

## Lesson 2: The Christian’s Morality

Christlike morality is required of all who are citizens of heaven.

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### Study at a Glance: The 5 W's

KEY AREA	DETAILS AND SUMMARY
WHO (Author & Audience)	
WHAT (Core Message)	
WHEN (Timing)	
WHERE (Location)	
WHY (Rationale)	

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### Introduction

In our previous lessons, we have been building a clear picture of what it means to truly belong to God. In Lesson 13, *Imitating Our Heavenly Father*, we were challenged to reflect His nature—to love as He loves, to walk in holiness, and to live as His children in the earth. Then in Lesson 1, *The Christian’s Character and Influence*, we learned that who we are on the inside inevitably shapes how we show up in the world; our character influences everything.

Now, in this lesson, we take the next step. If imitation defines our identity and character shapes our influence, then **morality reveals our obedience**. Jesus, in Matthew 5:21–48, shows that being a citizen of heaven is proven not just by outward behavior, but by inward transformation. This lesson challenges us to examine whether our lives truly reflect the Father we claim to imitate.

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## Key Terms Defined

TERM	ORIGINAL WORD in Greek	DEFINITION (Contextual)
<b>Morality</b>	<i>ēthos</i>	Principles concerning right and wrong behavior according to God's standard
<b>Anger</b>	<i>orgē</i>	Deep resentment that can lead to sin when unchecked
<b>Lust</b>	<i>epithumia</i>	Strong sinful desire, especially sexual desire
<b>Adultery</b>	<i>moicheia</i>	Violation of the marriage covenant in act or heart
<b>Divorce</b>	<i>apostasion</i>	Separation of marriage, often misused or abused
<b>Oath</b>	<i>horkos</i>	A sworn statement used to guarantee truthfulness
<b>Perfect</b>	<i>teleios</i>	Spiritual maturity reflecting God's character
<b>Lex Talionis</b>	—	"Law of retaliation" (an eye for an eye)
<b>Contempt</b>	<i>kataphronēsis</i>	Disrespect or disdain toward others
<b>Aspersions</b>	—	Damaging remarks or slander against someone's character

<b>Forswear</b>	<i>epiorkeō</i>	To renounce or deny truth, often through false oath
<b>Desacralizing</b>	—	Treating something sacred as common or unholy

## Transition into Section 1

Many believe sin begins with actions, but Jesus teaches that sin begins in the heart. Before there is murder, there is anger; before there is adultery, there is lust. God is not only concerned with what we do—He is deeply concerned with what we harbor within.

### SECTION 1: Avoid Anger and Lust (Matthew 5:21–30)

#### Discussion Questions:

#### Text/Exegesis:

1. How does Jesus expand the meaning of “Thou shalt not kill” and “Thou shalt not commit adultery” beyond physical acts?

#### Text/Exegesis:

2. What does Jesus mean by the severe language of “cutting off” or “plucking out” (vv. 29–30)? Is He speaking literally or emphasizing something deeper?

#### Application:

3. What practical steps can you take to deal with anger or lust at the root level before it becomes sin in action?

## Transition to Section 2

After addressing internal sins, Jesus moves into relational integrity. In a culture where people manipulated marriage laws and used oaths to appear truthful, Jesus calls His followers to faithfulness and simplicity—where your life and your words align without manipulation or loopholes.

## **SECTION 2: Faithful in Marriage;**

Truthful in Speech (Matthew 5:31–37)

### **Discussion Questions:**

#### **Text/Exegesis:**

1. How does Jesus correct the misunderstanding of divorce that was common in His day?

#### **Text/Exegesis:**

2. Why does Jesus discourage the use of oaths and instead emphasize simply saying “yes” or “no”?

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## **Transition to Section 3**

Jesus now raises the standard even higher. It is one thing to manage anger or speak truthfully—but what about how we treat those who hurt us? Kingdom morality is most visible not in how we treat friends, but in how we respond to enemies.

## **SECTION 3: Love Your Enemies (Matthew 5:38–48)**

### **Discussion Questions:**

#### **Text/Exegesis:**

1. What does Jesus mean by “turn the other cheek” and “go the extra mile”? How would this have challenged His original audience?

#### **Text/Exegesis:**

2. Why does Jesus connect loving enemies with being children of the Father (v. 45)?

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## Closing: Bringing It All Together

Christian morality is not about behavior modification—it is about heart transformation. Jesus calls us beyond surface-level obedience into a life that reflects the very nature of God. When anger is replaced with reconciliation, lust with purity, dishonesty with integrity, and hatred with love, we begin to mirror our Heavenly Father.

The question is not simply, “Am I doing right?” but “Is my heart becoming right?”

As you leave this lesson, reflect deeply: If God examined not just my actions, but my motives, what would He find—and what is He calling me to change?

Would you like me to help you design a "Heart Check" worksheet to accompany this lesson?