’s why they’re so dangerous. It’s the seat of who we are. His point is to show how serious heart issues are. I think sometimes we justify grumpiness and irritation. I know in my history I have justified being frustrated with other drivers on the road for not following the rules. I think this is an easy place to forget the words of Jesus.

- 7) What does Jesus teach us in this passage about reconciliation? What is Jesus teaching about the importance of reconciliation?

First thing is, it's absolutely important to Him. So much so He'd rather you go fix something than offer an offering. Secondly, I think it's part of worship. It's a heart of obedience. This is one of those Christian ethics, it's not a law, but it's important and it's how we live out our faith to relationship with Christ.

- 8) What's Jesus emphasizing through His illustration of settling matters quickly? He's warning us that unresolved conflict can have consequences. For example, if I have unresolved conflict with my wife these types of things can grow into bitterness. If I don't deal with them quickly, they can potentially lead to divorce. This happens very often.

- 9) Many people will read this passage on its surface without context of other passages and think this means I can lose my salvation. Is it possible to lose your salvation if you pass away before settling conflict with someone else or is Jesus's point greater than one small issue?

It would be very easy to think you can lose your salvation. That's not the case or what Jesus is talking about here. He is giving warnings that there are consequences to not following Him and in following Him we seek to clean our side of the street. The consequence is not we're going to lose the Holy Spirit in our life. Jesus is being partly hyperbolic and trying to illustrate the seriousness of anger in our lives. When we live in step with the Holy Spirit through relationship with Jesus, we should be salt and light to the world. Living it in and out of anger is not salt and Light. Remember, the whole context of this passage is the Beatitudes. Anger is an attitude and a place that our heart sits. Please don't miss this. There will be questions about this in your group. Remind them of the context of all of chapter 5 is about relationship with Christ.

CHAIR TIME TOOLS

Think about the following questions and pray through them with Jesus.

- 1) Ask God to show you if anger, bitterness, or offense has taken root in your heart.
- 2) Is there someone you need to step toward reconciliation with this week—make the call, write the message, have the conversation.
- 3) Spend time thanking Jesus that He didn't just obey the Law—He fulfilled it, so that you could live in freedom through His righteousness.