



Life Group Discussion Guide  
“The Heart of the Matter”  
Sunday, May 7, 2017

Matthew 5:20-22  
Series: Sermon on the Mount

**Open in prayer**

- What do you do to manage your physical health...your emotional health...and your spiritual health?

**Read Matthew 5:20-21**

- How were the pharisees righteous? How does our righteousness differ from the pharisees?

Our righteousness does exceed the righteousness of the Jewish religious leaders, not because we outworked them, but because we realize that is not how we become righteous.

**Read Philippians 3:4-9**

“I was circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless. But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.”

- What are some of the reasons that Paul could have tried to put his confidence in (verses 4-6)?
- What are some things, even religious things, that we are tempted to put our confidence in to make us acceptable to God?
- How does God view external efforts at righteousness (Mt 23:27-28)?
- Why does Jesus start with the heart when it comes to murder?
- Is all anger sinful? See Ephesians 4:26-27. When is anger appropriate? When does it become sinful? See Mark 3:5; Hebrews 4:3; John 2:13-17.
- Jesus warns against calling someone Raca (an Aramaic word meaning “empty” or “stupid”) or “You fool” (verse 22). Why do you think insults such as these constitute murder in God’s sight?



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Proverbs chapter 4:23 - “Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.”

“A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.” (Luke 6:45)

- Why is it important to guard our hearts?
- What is the connection between our spiritual heart and the rest of our lives?
- What kinds of things attack our hearts?
- How can we determine if our desires are led by the Holy Spirit?
  - “Is what you feel led to do (or not to do) consistent with the teaching of Scripture? If not, it's not the Holy Spirit who is leading you. But if it is consistent with Scripture, do it!

**Where in your life are you the most vulnerable?** Discouragement, deception, bitterness, unforgiveness, and unnecessary temptation.

**What can you do to tune your heart?** We can tune them up by being in church, or by reading and applying God’s Word.