

23 Strong April – Relationships, Matthew 5:21-26



April Day 1 Introduction to 23 STRONG Quarter 2

The Lord is my
portion;
I have promised to
keep Thy Words.

Psalm 119:57


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SPIRITUAL FOOD

Today we begin not only a new month, but a new quarter in this study. In this quarter we will focus upon Matthew 5:21-48 where Jesus words to us center upon relationships! You may remember that Purity of Relationships is a high value and privilege of God's Kingdom, so it is only fitting that Jesus will spend so much time talking to us about them in this sermon. We are going to spend 4 days getting settled into this new section and focus, but for today, let's get things started by:

- READING Matthew 5:21-48.
- LISTENING to the video titled, Jesus Talks About Relationships, taking notes as you do.

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

As we begin our movement in this part of the Sermon on the Mount, lets do a little bit of surveying...

- READ through Matthew 5:21-28 again.
- As you read, MAKE A LIST of every kind of relationship Jesus mentions.
- PRAY, and ask the Lord to use His Word in your life during this month and quarter to purify your heart, mind, and behavior in your relationships, so that you may live in His kingdom blessing of enjoying lifegiving connections with others.



April Day 2 But I Say To You...

The Lord is my
portion;
I have promised to
keep Thy Words.

Psalm 119:57


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SPIRITUAL FOOD

Today we will continue our introduction into this new quarter and month about relationships with a focus upon a statement Jesus continually makes throughout Matthew 5:21-48. See throughout these verses, over and over again, Jesus addresses one relationship issue after another beginning with these words... *"You have heard... but I say to you..."* Why? Well because the people of that day, just like us, have issues in relationships. And over time, they, just like us, have heard many things that have built a framework of thought and behavior regarding their relationships. But the problem is... much of what we have heard is often in great opposition to what Jesus would say about living in His Kingdom! Remember Jesus *"saw"* the people so He could see the impurity in their relationships... and thus He speaks. Let's listen by:

- READING Matthew 5:21-48 and making note of each time He says some form of the phrase, *"You have heard... but I say to you."*
- PRAY, asking God for a *"meek"* heart to listen and trust His voice above others!

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

ASK the Holy Spirit to help you personally consider this statement from Jesus by:

- LISTING voices you listen to regarding relationships. (Keep in mind, things like fear, hurt, offense, desire etc. can also have a very loud voice in our ears)
- DRAWING A LINE through each voice on your list that you will commit to putting under the authority of Jesus' voice.

MEMORIZATION - Choose to either memorize all of Matthew 5:21- 26, or only verses 21-21, or verses 23-26. Then make an action plan, dividing out whatever you chose into 22 days of memorizing. Get started with the first one now.



April Day 3

Matters Of The Heart

The Lord is my
portion;
I have promised to
keep Thy Words.

Psalm 119:57



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SPIRITUAL FOOD

Day 3 of this new month, and also of this 4 day introduction into Matthew 5:21-48 which will have our attention for this whole quarter. We already know these verses in Scripture are full of Jesus' words to us about relationships, but today we want to specifically take note of His attention to the heart. See relationships are really built upon matters of the heart. So often in relationships, we tend to focus upon actions, but we will hear Jesus really go past the action, and straight to the heart. So let's survey these verses again from that perspective by:

- **READING** Matthew 5:21-48, and making note of every time Jesus' words move past action/behavior and to the heart.
- **PRAYING**, asking God to use His Word this quarter to cultivate a pure heart in you for your relationships.

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Let's personally consider the heart focus of Jesus' words by:

- **READING** through Matthew 5:21-48 again and **MAKING A LIST** of the heart issues Jesus speaks of which cause problems in relationships. (ex: verse 21 – anger)
- Go back through this list and **CIRCLE** any of the heart issues on it which have a tendency to also be issues in your own heart.
- **PRAY** about what you discover.

MEMORIZATION - Scripture Memorization Benefit #1 - cleansing and renewing your mind. We all need that... so give attention to your memorization plan today!



April Day 4

Introduction To Verses 21-26

The Lord is my
portion;
I have promised to
keep Thy Words.

