

The Law of God and Your Brother

Chapter 12

Audio lesson: Sermon on the Mount 12



Objective: To understand how we should relate to other believers when we have the attitudes of Jesus in us. (Text: Matthew 5:21-24)



“If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother, then come and offer your gift.”

—Matthew 5:23-24

Jesus taught that it is critical for believers to cultivate and maintain strong, loving relationships. The religious leaders in the time of Jesus taught that as long as you did not murder or injure your brother, your relationship with him was acceptable to God. But those who have Jesus’ attitude of mercy are to show it; not to do so will affect our private worship. We must make sure we are not alienated from anyone who Jesus calls our “brother.” Anger and feelings of disgust toward our brothers and sisters must be addressed if we want to have a relationship with them that is pleasing to God.



1. True or **false**? As long as our relationship with God is good, it doesn’t matter whether our relationships with others are good.
2. True or **false**? The only thing that matters in our relationships with others is that we not do anything to hurt them. What we feel in our hearts is not important.

3. **True** or false? According to Jesus, any kind of alienation between brothers and sisters in Christ must be resolved if we are to relate properly to Him.

4. True or **false**? Whenever Jesus said “You have heard it said . . . but I say to you . . .,” He was disagreeing with what the Old Testament said.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one best answer for each question.

5. Which situation does Matthew 5:23-24 specifically address?

- a. When we have been wronged by someone else
- b. When we have wronged someone else**

6. Read Mark 11:25. Which situation does this passage specifically address?

- a. When we have been wronged by someone else**
- b. When we have wronged someone else

7. In Matthew 5:21-24, where is Jesus telling us to look?

- a. In
- b. Up
- c. Around**
- d. Away

“Whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.”

—Mark 11:25

8. In Jesus’ teaching, who does “brother” generally refer to?

- a. Our siblings
- b. Other believers**
- c. People of our own race
- d. Everyone

9. Which of the following was the main point of Jesus’ teaching in Matthew 5:21-24?

- a. We must not murder other believers.
- b. We must never get angry for any reason.
- c. The commandment to not murder does not apply to us anymore.
- d. We must learn to love other believers if we want to have a right relationship with God.**



Examine your relationships. Do you have a relationship that hinders your worship? If so, what steps can you take to resolve it?



Thank God that He seeks a strong, loving relationship with you and that He wants to help you have strong, loving relationships with others. Ask Him to heal any broken relationships you have with other believers and to help you forgive, ask for forgiveness, and take any other necessary steps to reconcile with them.



Going Deeper

1. Why does one's approach to scripture (or philosophy of scripture) make a difference to one's interpretation and application of scripture? _____

2. What is the difference between "vertical" righteousness and "horizontal" righteousness?

3. What does Pastor Woodward mean by "passing the Word of God through the love of God"? Why does that make a difference in the application? _____

4. Is the 6th Commandment, "Thou shalt not murder" simply about homicide? If not, what is the true content and scope of this commandment? _____

5. Would Jesus' interpretation convict you? If so, what do you need to do about it? _____

6. Give examples of the Pharisees' legalistic interpretation of scripture. _____

7. Now give some examples of legalism from your own experience. _____
