

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

What does it mean to die to self?

Matthew 5:38-42

"If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." (Luke 9:23)

Interested in a test today?

- What's your first reaction when someone gets you?
- Get 'em back. We're all guilty.

Wouldn't it be easier for us if Christianity dominated our nation?

- Constantine, by year 350, made Christianity the official church, lavished it with financial support, and ended the persecutions.

The results were a DISASTER.

- The church became lazy.

Matthew 5:38-42 is Jesus fifth illustration of the way in which His interpretation of the Mosaic law is contrasted with the perversion of the Scribes and Pharisees.

Jesus affirms the power to overcome evil, aiming to ensure the fellowship of His disciples.

The right way to revenge evil according to Jesus, is not to RESIST it.

TEACHING OF THE PHARISEES/SCRIBES

"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth..'" Matthew 5:38 (Found in Exodus 21:24, Lev. 24:20, Deut. 19:21)

MAIN PRINCIPLE OR INTENT IN THE MOSAIC LAW WAS TO PREVENT EXCESSES

- The law exposes evil and keeps it within the bounds, it is God Himself who has ordained this, and the powers that be enforce it.

JUSTICE IS NEVER EXCESSIVE IN ITS DEMANDS

- The punishment must fit the crime, not be in excess of it.

JESUS' TEACHING

CHRIST'S THEME: RESIST EVIL!

- Isn't it a shame that those of us under GRACE always seem to want to be under the law?
- It is an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth until the spirit of Christ enters into a person, then expectations are raised!

DON'T FUEL THE FIRE!

"But I tell you not to resist an evil person." Matthew 5:39

- When evil's stinger is unable to find it's mark, it is left unfruitful.
- Does this mean there should be no punishment for crime? No!
- These verses are concerned with the REACTION of the Christian as an individual to the things that are done to him or her personally.

JESUS IS ASKING EVERY MAN TO EXAMINE HIS ATTITUDES TOWARDS HIMSELF

PRINCIPLE #1: WE MUST RID OURSELVES OF THE SPIRIT OF RETALIATION

*“But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.”
Matthew 5:39b*

- Evil becomes a spent force when we put up no RESISTANCE.
- This adherence is the only power which can overcome evil.

PRINCIPLE #2: DON'T DEMAND/INSIST ON YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS

“If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also.” Matthew 5:40

- Problem: people focus on rights instead of RESPONSIBILITIES.
- The Christian is not be concerned regarding personal insults and defense, however, we're to uphold the law of the land when it is not honored.

PRINCIPLE #3: GO BEYOND WHAT IS DEMANDED

*“And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.”
Matthew 5:41*

- The first mile is duty, the second mile is DEVOTION (don't resist, do it willingly).
- Litmus test: how you respond when you are treated like a servant.

PRINCIPLE #4: TRUE CHRISTIANS HAVE DIED TO SELF

“Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.” Matthew 5:42

- What the Lord is pointing to is the tendency of a man because of a SELF-CENTERED spirit, not to help those who are in real need.
- (1 John 3:17-18) The love of God is a love that GIVES of itself in order to help and strengthen those who are in need.
- The tragedy is that Pharisees/Scribes, and often thinking within the church today is to interpret “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth” in a purely legal manner or as something physical or material.

Cutting it Straight Dying to self

Don't REDUCE this great teaching to a matter of capital punishment or going to war.

- We're not, as Jesus didn't, CONDONING evil or justifying aggression. The shameful act, the deed of violence, and the act of exploitation are still evil. (Romans 12:9-21)

I must confess and repent of my PERSONAL attitude towards:

- Myself and my spirit of self-defense at any wrong done to me.
- Injustices presented by demands of the State.
- Finally, my attitude of self to personal possessions.
- Our Lord uncovers and exposes for all to see, the horrible thing that CONTROLS the natural man, SELF! (Romans 1)

Who are you PROTECTING?

- Followers of Jesus RENOUNCE every personal right, and Jesus blesses them for their meekness.
- Litmus test: If after professing to give up everything else for Jesus Christ's sake one still wants to cling to their own rights, they would then have ceased to follow Him.

Jesus was never politically driven, but ULTIMATELY victorious!

- The cross is the only justification for the precept of NON-VIOLENCE for it alone can fan into flame a faith in the victory over evil which will enable, empower men/women to obey.

Jesus calls us to share His passion!

- You are blessed because of your participation in the Cross.
- The Cross is the only power in the world which proves that suffering love can avenge and overcome evil.

For completed notes of today's sermon, visit the FFC website – www.faithfellowship.us. Thanks.