

F. On Breaking the Boundaries of Love (5:43-47).

i. Limited love > Unlimited Love

ii. The basis? Because it is what God does.

iii. The point of the Sermon on the Mount is not to live this way *because it works better*; the point is to do it because it is *like God*... it is like our Father.

LIVE THE STORY

The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community. The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- Discuss the Chesterton and Tolstoy quotes on pg. 1 of this outline. Why do you think they said what they said?
- David Augsburger asks four crucial questions that help us identify if we are truly disciples of Jesus. (Do you believe the story of Jesus? Do you believe in Jesus? Do you believe what Jesus believed?) How do the last two separate “fans” from “followers”?
- What distinction is made by saying, “Do not *violently* resist an evil person,” rather than merely, “Do not resist an evil person”? Does Jesus teach *any* resistance in v39-42? Explain your answer.
- Why is the point Jesus makes about “not taking oaths” (in their cultural context) that is consistent with the point of the Old Testament call to keep our oaths?
- What benefit did the “eye for an eye” law bring? How is Jesus teaching moving in the same direction as that?
- Why is it important that we not just think that the teaching in the Sermon on the Mount “works better”? What is the real reason Jesus teaches us this way of life?

DISCIPLE 1.0.52: *How do You Interpret God’s Law? (Part 2)*

Jerry Cisar — March 24, 2019

Text: Matthew 5:21-48 (Part 2: 5:33-48)

Introduction

G.K. Chesterton: “The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting, it has been found difficult and left untried.”

- A. Tolstoy: The Sermon on the Mount “cannot be practiced in all circumstances without self-sacrifice, deprivation, suffering, and in extreme cases loss of life itself.”
- B. Jesus’ goal of the Sermon on the Mount is to mold the *disciple’s will* into His will and way.

R. Paul Stevens: “The ethics of Jesus demand a complete transformation. While perfection is never complete in this life, we must at least *start* being perfect because we are the children of God (5:48).”

I. A Promised Perfection

- A. Matthew 5:20 & 48 “Be Perfect!” (Review)
 - i. We are not talking about how to get to heaven.
 - ii. Perfect doesn’t mean sinless (19:21).
 - iii. Perfect might best be described as “godlike” (mature).
- B. This “perfection” was promised.
 - i. Jeremiah 31:31-34 (esp. 33)

Jesus is not canceling out Moses or the OT, He is showing us what it looks like when God’s law is no longer external, but internal—written on our hearts!

- ii. Jesus has kept this new covenant perfectly; He was *faithful to the Father all the way to the point of death* (Phil 2:6-8).
 - a) In baptism, we are joined with Him at the moment of His perfect obedience (death).
 - b) The Sermon on the Mount calls us to walk out our baptism; to die with Him.

- ii. Do not *violently* resist an evil person (39)!
 - a) Disciples must live contrary to the idea that if you are harmed, you can use like force in response!
 - b) This is not a prohibition on **all** resistance to evil inflicted upon you; it is a prohibition on **violent** resistance to evil.

iii. **What does “loving resistance” look like?**

a) *Turning the other cheek*

- By offering the other cheek you are declaring that they have no power over you!

Dietrich Bonhoeffer: “A king who dies on a cross must be the king of a rather strange kingdom.”

b) *Give them all your clothes!*

c) *Going the “extra mile”*

- Coercion from enemy armies. (Mat. 27:32)
- Jesus is saying that we must not resist by our refusal, but rather by our love.

iv. *Give and lend*

Jesus dares to believe that what we have is not our own but is available for others in need. When it is, we’ve entered the Empire of Heaven.

II. A Perfected Righteousness

D. On Truth-speaking (5:33-37).

- i. Jesus is not saying that you *should* break your oaths, but that everything we say should be treated as an oath!
 - ii. This doesn’t mean you can’t swear to tell the truth in court. It means you must always tell the truth.

E. On loving (*unvengeful*) responses to evil-doers (5:38-42).

- i. When wronged, our human impulse is vengeance—unlimited vengeance.
 - a) “*Two eyes for an eye,*” and, “*All your teeth for a tooth.*”
 - Genesis 34
 - b) “An eye for an eye” was implemented to bring limits to retaliation. (Not to make sure we retaliate in kind!)
 - c) Jesus is saying, “The point of “an eye for an eye” was to prevent unjust vengeance. *But the greater justice is the kind God has given you: Love.*”