

We come to the 5th “Ye have heard that it hath been said”

Remember that the Lord Jesus is sitting on a mountain teaching His disciples, (and the multitudes) that followed Him. (Matthew 5:1-2)

At this point in His teaching, the Lord Jesus has already taught His disciples that He did not come to destroy the law & the prophets; (He did not come to abolish the law); I came to fulfill it.

I came to teach you the true meaning and spirit of the law in a way that you have never seen it taught by your teachers; to show you what perfect obedience to it looks like.

To keep the law perfectly would mean that, THAT one that kept it was completely righteous in the eyes of God. The scribes and Pharisees feigned themselves righteous in their own eyes and exalted themselves as “righteous teachers” of the Law of Moses in the eyes of the people of Israel.

. *Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, completely exposed their unrighteousness and hypocrisy.*

He taught His disciples (and the multitudes) what true righteousness looked like! In (V20) Jesus said, if you don't possess a BETTER RIGHTEOUSNESS than the scribes and Pharisee, you won't go to heaven!

The scribes and Pharisees put on a good show on the outside; they looked righteous; but within their hearts, they were full of hatred, lust, arrogance, and irreverence toward God.

Murder~Anger, Look of Lust~Committed, Divorce allowed~Hard hearts, Carelessly using God's Name~Swearing, and this morning, Revenge or Retaliation. Matthew 5:38-42

“Ye have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth”:

Once again, the Lord Jesus exposed how the scribes and Pharisees had perverted and misrepresented the law of Moses. How so?

Exodus 21:23-25, Leviticus 24:17-20

There you have it, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, life for life. But these laws did not authorize individuals to personally exact justice and retaliate against an offender. You put out my eye, I'm going to put your eye!

BTW, that's never the way it is when we get someone back; in our sinful depravity, we don't know fairness/equity.

Back to the law, the scribes and Pharisees had taken this law, and taught the people that “personal retaliation” was lawful and right.

Remember the woman taken in adultery? They brought her to the Lord ready to stone her! BUT: Where was the man? Where were the judges and the evidence and the witnesses? *Leviticus 20:10*

Let's go back to eye for eye and tooth for tooth: *Exodus 21:1, 6, 22, 22:8-9*

This was judicial law; these punishments were to be decided by judges, not by individuals. The punishment was to fit the crime; justice was to be dispensed with equity and fairness by impartial judges.

God gave these judicial laws to CONTROL/STOP individuals from personally avenging themselves.

God put judges in place then, and in our day for the punishment of evildoers. They are God's ministers, who hear cases/decide punishments when the law has been broken. Romans 13:1-4, 1 Peter 2:13-14

h. Personal vengeance and retaliation have never been sanctioned by the Lord! If someone gouges out your eye or knocks out your tooth, you are NOT to gouge out his eye or knock out his tooth in retaliation and revenge.

i. If it was left to us, it wouldn't be eye for eye, and tooth for tooth; it would be both eyes for my one eye, all your teeth for my one tooth!

j. Sadly enough, all of us have experienced that sinful desire to retaliate against someone who has hurt us. We see it in the reactions of little children when they are injured or hurt by another child; very often, their immediate reaction is to retaliate in kind, and to hurt that child, as they were hurt.

1 Samuel 25:19-35

When David heard how Nabal had insulted and slandered him, he immediately got angry and determined to retaliate/kill Nabal and every male in Nabal's house; if it had not been for meek Abigail, who hastened to meet David and his 400 men, no doubt, David would have (in a fit of rage) shed innocent blood.

But it was the courage and godly wisdom of Abigail, Nabal's wife that stopped him in his tracks. Psalms 141:5, Proverbs 17:10

And don't miss this instruction from what is written: David, in his sin, was leading 400 men to sin with him. Who is watching/following your bad example when they hear you speak of retaliation and revenge? Or when they see you retaliate and avenge yourself against someone?

(V39-42)

Six (6) times in this chapter, the Lord declares with authority, "But I say unto you"! Jesus would now rightly represent this law, which the scribes and Pharisees had corrupted and misrepresented to the people.

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"Resist not evil"

Let me first say that the Lord Jesus is not teaching us that we must not defend ourselves from physical harm. He is not teaching us to just sit there (if we are attacked) and allow someone to hurt us or injure us and our families.

What He is teaching us, is that (as children of the Kingdom of Christ) we are NOT to RESPOND/RETALIATE against those who hurt or slander us in the spirit of vengeance. We are NOT to resist/attack our enemies and “Avenge Ourselves” for what they have done to us! Proverbs 20:22, 24:29

The Lord Jesus is teaching us how to conduct ourselves in our everyday lives as His children. (As Christians).

We must not be known in the world as people who are filled with the spirit of revenge and retaliation against others when we are attacked, hurt, or slandered. This is NOT who the Christian is, this is NOT who you are to be!

Romans 12:17-21, Leviticus 19:18, Exodus 23:4-5

You might be sitting here thinking in your heart; if someone attacks me, I’m gonna get them back, I can’t do what you’re saying!

If you’re a child of God; Philippians 4:13. AND: Don’t forget the Beatitudes: (V3-12)

These are the exceptional attitudes, virtues, characteristics of every child of the Kingdom of Christ! Are you cultivating these attitudes in your life?

I don’t see, Blessed are the vindictive, those that avenge themselves! Or Blessed are they that GOT THEM BACK!

YOU tell me how you feel next time you GET SOMEONE BACK for what they did to you? Blessed? Happy? Galatians 5:19-24

(V39B): “But whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also”

Our Lord uses the example of “turning the other cheek” drive home this truth and teach us that we must not possess the spirit of retaliation and revenge.

Listen: It’s quite natural to hit someone back when we are attacked; but we are NOT to be motivated by depraved natural tendencies, we are to be motivated by faith and trust in the Lord; by the Spirit of God and obedience to Christ! In regard to turning the other cheek, let’s put this in perspective with our Lord Himself! John 18:19-23

Understand that the Lord is not teaching us to sit there in silence while someone physically assaults us and do/say nothing, but that we should suffer injuries, slanders, persecutions with patience, and that we must leave the punishment of our attacker(s) to the Lord.

1 Peter 3:8-14. 2:19-23

(V40-42): READ

Next time. Luke 6:27-30