Psalm 119:57



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SPIRITUAL FOOD

For this last day of introductions, we will move our focus to verses 21-26, which are our focus verses for this month. In the coming days, we will carefully work our way through them in small sections, but today we want to look at them as a whole. So, respond to the following in your journal...

- **READ** and **COPY** Matthew 5:21-26, leaving a large margin to the left side of your copy.
- **ANSWER** - If you were to give this section of verses about relationships a title, what would it be?
- **READ** and **REVIEW** Matthew 5:3-12, The Beatitudes.

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Let's begin to move in these words from Jesus...

- Go back through your copy of verses 21-26 and **MAKE CONNECTION** between Jesus' instructions there, and The Beatitudes. To do so... in the margin you created on the left, beside each of His instructions, write the Beatitude(s) you would be living out if you followed His instructions.
- **PRAY**, asking Jesus to give you great understanding, and faithful action of His wisdom spoken here for your relationships.

MEMORIZATION - Scripture Memorization Benefit #2 – protection from sin. What more motivation do you need to show up for your memorization plan today!



April Day 5

Addressing Anger Part 1

The Lord is my portion;
I have promised to keep Thy Words.

Psalm 119:57



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SPIRITUAL FOOD

For the next three days we will settle into verses 21 and 22, leaning in closely to listen, understand, and apply Jesus' words. See when Jesus begins His lengthy dialogue about relationships in these verses, He jumps right into the muck and mire... by speaking about murder! So, READ verses 21-22 and JOURNAL about the following:

- This standard which had been heard regarding murder was obviously passed down from God's ancient Law. We already know the Law was very important to Jesus (see vs. 17), but here we begin to see how Jesus desires to take us past the legality of the Law, and come face to face with the inner workings of sin in the heart. How does Jesus make it clear that the heart is what drives behavior?
- In verse 22, Jesus speaks of anger in a progressive way, revealing its pathway to murder. In your own words, write out the anger progression He describes.

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Let's further consider the progression of anger Jesus speaks about in verse 22 by:

- WATCHING the video titled When Jesus Speaks About Anger Part 1, taking notes as you do.
- PRAYING and humbling yourself before God, asking Him to search your heart as you continue to partake of these 2 verses.

MEMORIZATION - Scripture Memorization Benefit #3 – providing Divine insight in the midst of real life. Want to live with heavenly insight? Keep memorizing!



April Day 6

Addressing Anger Part 2

The Lord is my portion;
I have promised to keep Thy Words.

Psalm 119:57



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SPIRITUAL FOOD

We are still in verses 21-22 today, listening intently to what Jesus has to say about anger in relationships. Yesterday we gained insight about the progression of anger, and what it can lead to. Today we will focus on the liability and guilt of anger. So,

- READ and COPY Matthew 5:21-22.
- UNDERLINE the words "liable" and "guilty" each time you see them. (applies to NASB, may be worded differently in other versions)
- MAKE NOTE... although these are two different English words, both are translated from the same word in the original language, so they really mean the same thing. However, Jesus words do draw distinctions between both the depth of the liability/guilt and the consequences too. What are those distinctions?
- CONSIDER then, according to Jesus' words... which holds the greater liability/guilt... the actual action of murder, or anger which takes place in the heart and can lead to murder? JOURNAL your thoughts.

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Obviously as Jesus shares such probing thoughts, He wants to probe into the interior of our hearts too. Keep in mind that the word "brother" in verse 22 is a generic term used to represent anyone that we walk alongside of in life. So as Jesus probes, what would He find in our heart responses toward others you do life alongside? Using your notes from the video on Day 5, LET JESUS SEARCH your heart regarding each of the three progressions of anger He speaks about. CONFESS as needed.

MEMORIZATION - Scripture Memorization Benefit #4 – strengthening your spirit. We definitely want a strong spirit... keep memorizing!



April Day 7

Addressing Anger Part 3

The Lord is my portion;
I have promised to keep Thy Words.

