

*An Eye for an Eye v38-42*

What sort of intensification is Jesus using here?

The rule 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth' was a law that limited revenge—there is a new way to limit revenge don't take revenge on anyone.

How do you feel about that?

How do you explain Jesus' denunciation of the sins of the Pharisees and Teachers of the Law?

Do you long for revenge?

*Love for Enemies v43-48*

What sort of intensification is Jesus using here?

What is so special about loving your enemies?

What do you think the word 'perfect' means in v48?

This is the lifestyle that is striking and counter cultural—the lifestyle that demonstrates a family likeness with God.

Pick one area you feel God is calling you to change to be like him.

How will you change?

What will be an indicator of growth in this area?

Share with the group?

**Group Prayer**

# Sermon on the Mount

## Study 2 Beyond the Righteousness of the Pharisees 1

### Introduction:

How serious do we take being holy? Is it a just a wish or a deep longing? The beatitudes that Jesus began his Sermon on the Mount with make it clear that the new People of God would have a passion for God's holiness and glory to be known through their 'good deeds'.

Do you have that deep longing? If you do where does it come from and if you don't, what are you Matt.5.3?

### Jesus' Ministry and the Fulfilment of the Law v17-20

Later on in Jesus' ministry he will be accused of breaking the law and especially the laws about the Sabbath but here at the very beginning of his public ministry in Matthew's Gospel he is going out of his way to make it clear that the purpose of his ministry is to fulfil the law?

What are your ideas about what 'fulfil' means in the ministry of Jesus?

Have a quick read of Matt.521-48. How does this show us how the law is 'fulfilled' in Jesus ministry?

What sort of teacher is Jesus according to v19?

If you asked an ordinary, garden variety Jew in Israel in the first century which group in Israel was the most righteous group of people, most, if not all, would say the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law. How do you think the disciples' would have felt with the news that their righteousness needed to better the best?

How do you feel about that—do you feel like giving up before you start? Why or why not?

## The Heart beat of the Law v21-48

### The beat

Each new section of this passage is marked out by 'You have heard it said' v21;27;31;33;38 and 43 in some way or another followed by 'But I tell you...' v22;28;32;34;39 and 44.

On the face of it Jesus does seem to be putting aside the law and over-riding it. But he's not doing that at all—what is he doing instead?

### The Heart

Intensification: Jesus intensifies the law in a number of ways; by

1. focussing on the attitude that produces the act that the law forbids.
2. Not allowing concessions and limitations given in the law to be used as indiscriminately or as a means to oppression.

### The Law

#### *Murder v21-26*

What sort of intensification is Jesus using here?

We could translate 'Raca' as 'idiot'? When we call someone a fool or an idiot what are we saying about them?

How is this related to murder?

Do you dismiss people and do you realise how much hot water you're in v22?

Before you rush off and ask God for forgiveness (he has something against you) do you need to ask the forgiveness of someone else who

has something against you?

*Point to Ponder*—do you have an issue with anger?

#### *Adultery v27-30*

What sort of intensification is Jesus using here?

Which gender normally has the most problems with lust?

Women are probably more prone to fantasy - is this the same as lust?

Jesus uses hyperbole to ensure we understand how serious God takes lust in the heart. How serious is that?

*Point to Ponder*—do you have a problem with lust?

#### *Divorce v31-32*

What sort of intensification is Jesus using here?

There was no divorce court in Israel. All it required was a husband to say he had enough of his wife and issue her with a certificate of divorce—the deed was done. One Rabbi said that burning a meal was sufficient reason for divorce!

Given this context what is Jesus saying?

*Point to Ponder*—is this an issue God is telling me to deal with? If you are married how good is your marriage?

#### *Oaths v33-37*

What sort of intensification is Jesus using here?

Oaths are used to either make liars afraid of telling lies or used by liars to convince others they are telling the truth.

*Point to Ponder*—Are you known as a truth teller, a person of your word?