

Matthew 5:38-42

Introduction

I. Matthew 5:38

A. Old Testament background

1. Leviticus 24:19-20 (cf. Ex. 21:24) – If anyone injures his neighbor, as he has done it shall be done to him, fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; whatever injury he has given a person shall be given to him.
2. Deuteronomy 19:21 – Your eye shall not pity. It shall be life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

B. These verses show how the *law* _____ and _____ in Israel should try and sentence people who are guilty of physical assault.

C. So the law about “eye for eye” and “tooth for tooth” was never meant to apply to _____ ethics.

II. Matthew 5:39a

A. The shocking thing about Jesus’ words is that He actually forbids _____, not just retaliation!

B. And He specifically forbids us to resist _____ people!

III. Matthew 5:39b

A. To slap someone’s cheek (especially the *right* cheek) was a serious insult to a person’s _____ and it entitled the victim to go to the courts and seek financial compensation.

- ✓ 2 Corinthians 11:20 – For you bear it if someone makes slaves of you, or devours you, or takes advantage of you, or puts on airs, or strikes you in the face.

- B. Jesus says: If someone slaps you on the right cheek, forget the potential for financial _____, and forget your own _____, *and* turn the other cheek.
1. To turn the other cheek is to _____ the other cheek.
 2. Isaiah 50:6 – I [the Servant of the LORD] *gave* my back to those who strike, and [I gave] my cheeks to those who pull out the beard; I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting.
 3. “Do not _____ an evil person who would insult you, disgrace you, or humiliate you. Instead, be willing to _____ yourself up for even more insults, disgrace, and humiliation.”

IV. Matthew 5:40

- A. Jesus not only says that the disciple should not _____ for the rights to his shirt, but that he should actually _____ to give up his coat as well!
- B. Exodus 22:25-27 (Deut. 24:12-13) – “If you lend money to any of my people with you who is poor, you shall not be like a moneylender to him, and you shall not exact interest from him. If ever you take your neighbor’s cloak in pledge, you shall return it to him before the sun goes down, for that is his only covering, and it is his cloak for his body; in what else shall he sleep?”
- C. *However* we take this statement, it is without any doubt a _____ and seemingly _____ idea.
- D. 1 Corinthians 6:7 – To have lawsuits at all with one another is already a defeat for you. Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded?

V. Matthew 5:41

- A. A Roman soldier had the legal right to _____ a Jew to bear a load for him from one place to another.
 ✓ Matthew 27:32 – As they went out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. They compelled this man to carry his cross.
- B. Jesus tells us that not only should we willingly accept this imposition, but we should actually _____ for _____ duty!
- C. The teaching of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount as far surpasses the heights of worldly morals as the heavens are higher than the earth!

VI. Matthew 5:42

- A. Deuteronomy 15:7-8, 10-11 If among you, one of your brothers should become poor, in any of your towns within your land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother, but you shall open your hand to him and lend him sufficient for his need, whatever it may be. You shall give to him freely, and your heart shall not be grudging when you give to him, because for this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake. For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, “You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.”
- B. Jesus’ words seem “dangerously” _____ - _____:
1. If someone asks, _____.
 2. If someone wants to borrow from you, _____.
 3. No matter how we limit or qualify this teaching, it will still end up being totally and completely _____ from every other perspective but a pure _____ perspective!
 4. For Jesus, meekness is not just refusing to insist on our own rights, meekness is:

Conclusion

- A. Jesus’ teaching in the light of American culture.
1. *Individual* rights are practically _____ so that the “right” and even the “noble” thing to do is to insist on them.
 2. Meekness is not a virtue in American culture (instead, it’s more likely to be thought of as a moral _____ and _____).
 3. True biblical meekness is 100% _____, 100% _____-cultural, and 100% _____.
- B. ***The ultimate point is that in the kingdom of heaven, _____ - _____ has _____ place.***
1. Philippians 2:5-8 – Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself ***nothing***, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
 2. Philippians 2:9-11 – Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
 3. Matthew 5:5 – Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Teaching our Children

Q. What do we want to do when people treat us wrongly?

A. We want to get them back (retaliate).

Q. But Jesus told us not even to *resist* or *defend* ourselves against what kind of people?

A. Bad people.

Q. If someone slaps us on our right cheek, what should we do?

A. We should humbly and quietly *offer* him our other cheek to slap. (See Isaiah 50:6; Discuss how this was really a humiliating insult to a person's honor.)

Q. If someone tries to take away our shirt, what should we do?

A. We should *offer* to give him our coat as well (Compare with 1 Corinthians 6:7).

Q. If someone forces us to carry his things for one mile (cf. Matthew 27:32), what should we do?

A. We should *volunteer* to carry his things for two miles (think of other modern day examples for your children).

Q. If someone asks us for something, what should we do?

A. Give them what they ask for.

Q. How do you feel about Jesus' teaching?

A. It *seems* foolish and unwise.

It doesn't make sense.

It means that other people will be able to walk all over me.

Even if I shouldn't "get others back", I want to at least protect and argue for my rights.

I definitely don't want to turn the other cheek, offer my coat, or go the extra mile – *not at all!*

Q. *Why* does Jesus give us this teaching? What is the *main* point? What is He telling us about how we ought to live and think as Kingdom citizens?

A. We should make ourselves *nothing* and forget *completely* about ourselves and our own interests* – just like Jesus did (Read Philippians 2:5-8).

We really know *for sure* that we are doing this when we actually offer the other cheek, etc.

Q. Blessed are the meek (those who obey Jesus' teaching in these verses), for they shall what?

A. The meek shall inherit the earth (cf. Philippians 2:9-11)

Discuss ways that we *retaliate*. Discuss ways that we *resist and defend* ourselves. Discuss ways that we could actually turn the other cheek or go the extra mile.

*NOTE: Paul says, "Let each of you look *not only* to his own interests, but *also* to the interests of others," and then he compares this attitude with the attitude of Christ in His incarnation. When Paul speaks of looking out for our own interests, he must be referring to the normal pursuit of life's necessities. Also, Paul is not at all addressing the possibility and ramifications of Christians being mistreated and oppressed by the world (He is dealing with relationships within the church). Finally, to the extent that Jesus was looking out for His own interests when He made Himself nothing and humbled Himself to the point of death on a cross, to that extent we may also look out for our own personal interests.