

Fall 2025 Grow Groups: Week 5
“Better: Greater Righteousness Pt. 1”
Matthew 5:17-30

LOOK AHEAD

- The primary Scripture for next week’s sermon is: Matthew 5:31-48
- This week’s memory verse is: Philippians 2:13

DISCUSS

Read Matthew 5:17-30.

- 1) **As we focus on listening to Jesus, what is the primary message of truth you sensed God speaking to you in our worship gathering this week?**
- 2) Jesus says in **Matthew 5:20**:

*For I tell you that unless your righteousness **surpasses** that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.*

- Look at what Jesus says directly to the Pharisees and teachers of the law in **Matthew 23:27-28**:

*Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you **hypocrites**! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the **inside** are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean. In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the **inside** you are full of **hypocrisy** and wickedness.*

- **What is Jesus pointing out about the righteousness of the Pharisees and teachers of the law in Matthew 23?**
 - **How does that inform the righteousness Jesus is calling his followers to in Matthew 5?**

- 3) Pastor John began his sermon by asking:

“What does true righteousness look like? And what does that have to do with our ability to experience the good life of God’s Kingdom?”

- **Based on what we just uncovered in Matthew 23 along with the sermon from Matthew 5, how would you answer John’s question?**

- How does the concept of “true righteousness” remind you of the “sincere love” we learned about in Romans 12:9 in our Listening Guide on Wednesday (9/24)?

- Romans 12:9:

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.

- What does it seem Jesus is getting at? What is Jesus asking of us?
 - Why do you think Jesus cares about us being righteous to the core?

4) In Friday’s Listening Guide (9/26), we learned about “**the ministry of reconciliation**” God has given us in Christ Jesus as seen in **2 Corinthians 5:18-19**.

- **2 Corinthians 5:18-19:**

*All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the **ministry of reconciliation**: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.*

- How might this relate to Jesus’ command in Matthew 5:23-24 to go and be reconciled?

- Matthew 5:23-24:

*Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. **First** go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.*

- John said:

“Reconciling with your brother and dealing with your anger is so important that it’s **better** to leave the church service and go be reconciled than to just stay in church and let the anger simmer.”

- When was a time you pursued reconciliation with someone like this, or someone else pursued reconciliation with you, and what was the result?

Consider who you need to be reconciled with today, and let’s break into prayer groups of MEN or WOMEN to talk freely and honestly about anger and lust, and to seek the Lord together in prayer.

**Smaller Group leaders can refer to the discussion and prayer guide page below.*

SMALLER GROUPS

1) Who do you need to be reconciled with today?

- **How can we pray for you as you let go of the hold anger has on you and instead embrace the ministry of reconciliation God has entrusted to you?**

2) When you think about anger and lust, which has felt like a greater struggle for you lately?

- **What seems to spark your anger or lust?**
- **What practical steps do you think you can take to not allow lust or anger to take root in your heart and mind this week?**

PRAY

1) How can we pray for you as you pursue freedom in Christ this week?

- **Allow Philippians 2:13 and Romans 8:12-14 to guide your prayer time together as you pray for God's power to do what is in your power:**

- **Philippians 2:13:**

For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

- **Romans 8:12-14:**

Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation – but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it. For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live. For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.

RESOURCES

Here are some resources to help find freedom from anger and lust:

- ***[30 Days to Taming your Anger](#)*** by Deborah Smith Pegues
- ***[30 Days to Taming your Tongue](#)*** by Deborah Smith Pegues
(accompanying [workbook](#) available)
- ***[The Freedom Fight: The New Drug and the Truths that Set us Free](#)*** by Ted Shimer
(visit [TheFreedomFight.org](#) for more resources including an app, support groups, videos, and study guides to find freedom from pornography and other sexual addictions)
- ***[Covenant Eyes](#)***
(visit [CovenantEyes.com](#) to purchase a Victory accountability membership to help protect yourself across all your devices as you pursue freedom from a pornography addiction)
- ***[Unraveled: Managing Love, Sex, and Relationships](#)***
(this study kit is specifically for women, but visit [PureDesire.org](#) for more resources from Pure Desire Ministries for men, women, and students, including online study groups)
- ***[Sex and the City Uncovered](#)*** by Marian Jordan Ellis
- ***[Sex and the Single Christian Girl](#)*** by Marian Jordan Ellis
(visit [ThisRedeemedLife.org](#) to download the TRL app for more discipleship resources designed for young women)
- ***[Finally Free: Fighting for Purity with the Power of Grace](#)*** by Heath Lambert