Psalms 119:57



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SPIRITUAL FOOD

Today we'll finish our focus on Jesus' discussion of anger in Matthew 5:21-22, but hopefully His words will continue to nourish our hearts/minds for years to come, because we all know that unrighteous anger can easily rise up as we face challenges in relationships. And according to Jesus, that anger is not pleasing to God. So because of that, we need wisdom from Jesus to help us manage our minds and emotions about others. And Jesus surely gives His wisdom to us in the Sermon on the Mount. So today, we'll connect His wisdom given in Matthew 5:22, to His Beatitudes from Matthew 5:3-12. **JOURNAL** your thoughts as we make this connection...

- **REVIEW** your notes from Day 5 on the progressions of anger, specifically noting the 3 personal attacks we tend to mentally make when anger is left unchecked.
- **LOOK** at the Beatitudes to see which attitude(s) of heart would counteract each of the three personal attacks you might be prone to make when angry. Why?
- **PRAY**, asking God to help you wisely live in His Beatitudes in regard to your relationships.

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

We want to be intentional about personally *"keeping"* Jesus' Word here... so:

- **WATCH** the video we've titled When Jesus Talks About Anger Part 2, taking notes as you do.
- **FOLLOW** the prompts at the end of the video to move in this Word from Jesus.

MEMORIZATION - Scripture Memorization Benefit #5 – combatting the lies of satan in your mind. When we memorize, our minds are filled with life giving Truth... so we like Jesus, will have Truth ready to combat any lies the enemy sends our way.



April Day 8

Reconciliation In the Kingdom Part 1

The Lord is my portion;
I have promised to keep Thy Words.

Psalms 119:57



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SPIRITUAL FOOD

For the next three days we will be in Matthew 5:23-24 where Jesus will begin to talk to us about reconciliation. Based on verses 21-22, Jesus obviously knows there will be relationship struggles between people, and He wants to talk with us about how we handle those struggles in His Kingdom. Today His Words will draw attention to how our struggles with each other affect our relationship to God. So first, **READ** vs. 21-24 and **COPY** verses 23-24. Then, **ANSWER** the following questions in your journal.

- What might *"presenting our offering at the altar"* (vs.23) look like for us today? Might it include worship, prayer, giving financial gifts, acts of service, and more?
- We would assume these *"offerings"* are desired by God and pleasing to Him... but, by what He says in verse 24, what seems to be more important to Him?
- Jesus is implying that our relationships with one another have direct impact on our relationship to God? Why might that be so?

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

As we spend these 3 days in verses 23-24, each day our understanding and movement will build upon the day before. So, from today, knowing that our personal relationship struggles affect our connection to God, complete the following:

- **MAKE A LIST** of any relationship in your life that has struggles/conflict. Beside each one, briefly describe the challenges. Be real in your description.
- **PRAY** and ask God to give you reconciliation wisdom in the coming days for each relationship on your list.

MEMORIZATION - Scripture Memorization Benefit #6 – stirring up righteous desires. When we memorize, our hearts are drawn toward righteous things. That's good, because remember, Jesus said, He will satisfy those desires! (Matthew 5:6)



April Day 9

Reconciliation In the Kingdom Part 2

The Lord is my
portion;
I have promised to
keep Thy Words.

Psalms 119:57



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SPIRITUAL FOOD

Yesterday we heard how our relationships with one another affect our relationship to God. And today, we will hear some clear direction from Jesus about the role of reconciliation we are to play when we face struggles in our relationships.

So, let's go back to the verses and JOURNAL through the following:

- READ and COPY Matthew 5:23-24.
- DESCRIBE the relationship struggle Jesus speaks about... specifically noting: who is offended, and who is instructed to make the first move.
- COPY this definition for the word "*reconcile*" – to renew friendship or harmony.
- WRITE OUT what Jesus says in verses 23-24, saying it in your own words.
- REMIND yourself of Jesus' authority in your life.

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

In the midst of a struggling relationship, we might be prone to give directions from Jesus like this a pushback. But our pushbacks don't negate the Truth Jesus is speaking to us. Tomorrow we are going to see one of the glorious reasons why Jesus gives us such challenging instructions. But for now, under His authority, let's draw near and PRAY, instead of pushing back. LOOK at your list from yesterday and talk with Jesus about each relationship struggle in light of the directions He gave.

