

**Welcome to the
Common Ground Café!**



Sunday, February 24, 2019

**The Gripes of Wrath
A Study of Matthew 5:21-26**

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Describe a course of study or training or weight loss that you found demanding. Examples: Preparing for the bar exam or the CPA exam, cramming for finals, sticking to a rigorous weight loss program, training for a race.

We're in a sermon series called "The Spartan Call." The Spartans were legendary for shaping their men into an elite fighting force. The training program began at the age of 7 and continued to the age of 30. In Matthew 5, Jesus recruited us to heed his "Spartan Call." In verses 21-48, he issues six of his toughest challenges.

Identify what the following verses have in common: Matthew 5:21, 27, 31, 33, 38, and 43.

By using this "formula" six times in these six verses, what was Jesus doing with our idea of what is morally "enough"?

The first of these six challenges have to do with our anger. Read Matthew 5:21-26.

Pastor Tom mentioned eight practical steps from the Word of God to help us deal with anger.

Step One: Slow your reactions.

Read Proverbs 12:16.

Describe a time you were *grateful* that you waited before storming into a colleague's office about something you heard, or before posting on social media about a breaking news item.

Step Two: Take time for reflection.

Read Nehemiah 5:6-7.

What are the advantages to reflecting on how you are going to express your disappointment before actually expressing it?

Step Three: Settle the issue quickly.

Read Proverbs 17:14 and Ephesians 4:26.

Some of us need the first two steps because we react too quickly. Some of us need this third step because we react too slowly. Why do some of us wait too long to talk about a frustration? What are the consequences?

Step Four: Decide to forgive.

Read Ephesians 4:32. What model are we to live up to in forgiving others?

Can we *confront* another about how we were offended or treated unjustly if Jesus commands us to *forgive* someone for these things? Explain your answer.

Step Five: Avoid an angry mindset.

Read Philippians 4:8.

If we committed to “set our mind on” the things in this list, would it reduce the times we would have to repent of angry outbursts? Explain your answer.

Step Six: Avoid angry people.

Read Proverbs 22:24-25.

Does this have any application to how (or how often) we listen to certain radio talk show hosts, or watch certain late night talk show hosts, or read certain people’s social media posts?

Step Seven: Grow spiritually.

Read Galatians 5:19-23.

Explain the difference between these two statements and explain which one is more true to the gospel:

- ❖ “If I get control of my anger, God will love me.”
- ❖ “As I grow in my knowledge and love of God, a byproduct of that is that I will have more self-control over my anger.”

Step Eight: Trust the providence of God.

Read Romans 8:28.

Does our hostility and unforgiveness betray that we doubt that verse to be true?

Can we believe that verse to be true and still address offenses and injustices? How can we do both?



Close with praise reports and prayer requests