

## GROUP LEADERS NOTES – STUDY 8

### Question 1

- a) Looking carefully at these two verses we see the external activity in verse 21 (i.e. murder) and the internal attitude in verse 22 (i.e. anger).
- b) In some respects this follows on from verse 20 that we looked at in the last study. Jesus on another occasion accused the Pharisees of observing the outward aspects of the Law to be seen by others; but in respect of the inner person they remained corrupt: e.g. **Matthew 23:25-28**.
- c) God sees not just the activity but also the attitude. Both are sin and deserve hell's condemnation.

### Question 2

- a) Throughout the history of God's people He had rebuked them for thinking that as long as they conformed to the outward observance of worship then they could do whatever they wanted the rest of the time (e.g. **Isaiah 1:11-17**).
- b) An outward observance does not hide the condition of the heart.
- c) Going through the motions of godliness and worship might pull the wool over other people's eyes but God knows.

### Question 3

- a) We might expect Jesus to refer rather to the issue of something we have done against our brother; therefore requiring us to put it right.
- b) However, the onus here is placed on us when others wrong us!
- c) It may be that our brother has something legitimate against us and we are in the wrong. On the other hand it may be that he is in the wrong and it is his attitude towards you that is wrong.
- d) Whichever way round it is Jesus instructs us to take the initiative.

### Question 4

- a) The natural response is that the onus is on the offender rather than the offended to put things right and bring about reconciliation.
- b) The way round that Jesus suggests here tends to suggest weakness and even 'letting the other person off the hook'.
- c) The Beatitudes also went against the grain of human logic but spoke of a blessing that comes with a humble submission before God.
- d) Carrying out this instruction in verses 23-24 brings both reconciliation and blessing.
- e) Remember; Jesus came to us: **Romans 5:8**.

### Question 5

- a) We cannot enforce reconciliation. All we can do is our part and make sure our attitude before God is right.
- b) In that sense we can then return to our worship at the altar; leaving our brother with the Lord.
- c) Later in **Matthew 18:15-17** Jesus gives a four-point process to resolving personal conflict among Christians.
- d) Whilst the reconciliation might happen at stage one; there may sadly be occasions where there is nothing else you can do.
- e) We need to make sure that we always follow the advice of **Romans 12:17-21**.

### Question 6

- a) Jesus uses the example here of the debtors prison.
- b) He is once again stressing the urgency of personal reconciliation.
- c) There is also the point made here that it is complacent to sit back and think that we are completely innocent and therefore will be vindicated.
- d) Verse 22 has already warned us that our thoughts and attitudes condemn us; a point that will be pressed home in the subsequent passages (e.g. **verse 28**).
- e) If we have the wrong attitude towards our accuser we are also open to judgement.