MEMORIZATION - Scripture Memorization Benefit #7 – diminishing the demands of the flesh. When we memorize, our minds take on a new way of thinking, and our flesh begins to get in line with Truth. Who knew memorizing could be so powerful!



April Day 10

Reconciliation In the Kingdom Part 3

The Lord is my
portion;
I have promised to
keep Thy Words.

Psalms 119:57



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SPIRITUAL FOOD

Today is an exciting day because so many things are going to come together in Jesus' Words to us in verses 23-24, as well as from this sermon as a whole. So, let's get to it!

- PRAY, asking God to open your eyes to everything He wants you to see, and asking Him for His grace and strength to be a "*keeper*" of His Word.
- READ and COPY Matthew 5:23-24.
- LISTEN to the video we've titled, Jesus Talks About Reconciliation, taking notes as you do.

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

In light of all that we have now taken in, let's move our hearts and minds in these Truths by JOURNALING your prayer responses to Jesus about:

- Your Kingdom Privilege of reconciliation.
- Your Kingdom Responsibility of reconciliation.
- Your Kingdom Blessing of reconciliation.
- Any questions/concerns you have in your mind and heart about living out Jesus' Words of reconciliation.

MEMORIZATION - Scripture Memorization Benefit #8 – being a "keeper". When we memorize, we are actively "*keeping*" God's Word, which we know sets us up to experience greatness in His Kingdom!



23 STRONG

April Day 11

Wisdom In Relationships Part 1

The Lord is my
portion;
I have promised to
keep Thy Words.

Psalms 119:57



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SPIRITUAL FOOD

We are moving on to verses 25-26 today with a focus upon Wisdom in Relationships. I believe Jesus' Words here are spoken in follow up to the instructions He already gave us about living in His Kingdom way of reconciliation (vs 23-24). See, just like we discussed, the reality of life involves conflict in relationships. Even if we live in reconciliation, it doesn't mean the other person always joins in. So what are we to do. Over the next three days Jesus will give us three portions of wisdom in verses 25-26. The first one is this: PROTECT YOUR LIFE. So, first READ and COPY Matthew 5:25-26, and then TAKE NOTE of the following in your journal.

- What does Jesus call the person in conflict with you? What does that title imply?
- How far has the opposition escalated? How do you know?
- What does Jesus say in these verses that encourages you to protect your life?
- The message seems to be that Jesus cares about our wellbeing in the midst of the conflict, and that we should exercise practical Kingdom wisdom regarding our wellbeing in the midst of conflicts. Would you agree? Why or why not?

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

So let's see what the actual wisdom is.

- PRAY, asking God to help you hear/understand the wisdom Jesus gives here.
- MAKE A LIST of each word of wisdom you hear from Jesus in verses 25-26 about how you are to protect your life in the midst of conflict.

MEMORIZATION - Scripture Memorization Benefit #9 – brain health. Talk about practical wisdom... studies show memorization is a healthy exercise for the brain 😊.



23 STRONG

April Day 12

Wisdom In Relationships Part 2

The Lord is my
portion;
I have promised to
keep Thy Words.

Psalms 119:57



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SPIRITUAL FOOD

Today we'll continue in verses 25-26 with a focus upon Wisdom in Relationships. The wisdom Jesus gives here is in follow up to His earlier wise instructions about living in the Kingdom way of reconciliation (vs 23-24). Yesterday His wisdom for us was PROTECT YOUR LIFE. Today His wisdom for us is RECONCILE QUICKLY. So, first READ and COPY Matthew 5:25-26 again, circling the word "quickly" (or a similar word) and then TAKE NOTE of the following in your journal.

- Look at Day 9 to recall the definition of the word, "reconcile."
- Define the word "quickly."
- Consider why Jesus instructs us to "make friends quickly with our opponent."
- Consider reasons why people resist "making friends quickly with an opponent."
- Consider the personal "prisons" that result when we resist/delay reconciliation.

