



**Questions for Application for the Week of February 17, 2014**  
**Part 3 - Lust Defiles. Love Your Spouse. - Matthew 5:27-30**

*Note: In our Life Groups this week we'll be spending the duration of the evening discussing these questions in breakout format rather than our usual full group discussion.*

1. Marriage is a covenant witnessed by God (Malachi 2:13-16) and an illustration of Christ and the Church to the world (Ephesians 5:31-32). Compare and contrast the biblical view of marriage with what people in our culture might think. What are some practical implications of these biblical truths and what difference should they make in our lives?

2. Jesus' greater righteousness calls us to not just avoid committing adultery physically but to not look at another with lustful intent (Matthew 5:28), that is desiring and/or imagining a sexual relationship with somebody who is not your spouse. What is the difference between being tempted and committing this sin in your heart? How does James 1:14-15 inform your answer?

3. Jesus encourages us that nothing is worth it if it causes you to sin (Matthew 5:29-30).

- Are you honest with yourself about areas that cause you temptation? Obviously each of us could have different answers, but can you identify areas that may need attention in your own life? What might they be?
- Using hyperbole Jesus exhorts us to take dramatic steps to rid ourselves of that which could cause us to sin. What might God be calling you to do in order to protect yourself from temptation?

4. Read Proverbs 5; 6:20-35; and 7. What are the similarities between these proverbs and what strikes you from their instruction? What (if anything) might they cause you to think about differently and how might you apply their direction in your life?

5. Given the subject matter it only seems appropriate to ask, have you been exposed this week to any explicit materials (or otherwise) that has caused you to stumble and/or been with a man or woman this week in such a way that was inappropriate or could have looked to others that you were using poor judgment? Considering 1 John 1:9-10, how might you need to respond?



**Questions for Application for the Week of February 24, 2014**  
**Part 4 - Divorce Divides. Stay Faithful. - Matthew 5:31-32**

1. Jesus' first example of his greater righteousness deals with anger. While the Old Testament clearly prohibited murder, Jesus desires that his people would deal with the attitudes behind murder and not simply refrain from killing each other. How do you suppose the "regular" non-church person views anger today? Is it something to be avoided or are there levels of acceptance? How shocking would Jesus' instruction here be to most?

2. While murderers are routinely arrested and put on trial, Jesus' illustration of the angry being tried or those who have insulted another facing a judge seem ridiculous (Mt. 5:22). Unfortunately, Jesus' list is not exhaustive and was merely representative of the severity of anger. What are some other ways we can display anger that would be liable to judgment in God's eyes? Are you prone to display a certain kind of anger? What is it and why do you think it is so?

3. In Matthew 5:23-26 Jesus gives two practical examples of how we should deal with our anger. The first (Mt. 5:23-24), warns against placing ritual over righteousness. Making an 80-mile journey to offer a gift at the altar would certainly look righteous, but Jesus desires our hearts be pure before him instead. How can we cultivate hearts that are authentic and avoid the hypocrisy that seems so prevalent in churches? What could you do to help ensure you are not simply going through the motions?

4. Jesus' second practical example (Mt. 5:25-26) calls us to deal with relational tensions intentionally. If you knew you were going to court and knew you would be imprisoned you would do whatever you could before that happened to avoid that fate. Jesus encourages that kind of intensity when we fail and wrong others. What is it that makes this so difficult to do? Have you gone and sought forgiveness from another in the past? How did it go and what might you do differently in the future? Regardless of the difficulty, how does this passage encourage you to be diligent in pursuing short accounts?

5. The apostle Paul instructed us to, "be angry and do not sin" (Eph. 4:26) and we know that Jesus at times was angry and yet without sin, how do we ensure the same appropriate response in our own hearts? What are some of the differences between righteous and unrighteous anger and how can we maintain perspective when angered and not take personal offense?



**Questions for Application for the Week of March 3, 2014**  
**Part 5 - Words Matter. Honor Commitments. - Matthew 5:33-37**

1. Read Leviticus 19:12, Numbers 30:2, Exodus 20:7 and Exodus 20:16. In what ways do these passages relate to one another and serve to give background to Jesus' instruction in Matthew 5:33-37? How often have you thought about "oaths" and "vows" and why is an oath or vow that invokes the name of the LORD so serious?

2. Why does Jesus prohibit taking oaths under heaven, by the earth, by Jerusalem or even your own head (Mt. 5:34-36)? In what ways does God witness all commitments? How should Psalm 139:1-6 inform your answer?

3. Josephus said of the Essenes, "Any word of theirs has more force than an oath; swearing they avoid, regarding it as worse than perjury, for they say that one who is not believed without an appeal to God stands condemned already." What does the necessity of oaths and promises in interpersonal relationships reveal about the character of the individual making them? Do you find you need to make appeals to something higher than yourself in order to gain the trust of those closest to you? Why is that so?

4. As you reflect upon your own truthfulness, consider the following questions:

- Am I leaving something out?
- Am I adding something in?
- Do I really need to say it?
- Do I mean what I say?

Which of the four (if any) is difficult for you to answer? In what ways are you personally prone to distort the truth or out and out lie and in what kinds of situations are you most tempted to?

5. How do you need to respond to Jesus' instruction in Matthew 5:33-37? Is what you say simply 'yes' or 'no'? Is there any specific action you need to take as a result of his direction in your life and how could others encourage you to be faithful to his leading?



**Questions for Application for the Week of March 17, 2014**  
**Part 6 - Revenge is Hollow. Be Generous. - Matthew 5:38-42**

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2. While murderers are routinely arrested and put on trial, Jesus' illustration of the angry being tried or those who have insulted another facing a judge seem ridiculous (Mt. 5:22). Unfortunately, Jesus' list is not exhaustive and was merely representative of the severity of anger. What are some other ways we can display anger that would be liable to judgment in God's eyes? Are you prone to display a certain kind of anger? What is it and why do you think it is so?

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4. Jesus' second practical example (Mt. 5:25-26) calls us to deal with relational tensions intentionally. If you knew you were going to court and knew you would be imprisoned you would do whatever you could before that happened to avoid that fate. Jesus encourages that kind of intensity when we fail and wrong others. What is it that makes this so difficult to do? Have you gone and sought forgiveness from another in the past? How did it go and what might you do differently in the future? Regardless of the difficulty, how does this passage encourage you to be diligent in pursuing short accounts?

5. The apostle Paul instructed us to, "be angry and do not sin" (Eph. 4:26) and we know that Jesus at times was angry and yet without sin, how do we ensure the same appropriate response in our own hearts? What are some of the differences between righteous and unrighteous anger and how can we maintain perspective when angered and not take personal offense?



**Questions for Application for the Week of March 24, 2014**  
**Part 7 - Hate is Expected. Show Christ. - Matthew 5:43-48**

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