





# Questions for Your Journal

Use these following questions to evaluate what you learned from Sunday's sermon.

## Summary:

- The main thing the speaker wants me to do, be, and/or feel as a result of this message.

## Application to My Life:

- What did God say to me through this message?
- How does my life measure up to this word?
- What action(s) will I take to bring my life in line with this word?
- What truth do I need to study further?

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## ***How Should We Understand the Law in Matthew?***

Many scholars argue that Matthew sets aside the validity and authority of the Old Testament law in these verses. Certainly he sees some discontinuity, for the law, as was argued in the previous question, is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Jesus is the new and better Moses, for he regularly contrasts what was said under Moses ("you have heard that it was said," Matt. 5:21, 27, 33, 38, 43; "it was also said," 5:31) with the authority of his words ("But I say to you," 5:22, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44). Nevertheless, I will argue that in these particular verses Jesus corrected misinterpretations of the Mosaic law, explaining as the sovereign and final interpreter of the law how it relates to the hearers of his day. In other words, Jesus explicated the true meaning of the law and corrected erroneous interpretations.

For instance, the Pharisees likely interpreted the prohibition against murder (Exod. 20:13) as fulfilled if they did not literally murder anyone. But Jesus astonished them (and us!) by saying that one violates the commandment if one is angry with his brother (Matt. 5:21–22). Jesus interpreted the commandment at a deeper and more radical level, uncovering the sin lurking in the heart of human beings (cf. Prov. 14:29; 22:24; 29:22). Similarly, the Jewish interpreters of Jesus' day apparently believed that they had carried out the prohibition against adultery (Exod. 20:14) if they refrained from the physical act. Jesus cut to the root of the matter, reminding them of what they already should have known from the Old Testament (Job 31:1; Prov. 6:23–25). Adultery stems from lust in the heart, and such lust also violates the seventh commandment (Matt. 5:27–28).<sup>1</sup>

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Finally, Jesus commanded his followers to love their enemies instead of hating them (Matt. 5:43–48). This text strongly supports the notion that Jesus corrected misinterpretations of the Old Testament in Matthew 5:21–48. The Old Testament did not call upon God's people to hate their enemies but just the opposite. They must not hate their brothers (Lev. 19:17–18) and must help the person who hated them (Exod. 23:5). Nor can the call to refrain from hatred be restricted to fellow Israelites only, as Job makes clear (Job 31:29–30). The hatred commended in Psalm 139:21–22 does not violate what Jesus commanded here, for there it represents taking the same stance as God toward his enemies, which does not preclude showing love and kindness to those who hate us.

Since the Old Testament does not commend hating enemies, Jesus is most likely responding to a misreading of the Old Testament, reminding his hearers that they must imitate God and shower good on both the evil and the righteous.

### SUMMARY

The Old Testament commands in Matthew 5:21–48 were not set aside by Jesus. Rather, he provided the proper interpretation of those commands and applied them in a penetrating way to the lives of his disciples.<sup>2</sup>

## Encounter

Take a few minutes to read Matthew 5:21–48 in a couple of Bible translations. Make a note of any differences between the translations and anything that especially jumps out at you.

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## Reflect

In Matthew 5:21–26, Jesus addresses the seriousness of human anger. **Read Matthew 5:21–26 and Proverbs 29:22. Why should we be on guard against the presence of anger in our lives? What other sins typically follow anger?**

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Jesus' instructions for battling lust can seem extreme., especially in an immodest and hedonistic culture. Unfortunately, some in the church's history have failed to note Jesus is exaggerating to make a point: the temptation toward sexual sin must be taken seriously. **What practical steps can Christians take to avoid this sin?**

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The teaching on retaliation in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:38–42) is worth meditating on since Christians often face persecution (cf. Matt. 5:11–12). **Read Matthew 5:38–42 and Romans 12:14–21. How can you do good to those who wrong you? Are there any particular people in your life that these passages bring to mind? Ask God to help you respond to their insults in a way that honors Him.**

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“Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matt. 5:44) is one of the more well-known verses from Jesus’ Sermon. **Read Matthew 5:43–48. Why does God show kindness and love toward His enemies? Why is that so difficult for us?**

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## Examine

Based on 2 Timothy 3:16 (“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness”), this series of questions is intended to help you figure out what you should do or believe in response to this text. (This passage may not have a clear answer for each question. Just use them to prompt your thinking.)

1. What does this passage tell me to believe?

*(How does it teach me?)*

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2. What does this passage tell me not to believe?

*(How does it reprove me?)*

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### 3. How does this passage tell me not to live?

*(How does it correct me?)*

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### 4. How does this passage tell me to live?

*(How does it train me in righteousness?)*

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## Embrace

After spending significant time with this passage, you've probably learned a lot and heard God speak to you through His Word. Look back at your responses to the previous questions and ask God to show you how you can respond to this text this week.

Write down some ideas for how you can respond to the truth of God's Word.

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#### About The Map

The Map exists to help you consistently reflect on Scripture as you pursue maturity in Christ. When you devote yourself to reading God's Word, and meditate on what you read, you're allowing Him to shape your thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors.