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

So, now that we have considered some benefits of, and resistances to Jesus' wisdom of "reconciling quickly" ... JOURNAL about the following:

- Think of relationship struggles where you have not followed Jesus' wisdom of "quickly" reconciling ... what additional struggles resulted?
- Look at the notes you made earlier about why people resist "making friends quickly" ... are you prone to resisting?
- PRAY, asking the Lord to help you "keep" His Words of wisdom. CONFESS any resistance in your own heart and, ACT "quickly" upon His wisdom as needed.

MEMORIZATION - Scripture Memorization Benefit #10 – learning God's language. When you memorize, you are learning the language God's speaks and that opens doors for so many things! Stay tuned for more in the coming days...



April Day 13

Wisdom
In Relationships
Part 3

The Lord is my
portion;
I have promised to
keep Thy Words.

Psalms 119:57



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SPIRITUAL FOOD

Verses 25-26 will still have our attention today as we listen to Jesus' wisdom about relationships in our lives that have struggles. In these verses, we have partaken of Jesus' wisdom to: PROTECT OUR LIFE, and RECONCILE QUICKLY. Today we'll hear more of His wisdom, this time about PRISON EXPENSES. So,

- READ and COPY Matthew 5:25-26 again, this time underlining Jesus' words about "prison" and what it will cost.
- WATCH the video titled, Prison Costs, taking notes as you do.

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Let's personally consider Jesus' wisdom by JOURNALING through the following:

- Have you ever experienced the "prison" of a broken relationship. Describe what it was like? What did the "prison" cost you?
- Would it ever be wise for you to pay "prison" costs, instead of allowing Jesus sacrifice to cover the cost of forgiveness and reconciliation. Why or why not?
- How does all of Jesus' wisdom in verses 25-26 personally affect your relationships?

PRAY, asking the Lord to help you "keep" His wisdom.

MEMORIZATION - Scripture Memorization Benefit #11 – rich and meaningful conversations with God. When you memorize, you learn God's language. Knowing His language allows for rich and meaningful conversations with Him. So good... but stay tuned, there is still more...



April Day 14

Review
&
Act

The Lord is my
portion;
I have promised to
keep Thy Words.

Psalms 119:57



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SPIRITUAL FOOD

Today we will take some moments to review and act upon Jesus' words in Matthew 5:21-26 regarding relationships. In Matthew 5:19, we learned how important it is to "keep" God's Word. And we learned that "keeping" = making and doing. Well... when we review, we are making God's Word stick... meaning we are making it a reality of how we think and view life. And when we act upon God's Word, we are doing it. All that to say... let's be "keepers" of Jesus' words here, by wholeheartedly reviewing, and acting upon Jesus' Truth and wisdom He shared in these verses...

- READ Matthew 5:21-26 again. Any part you have been memorizing, pause to say it from memory.
- Based on the understanding and revelation you've received in meditating upon these verses, REVIEW them by writing out each verse in your own words, being careful that your words preserve Jesus' heart and intent. PRAY first, and then get to it! Make sure to leave space beside each verse you write out.

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Now, in your journal, CREATE A PLAN to act upon what Jesus said. Here is how... in the space you left beside each verse, answer the following question, and then make sure to do your answer!

In order to live out the Words Jesus spoke in Matthew 5:21-26,
is there anything He would specifically have me do today?

MEMORIZATION - Scripture Memorization Benefit #12 – increased understanding. When you memorize, you learn God's language, and the more you know His language, the more you understand when He speaks! Stay tuned, there is more...



April Day 15

Praying the Beatitudes Part 1

The Lord is my
portion;
I have promised to
keep Thy Words.

Psalms 119:57



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SPIRITUAL FOOD

When Jesus revealed the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-12, we learned so much... but one thing we specifically learned about them is that they are foundational to all that Jesus would go on to say in His sermon. We also learned that praying through the Beatitudes is a powerful experience. No doubt, His Beatitudes are definitely connected to vs 21-26 and praying through the Beatitudes alongside these verses, will help us take hold of His Truth and wisdom in them. So, today we'll review the Beatitudes, and pray through them... with our prayers specifically focused upon the relationships in our lives that bring challenges. To get started, let's do two things:

- READ Matthew 5:3-12. Any part of it you memorized, pause to say it out loud.
- PAUSE at each Beatitude and remind yourself of the instruction and blessing Jesus describes.

