



## A Higher Calling

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:21-37

Jesus invites us to participate in a kind of living that is \_\_\_\_\_.

Jesus followed the same teaching methods as other rabbis of the day.

- He asked questions.
- He used exaggerated examples to make his point.
- But then also did something that no rabbi had ever done before. He spoke on his own \_\_\_\_\_.

### Each command has three elements.

- The Old Commandment
- Jesus' New Command,
- Little Steps of \_\_\_\_\_.

Jesus asks us to open our lives to him, to allow the Holy Spirit to search out our \_\_\_\_\_ before they become hardened \_\_\_\_\_ of sin that separate us from God.

Refusing to let Christ \_\_\_\_\_ us, insisting that we are fine as we are, that it's enough to follow the basic rules without \_\_\_\_\_ our whole selves to Christ's purpose – that is the way to pain, sorrow, and separation from God.

Christ calls us to a \_\_\_\_\_ standard of living into the Kingdom of God.

**Start talking.**

- How did your parents settle arguments between you and your brother/sister?
- What's the best advice you've been given for dealing with an issue that holding you back from the best in life?

**Start thinking.**

- What new standard of right and wrong is Jesus creating in vv21-37? What inner attitudes is he stressing by these examples?
- What's Jesus' point in using such exaggerated language in vv29-30?
- What kind of inner qualities is Jesus seeking instead of the easier attitudes and teachings?

**Start sharing.**

- Since all of us experience something of anger, lust, divorce, duplicity, selfishness, and hate, what is Jesus saying to us? Which illustrations speaks to you the most?
- Although these standards are not a new law, what do they suggest about the direction that God wants us to grow after we've received his mercy?

**Start praying.** *Be bold and pray with power.*

*God, I've often lived by the rule of "good enough" in my relationship to you, but I realize that you have so much more for me if I would submit, and get beyond just external things. That you desire my heart. I offer it to you, search my heart and point out anything in my life that is contrary to Your Spirit.*

**Start doing.** *Commit to a step and live it out this week.*

- Pray daily for God to reveal Himself to you and one other person you choose to pray for.
- Pray about which of these qualities that God wants you to cultivate on right now. Start taking steps to be obedient.