



LIFE Group Discussion Guide

September 20, 2026

Matthew 5:27-30

CONVERSATION STARTERS

What are some highs or lows you experienced this past week?

What Scripture has been shaping you recently?

Where have you seen God moving in your life this week?

What did you hear in today's sermon OR read in today's passage that you would like to discuss?

What did you learn about yourself in today's sermon/passage?

What did you learn about God in today's sermon/passage?

What convicted you as you listened to today's sermon OR read in today's passage?

OPENING

Think about a habit that was difficult to break or a goal that required significant self-discipline. What made lasting change possible?

Many people believe sin is only about outward actions. Jesus teaches that God looks much deeper. In Matthew 5:27–30, Jesus explains that purity begins in the heart.

Rather than merely avoiding sinful behavior, His followers are called to pursue holiness in their thoughts, desires, and actions.

Jesus also uses strong, memorable language to emphasize the seriousness of sin and the importance of removing anything that draws us away from faithful obedience to God.

Today we'll explore how followers of Jesus pursue purity by allowing God to transform their hearts and by removing anything that leads them away from Him.

SCRIPTURE READING

Read **Matthew 5:27–30** together.

Ask the group to listen for:

- How Jesus connects outward actions with inward attitudes.
- What Jesus teaches about purity.
- Why Jesus uses such strong language.
- What practical response Jesus calls for.

PASSAGE SUMMARY

Jesus continues explaining the deeper meaning of God's Law.

While the commandment prohibited adultery, Jesus teaches that sinful desires and lust also matter because they begin in the heart.

Jesus is not saying that noticing someone's attractiveness is sinful. Rather, He warns against cultivating lust—choosing to entertain impure thoughts or viewing another person as an object for selfish desire.

In verses 29–30, Jesus uses deliberate exaggeration (hyperbole) to make a powerful point. He is not instructing people to harm themselves. Instead, He emphasizes that sin is serious and that His followers should take decisive action to remove anything that leads them into temptation.

The focus is on wholehearted devotion to God and intentional pursuit of holiness.

The main point is: Jesus calls His followers to pursue purity by guarding their hearts and removing influences that lead them toward sin.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What does Jesus teach about where sin begins?

Jesus teaches that sin begins in the heart. Our thoughts, desires, and attitudes matter to God, not just our outward actions.

Why is it important to guard our hearts as well as our actions?

Our thoughts and desires influence our choices. A heart that is continually shaped by God's truth leads to godly actions.

Why do you think Jesus used such strong language about removing an eye or a hand?

Jesus was emphasizing the seriousness of sin and the importance of dealing with temptation decisively. His words are meant to stress urgency, not to be taken as instructions for self-harm.

What are some influences in today's culture that can make pursuing purity more challenging?

Media, entertainment, internet content, social media, unhealthy relationships, and cultural messages that normalize sexual sin can all influence our thoughts and desires.

What are some practical ways believers can guard their hearts?

Regular Bible reading, prayer, accountability, wise entertainment choices, healthy relationships, setting appropriate boundaries, and relying on the Holy Spirit.

How does God's grace encourage us when we struggle with temptation?

God's grace offers forgiveness when we confess our sin and strength to continue growing. He invites us to repent, depend on Him, and pursue holiness rather than living in shame.

How can a LIFE Group encourage one another in pursuing purity?

By creating an atmosphere of trust, praying for one another, encouraging spiritual growth, providing accountability, and pointing one another to God's grace and truth.

APPLICATION

Are there influences in your life that are shaping your thoughts more than God's Word?

What changes might God be calling you to make?

What practical boundaries could help you guard your heart more effectively?

Examples:

- Limiting certain media or online content.
- Strengthening accountability.
- Spending more intentional time in Scripture and prayer.
- Choosing friendships that encourage spiritual growth.

What is one step you can take this week to pursue greater purity in your thoughts and actions? Be specific and prayerful.

DIG DEEPER

Why does our culture often focus only on outward behavior rather than heart transformation?

How does understanding God's holiness deepen our desire for purity?

What is the difference between temptation and sin?

How does the gospel provide hope for those who have failed in this area?

How can we speak about purity with both conviction and compassion?

CLOSING THOUGHT

Jesus reminds us that following Him involves more than avoiding certain behaviors. He desires transformed hearts.

Purity is not simply about saying "no" to sin. It is about saying "yes" to a deeper relationship with Christ and allowing Him to shape our desires.

Because of the gospel, we are not left to fight temptation alone. Christ offers forgiveness, grace, and the power to grow in holiness.

Ask yourself:

What is shaping my heart?

Are there influences I need to remove?

What habits will help me pursue Christ more faithfully?

Who can encourage me in my walk with Jesus?

This week, prayerfully identify one practical step that will help guard your heart and strengthen your pursuit of holiness. Share that commitment with a trusted believer who can encourage you and pray for you.

Remember:

Lasting purity begins with a heart that is continually surrendered to Jesus Christ.

LOOKING AHEAD

Next week we will discuss **Matthew 5:31-32** as we continue the series, *The Greatest Sermon Ever Preached: The Sermon on the Mount*.

PRAYER FOCUS

- Thank God for His holiness, grace, and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.
- Ask Him to reveal any attitudes or influences that are drawing our hearts away from Him.
- Pray for wisdom and self-discipline to establish healthy boundaries.
- Pray for purity in our thoughts, words, and actions.
- Pray that our LIFE Groups would be places of grace, encouragement, accountability, and spiritual growth.
- Pray specifically for the invitation portion of our worship services—that hearts will be open, the Spirit will move powerfully, and people will respond in obedience to Christ.

COMMENTARY

Matthew 5:27-30

In Matthew 5:27-30, Jesus addresses the seventh commandment. He moves past outward legalism to explain that lustful intent breaks the law in the heart, and commands radical, decisive action against sin to avoid eternal destruction.

The Heart Intent (Verses 27-28)

- **External vs. Internal:** Jesus contrasts traditional teaching with God's true standard. The religious teachers of the day only limited the law to the physical act of adultery.
- **Adultery of the Heart:** Jesus teaches that intentionally gazing at someone to arouse illicit sexual desire means a person has already committed adultery inwardly. Righteousness requires purity of the inner mind and attitude, not just external conformity.

Radical Action Against Sin (Verses 29-30)

- **Hyperbolic Language:** The commands to tear out the right eye or cut off the right hand use vivid imagery. Commentators generally agree this is extreme hyperbole rather than literal self-mutilation.
- **Severity of Sin:** The graphic language emphasizes that believers must take ruthless, painful, and uncompromising steps to sever ties with anything that leads them into persistent temptation.
- **Eternal Stakes:** Removing or abandoning the source of temptation—no matter how valued it feels—is far better than letting unrepentant sin destroy the whole body and soul in hell.