*if you did not participate in 23 Strong February,
we recommend viewing our 23 Strong videos related to the Beatitudes.
You will find them on our YouTube channel.

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Using the reference sheet titled, Praying the Beatitudes, pray through the Beatitudes with a focus upon Matthew 5:21-26 and the relationships in your life that bring challenges.

MEMORIZATION - Scripture Memorization Benefit #13 – increased revelation.
When you memorize, you learn God's language, so when He reveals things to you from His Word, you see them, and they makes sense! There are so many benefits of knowing His language. And stay tuned, there are still more coming...



April Day 16

Praying the Beatitudes Part 2

The Lord is my
portion;
I have promised to
keep Thy Words.

Psalms 119:57



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SPIRITUAL FOOD

Yesterday we were reminded of the special connection between the Beatitudes and all that Jesus speaks in the Sermon on the Mount. It is so lifegiving to lay the Beatitudes alongside what Jesus teaches... and even more so to then personalize them through prayer. Today we are going to dig in a bit deeper and pray through them again... this time with a different focus. To prepare our hearts for this, once again:

- READ Matthew 5:3-12. Any part of it you memorized, pause to say it out loud.
- PAUSE at each Beatitude and remind yourself of the instruction and blessing Jesus describes.

*if you did not participate in 23 Strong February,
we recommend viewing our 23 Strong videos related to the Beatitudes.
You will find them on our YouTube channel.

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Using the reference sheet titled, Praying the Beatitudes for Those Who Oppose Us, pray through the Beatitudes with a focus upon Matthew 5:21-26, and a relationship in your life that seems to bring challenge and opposition.

MEMORIZATION - Scripture Memorization Benefit #14 – opportunities to share.
When you memorize, you learn God's language, which opens so many doors to share His language with others who don't know it. Sounds like being "*salt*" and "*light*" doesn't it 😊!



April Day 17

3 Point Relationship Review

The Lord is my
portion;
I have promised to
keep Thy Words.

Psalms 119:57



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SPIRITUAL FOOD

We have spent much time this month focused on Jesus' Words in Matthew 5:21-26, where He shares so much relationship Truth with us. And in moving forward, it is important to make sure that we hold onto this Truth and live it. Reviewing with intention is especially helpful for that retention and application, so we'll do so today.

- READ Matthew 5:21-26. Review any part that you memorized.
- DIVIDE the verses into three sections and give each a title.
- WATCH the video we've titled, 3 Pt Relationship Review, taking notes as you do.

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

After watching the video...

- Go back to the titles you assigned each section and MAKE EDITS as you desire.
- DETERMINE an association word, picture, or symbol representing each section/title.
- JOURNAL about the relationship Truths you are taking away from each section.
- PRAY, asking God remind you of these Truths through the words, pictures or symbol you chose. And, ask Him to bless your relationships as you live out these Truths.

MEMORIZATION - Scripture Memorization Benefit #15 – spiritual weaponry. The Bible calls the Word of God a "sword," so when you memorize Scripture, you are taking up your "sword" so you can fight your spiritual battles, and win!



April Day 18
"SALT" & "LIGHT"

In Relationships

The Lord is my
portion;
I have promised to
keep Thy Words.

Psalms 119:57



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SPIRITUAL FOOD

Jesus uses so much imagery in the Sermon on the Mount. In the first month of our study we made an Imagery List... and then in the third month, we specifically looked at both "salt" and "light"... For the remaining seven days we are going to look at many of the images that Jesus speaks of in this sermon, and we'll see how they connect with His Words about relationships. I believe the more we make these connections, the more powerful these images will become, and the more personally Jesus will use them to speak to us, and strengthen us in Truth throughout our lives.

- READ Matthew 5:21-26. Review any part that you memorized. Also review the titles you created yesterday.
- READ Matthew 5:13-16. Review any part that you memorized. Then review your journal notes from March Days 3 and 5 about "salt" and "light."

*if you did not participate in our March 23 Strong Study, we recommend viewing our 23 Strong Bible Study images from March 3rd and 5th about the functions of "salt" and "light."

