
SUNDAY WORSHIP GUIDE
MATTHEW 5:38-48

Sermon On The Mount: What Is Love?
Matthew 5:38-48

One Thing:

- **We need to be counter-cultural by demonstrating our Christ-likeness – especially to those who persecute us and cause us harm**

Gospel Thinking:

1. Relinquishing One's Rights

- vv. 38 – You have heard that it was said, “eye for an eye, and tooth for tooth.”

Exodus 21:24 – But if there is harm, then you shall pay life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe

- 4 examples of what it means to not resist the one who is evil:
 - a. vv. 39b – But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also
 - b. vv. 40 – And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well
 - c. vv. 41 – And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles
 - d. vv. 42 – Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you

“What Jesus is saying in these verses, more than anything else, is that his followers have no rights. They do not have the right to retaliation and wreak their vengeance, they do not have the right to their possessions, nor to their time and money. Even their legal rights may sometimes be abandoned.” - D.A Carson

- Being counter cultural means not claiming our rights to personal retaliation, but by demonstrating self-sacrifice

2. Resisting Limits on Our Love for Others

- vv. 43 – You have heard that it was said, you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemies

Leviticus 19:18 – You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself

- Jesus challenges us to love without any limits

“The rule for all of us is perfectly simple. Do not waste your time bothering whether you “love” your neighbor; act as if you did. As soon as we do this we find one of the greatest secrets. When you are behaving as if you loved someone, you will presently come to love him. If you injure someone you dislike, you will find yourself disliking him more. If you do him a good turn, you will find yourself disliking him less The difference between a Christian and worldly man is not that the worldly man has only affections or “likings” and the Christian has only “charity.” The worldly man treats certain people kindly because he “likes” them; the Christian, trying to treat everyone kindly, finds himself liking more and more people as he goes on – including people he could not even have imagined himself liking at the beginning” – C.S Lewis

Gospel Living:

1. Remember

Romans 5:10a – For while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son

2. Pray

3. Demonstrate

Romans 12:19-20a - Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” To the contrary, if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink

4. Hope

Matthew 5:12 - rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you

“There is a reward in heaven, spectacularly beyond anything you lose on this earth in loving your enemies. Let’s show the world how free we are from vengeance, free we are from the love of money, free we are from the need of security, and how much love we have for those who persecute us.” – John Piper