

Belmont Exeter House Group Notes
w/c 20th October (Sunday AM services on 29th Sep, 6th Oct)
Matthew 5: 20 – 32 Jesus on anger and lust

The Sermon on the Mount contains probably the most well-known words of Jesus'. It has influenced our culture whether or not people are followers and believers in the Lord Jesus. We've recently looked at the book of Malachi where the Lord calls the people to repent and be renewed. The patterns of life to which we are called are given vivid reality here in the Sermon on the Mount.

This year we've had a focus on living a life of true worship. Romans 12:1 describes the right response to the gospel as offering our bodies as living sacrifices. This is our true worship. The Sermon on the Mount gives us plenty of details what a righteous, fulfilled life looks like and how to go about living it. This contrasts with false worship of idols such as power, identity, ambition, status, wealth, control.

If people were not able to be at the service, then do encourage them to catch up online ahead of the study via the talks page on the Belmont Exeter website. <https://belmontexeter.church/talks/>

This outline gives plenty of questions for studying the text, as well as exploring the outworking of these ideas in our everyday lives. There's more than you'll need for a single study so please do edit to a focus that is helpful to your group / study.

Resources

This year, the Bible Project has produced a wealth of resources for studying the Sermon on the Mount. You may find it helpful to use this overview at the start of the series.

<https://bibleproject.com/guides/introduction-to-the-sermon-on-the-mount/> This video gives one helpful structure of the sermon <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/matthew-5-7-sermon-overview/> and then follow links for many other resources.

The following books are thorough and accessible commentaries.

The Message of the Sermon on the Mount – John Stott

Sermon on the Mount - Scot McKnight

BIG IDEA: Whilst our actions may look acceptable, it's from our attitudes that sin does its damage. Addressing our inner life is what blessed people do.

Anger, rudeness and vengeance can often seem justified when we have been antagonized. Private thoughts of lust may seem harmless. Jesus, however, calls these attitudes "murder" and "adultery."

WAY IN: Three options – choose one and discuss opinions

What advice would you give to someone who is struggling to get along with an irritating individual? Compare the statements: "I haven't broken any rules/laws" with "I haven't done anything wrong" – Is "I'm not hurting anyone" a good reason for allowing actions?

READ: Matthew 5:21 – 32

You may want to select only one of the sections (21 – 26 / 27 – 30 / 31 -32), to dig deep into a specific topic. There are also principles that cover all three.

DIG IN:

1) Which part of the text (or sermon(s) if you were able to listen to them) had the greatest impact on

you? What puzzled you? Did you learn anything new about God? Jesus? You?

- 2) What does Jesus' expansion / explanation do to the commandments he quotes in (v21,27,31)?
- 3) In each case, what attitude is Jesus challenging? What do we do first when we fail to meet this challenge?
- 4) What is the impact of an angry phrase, a lustful look, casual divorce? Who is Jesus challenging and who is he protecting?
- 5) What has caused you to lose your temper with people? What do verses 23-26 teach us about broken relationships?
- 6) Why is Jesus concerned that reconciliation and apologies be made quickly? Has anyone got personal experience to share of reconciliation that has been done well?
- 7) What is Jesus' remedy to the lustful look? What does Jesus actually mean when he says to "cut off your hand" and "pluck out your eye"? What might be the equivalent of Jesus' instructions to "gouge out an eye" or "cut off a hand"?
- 8) What is the impact of casual divorce? Who is Jesus challenging and who is he protecting? How is Jesus advocating for the fair treatment of women?

LIVE IT OUT and PRAY IT THROUGH

Working in pairs or triples, share some of your own challenges and pray for each other

- 9) Whose forgiveness do you need to seek? Who do you need to reconcile with?
- 10) What steps could you take to prevent the "look-with-desire"? What would keep temptation out of reach?
- 11) How can we protect and provide for those who are vulnerable?