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

After reviewing the verses listed above...

- CONSIDER how living out the relationship Truths Jesus shared in vs 21-26 can cause you to actively live out the functions of "salt" and "light" in this world.
- JOURNAL your thoughts.
- PRAY, asking God to strengthen you as "salt" and "light" in your relationships.

MEMORIZATION - Scripture Memorization Benefit #16 – becoming a storehouse of Truth. When you memorize, you store up Truth inside of you. That Truth then benefits not only yourself, but those you are in relationship with!



April Day 19
"CLEAR VISION"
In
Relationships

The Lord is my
portion;
I have promised to
keep Thy Words.

Psalms 119:57

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SPIRITUAL FOOD

Today we will move onto another image which will help us glean even more about how we can personally put the Truth Jesus has shared, into action. Our image for today is found in chapter 6 and we will call it "clear vision."

- READ Matthew 5:21-26. Review any part that you memorized. Also, bring to mind the titles you gave to all that Jesus has been teaching you about relationships.
- READ and COPY Matthew 6:22-23.
- ANSWER this question in your journal... If you had to share the message of Jesus' words from Matthew 6:22-23 with someone, what would you say?

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

After partaking of the Spiritual Food in Matthew 5:21-26 and Matthew 6:22-23, JOURNAL about the following...

- How might unclear vision lead you into dark progressions of anger? Be specific.
 - How might clear vision of your relationship with God strengthen your relationships with others? How might unclear vision, destroy those relationships?
 - How could clear vision of God's mercy flow impact your relationships?
- PRAY, asking God to give you clear vision to see Him, and others.

MEMORIZATION - Scripture Memorization Benefit #17 – fixing your mind on things above. When we memorize, our minds experience the benefit of being fixed on things above. Such a wonderful blessing of memorization. Don't quit!



April Day 20
"SPECK" & "LOG"
In
Relationships

The Lord is my
portion;
I have promised to
keep Thy Words.

Psalms 119:57

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SPIRITUAL FOOD

Today we'll continue looking at the images Jesus' used in His Sermon on the Mount, and how they really speak even deeper into the relationship Truths He has shared with us in Matthew 5:21-26. I like to think of these images being like magnifying glasses which help us see these Jesus' Truths even more clearly. Yesterday we considered the image of "clear vision," which I believe impacts the images for today which are the "speck" and the "log." Let's look closer:

- READ Matthew 5:21-26. Review any part that you memorized. Also, bring to mind the titles you gave to Jesus' teaching you about relationships.
- READ and COPY Matthew 7:1-5.
- PUT the Truth Jesus shares in Matthew 7:1-5 into one simple statement. WRITE the statement in your journal.

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

After partaking of this Spiritual Food, JOURNAL about the following...

- How can the image of "clear vision" from Matthew 6:22-23 impact the images of the "speck" and the "log" in Matthew 7:1-5?
- How can all three images have impact upon the progression of anger Jesus speaks of in Matthew 5:21-22?
- What might all three images be revealing about your relationships?

PRAY, asking God to give you clear vision and a humble spirit to see your own faults as you consider the faults of others.

MEMORIZATION - Scripture Memorization Benefit #18 – cleansing. The Bible says that God's Word cleanses. When we memorize Scripture, our minds, hearts and eyes are continually cleansed. O how we need that!



April Day 21
THE "GATES"
In
Relationships

The Lord is my
portion;
I have promised to
keep Thy Words.

Psalms 119:57



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SPIRITUAL FOOD

We have three more days, and three more images... Jesus gives us so much to take in! Today our focus will be on the *"narrow gate"* and the *"wide gate"* that Jesus speaks about in Matthew 7:13-14. These are such powerful images, able to speak wisdom into every decision of our lives, especially those decisions we make about relationships. Let's look closer:

- READ Matthew 5:21-26. Review any part that you memorized. And again, bring to mind the titles you gave to Jesus' teaching you about relationships.
- READ and COPY Matthew 7:13-14... then LIST His descriptions of both *"gates."*
- In light of His descriptions, CONSIDER why living out the Truths of Matthew 5:21-26 is really a choosing of the *"narrow gate."* JOURNAL your thoughts.

