

Word One Bible Study

The Letter of the Law

By Mark Sengele

Text: Matthew 5:21-37 for the Sixth Sunday after Epiphany, Lectionary Series A

Objective

Participants will:

1. Understand that even breaking one small part of God's Law is like breaking all of it.
2. Understand that Jesus has fulfilled the Law on our behalf.

Materials Needed

Bible

Pen/Pencil

Paper

A variety of teen/fashion/other magazines

Scissors

Glue Sticks

Construction Paper

Group Guidelines

Break up into groups of 6-8 people. The leader is the person with the shortest hair. The leader's job is to make sure that you keep moving through the study and that everyone has the chance to participate.

Building Community

1. Have everyone share their nickname. How did they get it? Do they like it?
2. Share a time that someone called you a name and it really hurt your feelings.

Looking at God's Word

1. Read Matthew 5:21-37.
2. Which commandment is specifically referred to in this section of Scripture?
3. The term "race" in verse 22 is an Aramaic term of contempt or name calling. How can the way we address others affect how they feel about themselves?
4. How well do we do at keeping the Law? Read James 2:10.
5. Verses 28 and 29 make some extreme statements. What is Jesus trying to tell us about staying away from sin?
6. Verse 24 reminds us of our need to be reconciled to those whom we sin against. Read 2 Corinthians 5:20-21. To who do we need to be also reconciled? How is this done?

Reinforcing What Has Been Learned

1. Have group members look through the magazines to find pictures or articles that demonstrate breaking God's Law. How has our society come to accept these things?
2. Have participants make a poster with James 2:10 on the top of one half and 2 Corinthians 5:20-21 on the other. Find appropriate pictures or words to cut out and paste on each half.

Closing

Close the lesson with a popcorn prayer. Have a leader begin and end the prayer. Allow participants to add petitions. End with “Lord in Your mercy,” to which everyone responds, “Hear our prayer.”

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