

Sunday, February 12, 2023 – Easter Hill United Methodist Church

**Bible Study
Matthew 5:21-37
“But I Say: Glimpses of the Kin-dom”**

Open with a word of prayer

Gathering Time (5-10 minutes)

In groups of two or three, have participants respond to the question, “What might it look like to allow Jesus to fully ‘reign’ in someone’s life?”

Matthew 5:21-37, Context. This week’s reading continues Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount that began with the Beatitudes a couple weeks ago. If the latter describes the character of those yearning for the coming of the Kingdom of God, and last week’s reading describes the guiding principles that will govern how they will be and act, this week’s reading takes as its starting point the principle that Jesus had announced at the end of last week’s reading, that he had not come to destroy the law but to fulfill it. What does that mean in concrete terms? Do you really want to know? Jesus takes four of the ten commandments and tells you what it really means to fulfill them.

Read Matthew 5:21-37

What touches your heart, what do you hear in the scripture, what questions do you have, or what doesn’t make sense to you in the text?

Read Matthew 5:21-37 again -

Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

Some reflection questions –

- How does Jesus’ use of the phrase “You have heard it said...but I say to you...” relate to what Jesus said in 5:20?
- Jesus’ use of commandments in this passage focuses on those that center on how we relate to one another. What might that tell us about how Jesus thinks about righteousness? [Righteousness is much more than a personal achievement or quality. It is about how we relate to others.]
- How much are Jesus’ words in the Sermon on the Mount about personal spiritual growth and how much of his words are about creating a way of living in community?
- What do we learn about discipleship from the Sermon on the Mount?

Closing Reflection Question

How is this scripture calling you to change, to see, to be or what might it be calling you to do?

Prayer (10 minutes). Share prayer requests and respond appropriately.

Sending Forth (2 minutes). After all, have shared, end by praying the following or a similar prayer:

Triune God, we confess that too often we are more concerned with getting what we think we deserve than looking to the needs of others. Likewise, we confess that too often we can seek to fulfill the desires of others instead of reflecting on where God is guiding us as those who are righteous. Empower us to be those who seek righteousness in all our relationships. **Amen.**

And now we pray The Lord's Prayer....

Our Father who art in Heaven

hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,

on earth as it is in Heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power

and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.