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Let's exercise this imagery into our own lives...

- DRAW a *"narrow gate"*... inside it, write the titles you assigned to Matt. 5:21-26.
- DRAW a *"wide gate"*... inside it, write out brief descriptions of relationship dynamics that people generally tend to live in. (ex. anger, bitterness)
- On top of your *"wide gate"* boldly write, *"leads to destruction,"* and on the *"narrow gate,"* boldly write, *"leads to life."*

PRAY, thanking Jesus for His gracious wisdom to show you the best gate, and asking Him to give you strength to choose the *"narrow gate"* in all of your relationships.

MEMORIZATION - Scripture Memorization Benefit #19 - guidance. The Bible says that God's Word lights our path. When we memorize Scripture, it is like holding a flashlight of Truth on our steps as we walk through life!



April Day 22
"GOOD FRUIT"
In
Relationships

The Lord is my
portion;
I have promised to
keep Thy Words.

Psalms 119:57



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SPIRITUAL FOOD

Today we move from the two *"gates"* to two kinds of *"fruit."* See in the next verses Jesus describes how those who are living in His Truth produce *"good fruit,"* in contrast to *"bad fruit."* Let's look closer:

- READ Matthew 5:21-26. Review any part that you memorized. Also, bring to mind the titles you gave Jesus' teachings about relationships.
- READ and COPY Matthew 7:15-20... then LIST the descriptions Jesus gives of both kinds of *"fruit."*
- In light of His descriptions, CONSIDER how living out the Truths of Matthew 5:21-26 might *"bear good fruit"* in His kingdom. JOURNAL your thoughts.

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Let's exercise this imagery into our own relationships by JOURNALING about:

- How might living in the Truths of Matt. 5:21-22, contribute to bearing the *"good fruit"* of a merciful, pure, and peacemaking heart? (Matthew 5:7-9)
- How might living in the Truths of Matt. 5:23-24 contribute to bearing the *"good fruit"* of being poor in spirit, meek, merciful, pure, & peacemaking? (Matthew 5:3-9)
- How might living in the Truths of Matt. 5:25-26 contribute to bearing the *"good fruit"* of a merciful and peacemaking heart? (Matthew 5:7,9)

PRAY, asking Jesus to help you *"bear good fruit"* in your relationships, & asking Him to show you anything in your heart/mind/actions that needs to be pruned so you can.

MEMORIZATION - Scripture Memorization Benefit #20 - mirror. The Bible is likened to a mirror, as it reveals a picture of who we are. Memorizing Scripture keeps that mirror handy, as we often need a check in the mirror!



April Day 23
"ROCK" & "SAND"
In
Relationships

The Lord is my
portion;
I have promised to
keep Thy Words.

Psalms 119:57


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SPIRITUAL FOOD

Day 23... and today we'll focus upon the last image in Jesus' sermon... building on the "rock" as described in Matthew 7:24-27. This image is often taught to children, and yet it takes much maturing before many of us embrace its Truth. Let's explore more:

- READ Matthew 5:21-26. Review any part that you memorized. On this last day, once again, bring to mind the titles you gave Jesus' teachings in this section.
- READ and COPY Matthew 7:24-27... then LIST the descriptions Jesus gives of both the "rock" and the "sand."
- In light of His descriptions, CONSIDER how living out the Truths of Matthew 5:21-26 is like building upon "the rock." JOURNAL your thoughts.

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Let's finish out this section of Scripture by WATCHING the video we've titled, Building Our Relationships on the Rock, taking notes as you do.

After watching the video, JOURNAL a prayer about your commitment to build your relationships upon the Truths Jesus has shared with you this month. As you do:

- Express thankfulness for all He has taught you.
- Intentionally include Jesus' language in your prayer.... meaning, use words and phrases that He uses in His sermon.
- Ask for strength to live in His Truth in your relationships.

MEMORIZATION – Hopefully you have completed the verses you set out to memorize this month! And hopefully you have been encouraged in doing so by all the benefits of Scripture memorization we have shared. May Scripture memory become a lifelong delight in your life, bringing many blessings for years to come!