



Having a Heart Free of Murderous Anger

Matthew 5:21-26 (NIV)

ICE BREAKER: What is your biggest pet peeve? Do you have a thing that tests you more than anything else? If you can share it without getting angry, tell your group about it.

Key Scripture: Read together Matthew 5:21

1. Guarding your heart from anger will guard your life from the influence of hell.

Some facts:

- Jesus does not want you to live a life that is full of anger!
- Pharisees (aka, people who are legalistic) care more about the letter of the law than the spirit of the law. They blur the edges of truth and find ways to harbor bitterness, anger and other sins.
- Pastor Jason talked about how Jesus is warning us not to be so busy following the rules that we allow anger, rage, wrath and other sins to pile up. Often, we can stuff our true feelings and rather than dealing with the issue, we allow ourselves to accumulate toxicity in our heart. The result can be really detrimental to our personal lives.
- Pastor Jason pointed out that Jesus is revealing the content of our heart. He is not doing so to make us feel bad. Rather, He is calling us back to a relationship with Him that frees us from the anger and toxicity that we have accumulated.

2. Reconciliation with others is first priority.

Read: Matthew 5:23-24

Discuss/Challenge:

The example that Pastor Jason used about calling His wife to apologize for attitudes earlier in the morning before he left for church was so convicting.

- Have you ever had a moment in church where you had to stop worship, go to someone, reconcile and then continue?
- Whom have you had to make things right with before you could worship? (You don't have to give examples out loud but ponder that in your heart. Is your heart soft enough for God to correct you in that way?)

Read: Matthew 18: 15-17

Discuss/Challenge:

This passage tells us how to handle conflict with someone. There are specific steps to reconciliation that Jesus told the Disciples to follow. The PURPOSE for this is to be RECONCILED. Not to feel better about a situation or to justify your own opinion. The purpose is to bring you back into relationship in a healthy way.

- Have you ever followed the method outlined by Jesus in Matthew 18? What was the result?
- Was your heart to be right or to be reconciled?
- Isn't it cool that Jesus gave us such a practical model to follow for reconciliation?
- It is important to note that our attitude in approaching others may not always be received well. The other person may not be ready to forgive or want to be reconciled. The point is that we are yielded enough to the Holy Spirit to humble ourselves and be willing to go and attempt to reconcile.

3. Settle your differences now if you can, and you will avoid bigger troubles later.

Read: Matthew 5:25-26

Consider:

We often refer to this as keeping short accounts. Instead of letting something fester and grow, let's challenge ourselves to recognize when relationship has been damaged and do our best to make it right sooner than later.

Read: Romans 12:18

Contemplate:

- How do you rate yourself on a scale of 1-10 at living at peace with EVERYONE?

Take away!

Challenge yourself and ask:

- Is there someone that you have offended that you know that you need to go make amends with?
- Do you need to admit that you blew it and own that?
- Is there someone that has offended you and you need to have a conversation for the sake of reconciling?
- Ask your group to pray for you to have the courage you need to make amends, be reconciled and live at peace with all men. (As much as it depends on you.) Remember, we cannot control their response, but we can seek peace.

Blessings to you this week as you move toward more freedom in Jesus.