

# SERMON PASSAGE GUIDE

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## *This Week's Passage*

<sup>38</sup> "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' <sup>39</sup> But I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. <sup>40</sup> If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. <sup>41</sup> Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two. <sup>42</sup> Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you. <sup>43</sup> "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' <sup>44</sup> But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, <sup>45</sup> so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. <sup>46</sup> For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? <sup>47</sup> If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? <sup>48</sup> Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.



## *Prepare Your Heart & Mind*

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you can recall, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word, and asking for His Spirit to guide you in your time.

## *Reflect/Connect*

*Use these questions to reflect privately in prayer, or journal, or to start a meaningful conversation in your Life Group.*

- What's been the most impactful passage, lesson, or conversation for you in the Sermon on the Mount so far?
- Where do you feel the tension most strongly between Jesus' call to love our enemies and a culture that often celebrates "canceling," defeating, or retaliating against those who wrong us?

## *Grow in the Word*

These questions are designed to guide your personal study, or spark spiritual conversation in your Life Group.

Jesus begins by referring to the familiar law of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." He then tells His listeners not to resist an evil person in kind, offering examples like turning the other cheek, handing over a cloak, and going an extra mile for those who make demands of them (v. 38-42).

- Take a look at Exodus 21:22-25 and compare it with verses 38-39. In the Exodus passage, who is responsible for applying this "eye for an eye" law: private individuals or judges in a legal setting? How does Jesus' teaching challenge the practice of taking "courtroom justice" into personal relationships when wronged?
- In Jesus' day, a slap on the right cheek was a severe public insult, and a Roman soldier could legally force a civilian to carry his gear for one mile. With that background in mind, what do these commands suggest about dignity, power, and freedom in the face of humiliation or coercion? See also Romans 12:17-21.
- How does the choice to absorb an insult or give generously, rather than retaliating, protect your own heart from being shaped by anger?

Jesus then quotes the command to "love your neighbor," along with a common assumption that this meant "hate your enemy". He counters this by commanding His followers to love their enemies and pray for those who persecute them. He grounds this command in the example of God, who provides sun and rain for both the evil and the good. Jesus ends this section with a sweeping call to reflect the Father's complete, perfect love (v. 43-48).

- Why does Jesus tell his listeners to "love your enemies"? What thoughts and emotions come to the surface when you consider this command?
- What does God's pattern of giving sun and rain to both the righteous and the unrighteous reveal about His character? How is this kind of love different from simply loving those who already love you? See also Luke 6:32-36.
- In this context, what does it mean to be "perfect" as the Father is perfect? Does it mean moral flawlessness or something more? Take a look also at James 1:4.

## *Practice Together*

This section provides an easy way to live out the truths of the passage in daily life, whether you're with your Life Group, family & friends, or on your own. These practices help turn reflection into relationship & action.

- This week, identify one person who frustrates you or functions as an "enemy" in your life. Commit to praying for their well-being each day. Pray, "Lord, help me to see this person through Your eyes of generous grace."
- As a group, family, or on your own, consider what it might look like to "go the extra mile" for someone who currently drains your patience or asks too much of you. Take one concrete, unexpected step of generosity toward them this week.