#### NOTES:

1. Thomas R. Schreiner, 40 Questions about Christians and Biblical Law, ed. Benjamin L. Merkle, 40 Questions Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic & Professional, 2010), 165.
2. Thomas R. Schreiner, 40 Questions about Christians and Biblical Law, ed. Benjamin L. Merkle, 40 Questions Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic & Professional, 2010), 168–169.



## Disciple-Making Guide

Kids Kindergarten through 6th grade receive Adventure Tokens for discipleship activities completed during the week. They can spend them at the Adventure Store on the last Sunday of the month.

### Big Picture Questions for Unit 34: “God’s Plan for Paul”

**Preschool:** Q: When should we tell others about Jesus?  
A: *We should tell about Jesus all the time.*

**Kids (1-6):** Q: When should we tell others about Jesus?  
A: *We should always tell others about Jesus even when it is difficult.*

### This Week’s Family Reading Plan

**for Preschoolers:** *Jesus Has Power Over Sickness\**

**Day 1:** *Nehemiah 7-8*

**Day 2:** *Nehemiah 9*

**Day 3:** *Nehemiah 10*

**Day 4:** *Nehemiah 11*

**Day 5:** *Nehemiah 12*

\*Preschool readings are taken from *The Big Picture Interactive Bible Stories for Toddlers, New Testament* (B&H Publishing Group), available at Amazon.com & LifeWay Christian Store.

### Key Passage for Unit 34: “God’s Plan for Paul”

**Preschoolers:** “For me, to live is Christ and to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21).

**Kids (1-6 grade):** “My eager expectation and hope is that ... Christ will be highly honored in my body, whether by life or by death. For me, to live is Christ and to die is gain” (Phil. 1:20-21).

Northway’s Family Ministry uses *The Gospel Project* to help preschoolers, kids, and students grow in their knowledge of Scripture and of Jesus Christ, about whom it was all written (Luke 24:44-49).



### Adventure Token Coupon

*Fill this out and bring it to Bible Study for your tokens!*

I worked on learning my big picture question and key passage \_\_\_\_\_.

I read my Bible at home \_\_\_\_\_.

Child’s Name \_\_\_\_\_.

Parent’s Signature \_\_\_\_\_.

# 30 BIBLICAL BASICS

## CORE BELIEFS

### **God** | 2 Corinthians 13:13

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

### **Personal God** | Psalm 121:1-2

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

### **Salvation by Grace** | Ephesians 2:8-9

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

### **Authority of the Bible** | 2 Timothy 3:16-17

I believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God that guides my belief and action.

### **Identity in Christ** | John 1:12

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

### **Church** | Ephesians 4:15

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth.

### **Humanity** | John 3:16

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

### **Compassion** | Psalm 82:3-4

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

### **Stewardship** | Psalm 24:1-2

I believe that everything I am and everything I own belong to God.

### **Eternity** | John 14:1-2

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus will return to judge all people and to establish His eternal kingdom.

## CORE PRACTICES

### **Worship** | Psalm 95:1-2

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

### **Prayer** | Psalm 66:18-20

I pray to God to know him, to find direction for my life, and to lay my requests before him.

### **Bible Study** | Hebrews 4:12

I study the Bible to know God and his truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

### **Single-mindedness** | Matthew 6:33

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

### **Total Surrender** | Romans 12:1

I dedicate my life to God's purposes.

### **Biblical Community** | Acts 2:44-47

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, in the life of others, and in the world.

### **Spiritual Gifts** | Romans 12:4-6

I know my spiritual gifts and use them to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Offering My Time** | Colossians 3:17

I offer my time to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving My Resources** | 2 Corinthians 8:7

I give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Sharing My Faith** | Ephesians 6:19-20

I share my faith with others to fulfill God's purposes.

## CORE VIRTUES

### **Love** | 1 John 4:10-12

I am committed to loving God and loving others.

### **Joy** | John 15:11

Despite my circumstances, I feel inner contentment and understand my purpose in life.

### **Peace** | Philippians 4:6-7

I am free from anxiety because I have found peace with God, peace with others, and peace with myself.

### **Self-Control** | Titus 2:11-13

I have the power through Christ to control myself.

### **Hope** | Hebrews 6:19-20

I can cope with the hardships of life because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

### **Patience** | Proverbs 14:29

I am slow to anger and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

### **Kindness/Goodness** | 1 Thessalonians 5:15

I choose to be kind and good in my relationships with others.

### **Faithfulness** | Proverbs 3:3-4

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my loyalty to those relationships.

### **Gentleness** | Philippians 4:5

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

### **Humility** | Philippians 2:3-4

I choose to esteem others above myself.

The 30 Biblical Basics are the skeleton of a person being formed into the image of Jesus by His Spirit (Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18), a helpful framework for the Christian's thoughts, actions, and character. As we commit ourselves to growing in Christ through the process of spiritual formation, we pray these statements become increasingly true of us. When they are, we'll be able to carry out the biblical mandate to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind"; and, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27), and to truly **love, live, and lead like Jesus.**