



October 11, 2026
Sermon on the Mount
Reject Anger
Matthew 5:21-26

1. **Sermon Outline:**

- a. Reject Sinful Anger Toward Other People (v22)
 - i. It's extremely difficult to be angry with a person without sinning
 - ii. Walk in the Spirit, not anger
- b. Pursue Reconciliation With Those Angry With You (v23-26)
 - i. Make the first move toward reconciliation
 - ii. Don't make excuses, go

2. **Sunday** – As soon as possible after the sermon, consider:

- a. What stood out to you the most in this sermon?
- b. What new truth did you learn, or what truth were you reminded of?
- c. Is there a particular Scripture passage you feel God is leading you to meditate on or commit to memory?
- d. What is one thing God is leading you to do after hearing this message?
- e. Did God convict you of a need to make any changes in your life and walk with Him?

3. **Monday:**

- a. Start the week by reading the focal passage, Matthew 5:21-26, carefully several times (perhaps from different versions). Then read Exodus 20:17 and Deuteronomy 5:21.
- b. This passage is the first of six “antitheses” that Jesus includes in the Sermon on the Mount in the format “You have heard it said ... but I say to you.” It is important to recognize that Jesus is not contradicting the Old Testament Law (see verse 18) but is instead contradicting the faulty interpretation and application taught by the Jewish religious leaders. In each case, Jesus shows us, as His disciples, how to properly understand and apply the principle of the Law rather than just the letter. In this first antithesis, Jesus deals with anger, not murder.
 - i. Read these verses from the Old Testament Poetic books: Psalm 37:8, Proverbs 14:29, 15:1, 15:18, 22:24, 29:11, and Ecclesiastes 7:9.
 - ii. Based on these verses, how would you summarize the Bible’s view of human anger?
 - iii. At the most basic level, what is anger? In what ways is anger related to excitement, love, sorrow, fear, desire, joy, shame, etc.? What is the name we use to describe all such conditions?
 - iv. What is the source (why do we have) emotions (see Genesis 1:26-27)? As an emotion, is anger (always) a sin (consider Exodus 11:8, 32:19-20, Nehemiah 5:6-7, and Mark 3:50)?

- v. As sinners by nature, what are the factors that turn anger into a sin (consider the Proverbs above and Romans 2:8, Philippians 2:3-4, 1 Corinthians 10:24, James 3:13-16 & Galatians 5:19-21)? Can the same be said about other emotions (see Luke 16:14, 1 Timothy 6:10, & Hebrews 13:5)?
- vi. What prevents an emotion from becoming sinful (Titus 2:2 & 12, 2 Peter 1:5-9, & Galatians 5:23)?

4. **Tuesday:**

- a. Read and meditate on Matthew 5:21-22.
- b. Who do you think Jesus is addressing when He starts the passage with “You” (review Matthew 5:1-2)? What does that suggest about how we should understand “brother” or “brother or sister” (NIV) (compare Matthew 12:46-50)?
- c. Why is verse 21 an understatement? Why would every good Jewish man be familiar with the first part of what He says they had heard from those of old? Although this is not a direct quote from the Old Testament, why would the disciples also have been familiar with the second part?
- d. Some versions include “without cause” after the first “brother” in verse 22 (ESV, NIV, and CSB use a footnote acknowledging that the phrase is in some manuscripts). Why do you think “without cause” is unnecessary?
- e. In these two verses, Jesus presents three situations, in addition to murder, in which punishment is due. What are they? How do they show a progression of increasing severe consequences?
 - i. What word does Jesus use that equates anger with murder? What is the “judgment” for someone found guilty of murder (see Exodus 21:12 & Leviticus 24:17)?
 - ii. You may be familiar with the second situation as “anyone who says to a brother or sister, ‘Raca’” (NIV), although the ESV substitutes “insults.” Raca is an Aramaic insult which literally means “empty-headed”. What might be a modern English equivalent? Thinking about our culture, why might this actually represent a much more prevalent situation than murder? On a personal note, when was the last time you referred to someone as a dummy (or equivalent)?
 - iii. In the third case, we probably don’t see the term “You fool” with the severity intended. Read Matthew 7:26, 23:17, and 25:2-3 & 8. What is the spiritual state of those Jesus calls “fools”? What is the all-too-common, three-word expression beginning with Go that this suggests might be our modern equivalent? Why is it okay for Jesus to use a term He tells us not to (John 2:25)?
 - iv. Jesus is talking about spiritual consequences, and while three different terms are used to describe them, what is the end result? Why do you think Jesus says “in *danger* of the fire of hell” (consider 1 John 1:9)?

5. **Wednesday:**

- a. Read and meditate on Matthew 5:23-24.

- b. How does Jesus move us from the eventual consequences of anger to a practical application in our daily lives?
 - i. What is Jesus referring to when He says “offering your gift at the altar”? What would be the modern equivalent (and no, it is not the passing of an offering plate)?
 - ii. Reading verse 23 carefully, who is the offended party?
 - 1. Who has committed the offense? How is this a subtle shift from verse 22?
 - 2. Who does Jesus say is responsible for initiating reconciliation?
 - 3. Since “brother or sister” likely implies fellow Christians, what does reconciliation look like (consider Luke 6:27-31 and John 13:35)?
 - iii. Since Jesus’ followers were mainly from Galilee and would have traveled a long distance to present their offerings (sacrifices, perhaps of a lamb), how is Jesus emphasizing the seriousness of this issue?
 - iv. Which of the Beatitudes discussed last week is Jesus expecting His disciples to demonstrate in this situation (consider especially 5:9)?
- c. Second Corinthians 9:7 teaches us that God loves a cheerful giver. While our giving is only a small part of the overall worship Jesus is talking about in these verses, what additional characteristic of a giver does Matthew 5:24 imply God loves (hint: Acts 24:16, 1 Timothy 1:5, Hebrews 10:22, 1 Peter 3:21)?

6. **Thursday:**

- a. Read and meditate on Matthew 5:25-26.
- b. What is the second practical application that Jesus gives us, and how does it differ from the first?
 - i. In what sense does an “accuser” (“adversary” in the NIV) differ from a brother? Why might we, in our human nature, expect the rules to be different in this case?
 - ii. A more literal translation of “settle matters quickly” is “make friends quickly”. Given the literal translation, what objective should we seek in such a situation? Is it sufficient to just get an “out-of-court settlement”?
 - iii. How does Romans 12:18 address such a situation? Paul recognizes that, despite our best efforts, we may not be able to “settle the matter quickly.” What instructions does he give in the subsequent verses (19-21) for such situations, and how do you see it relating to the focal passage we are studying?
- c. In our society, where lawsuits seem to be the preferred way to settle any dispute, Paul’s instructions to the Corinthian believers in 1 Corinthians 6:1-11 should weigh heavily on us as Christians. How does/would a proper application of what Jesus teaches us in this focal passage make such instruction unnecessary?

- 7. **Friday:** Unfortunately, Matthew 5:21-22 has been used by some to advocate against capital punishment or for conscientious objector status, when in fact Jesus is actually addressing individual anger and its consequences. However, the emphasis in the news about capital punishment in the past week makes it appropriate to present a few of the passages that you may want to consider when reflecting on these two issues:

- a. Exodus 21:12-17, Numbers 35:16-21, & 35:30-34
- b. Exodus 22:2-3
- c. Exodus 21:12-17, Leviticus 20, Deuteronomy 17:2-7 and 21:18-21
- d. Deuteronomy 20:10-18 and 1 Samuel 15:1-3
- e. Numbers 25:1-13 and 1 Kings 18:40
- f. Genesis 9:5-6
- g. Romans 13:1-5

8. **Saturday:**

- a. Read Matthew 5:21-26 twice more.
 - i. The first time, read looking for the big theme (message) that Jesus is teaching.
 - ii. The second time, read prayerfully, asking the Holy Spirit to show you any areas where you need to take action or make changes to your life.
- b. End by going back and reading the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12), noting how they relate to controlling anger.

9. **Application:** Anger is one of the great many emotions God gave mankind when we were “created in His image.” Unfortunately, in the Fall it became one of the emotions that tends to do far more harm than the good God intended. While we cannot control the onslaught of emotions, the Bible tells us clearly that, as Christians, we cannot let emotion control us – and when we do, it invariably leads to sin. When anger is not controlled, it leads to sin. When uncontrolled, it is so dangerous that it led to the first murder (Genesis 4:1-8), and while few allow it to go to that extreme, Jesus shows us in this passage that it still leads to serious sin. When it occurs between “brothers and sisters” in the Christian family, it destroys the unity Jesus prayed we would have (John 17:20-21) and, in doing so, the witness we are to be to the world.

10. **Pray:** In memory of Angela Ewing, it seems appropriate that for the coming week we should pray for the country of Pakistan and these unreached people groups that live there:

- a. **Awan:** The 5.2 million Awan people belong to the landowning class, and many families still live on land which their ancestors have held for centuries. They are exclusively Muslim and are probably descendants of Muslim invaders from the tenth century or earlier. Most are Sunni but believe spirits determine how well they live each day, so they often use charms and amulets to help them with spiritual forces.
- b. **Bashkar:** Descendants of ancient Central Asian tribes, the Bashkar settled in the mountainous regions of northern Pakistan centuries ago. Over hundreds of years, they have adapted to the challenging terrain and climate of their new homeland, where they lead a predominantly agrarian lifestyle, cultivating crops like wheat, maize, and barley on terraced fields. Despite Islam's influence, the Bashkar maintain many of their ancestral spiritual customs and ancient beliefs.
- c. **Mussali:** Indigenous Hindus who were forcibly converted to Islam. The Mussali people have a very low status and are often relegated to jobs as sanitation workers. Affected by the caste system and a form of Islam that is strongly tainted by Hinduism, the Mussali have a difficult time getting an education and often live in poverty.