

WELCOME!

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Matthew 5 - 7

MATTHEW 5:21-48
“THE SIX ANTITHESES”

YOU HAVE HEARD IT SAID

Do not murder

Do not commit adultery

Give a certificate of divorce

Do not swear falsely; fulfill your oaths

An eye for an eye

Love you neighbor, hate your enemy

BUT I SAY TO YOU

Do not be angry nor insult

Do not lust

Do not divorce

Do not swear at all

Do not resist the evildoer

Love your enemies & pray for them

MATTHEW 5:21-48
“THE SIX ANTITHESES”

Pattern:

- 1) “You have heard that it was said”: Quote from the OT Law
- 2) “But I say to you”: the greater righteousness of the Kingdom
- 3) Real life illustrations

MATTHEW 5:38-42

“You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I say to you: Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also, and if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, give your coat as well, and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. Give to the one who asks of you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you.

MATTHEW 5:38 – “You have heard that it was said...”

EXODUS 21:22-25

“When people who are fighting injure a pregnant woman so that there is a miscarriage and yet no further harm follows, the one responsible shall be fined what the woman’s husband demands, paying as much as the judges determine. If any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.”

**WHAT IS AT ISSUE WITH THE LAW
“AN EYE FOR AN EYE...”?**

- NOT “Be sure to get your full revenge!!”
- BUT “Limit justice/retaliation to the harm committed”

MATTHEW 5:39 – “BUT I SAY TO YOU...”

Do not resist an evildoer.

“Resist” = αντιστηναι = “to oppose”

- e.g., Psalm 138:6, quoted in James 4:5 and 1 Peter 5:5 – “God opposes the proud but give grace to the humble.”

“Evildoer” = πονηρω = evil, evil one, evildoer, evil deed

- e.g., The Lord’s Prayer: “...but deliver us from evil”

WHAT'S THE ISSUE?

“An eye for an eye” = justice, **safeguarding** one's rights

“Do not resist” = **yielding** one's rights

EARLY CHURCH AND “DO NOT RESIST EVIL”

Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says the Lord.” Instead, “if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink, for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.” Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good. (Romans 12:17-21)

Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse, but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing. It is for this that you were called—that you might inherit a blessing. (1 Peter 3:9)

FIVE ILLUSTRATIONS

Jesus illustrates his saying

- first in terms of nonretaliation (turn other cheek)
- then in terms of compliance with unreasonable requests (dealing with suits, going extra mile)
- and finally in terms of simply charity (give, loan)

ILLUSTRATION #1 -- VIOLENCE

”If anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also”

- Don't resist physical violence (vs. our impulse to strike back)
- Right cheek indicates a backhanded blow (more an insult than physical injury)
- This means refraining to choose retaliation and instead to put oneself intentionally in a condition of continuing vulnerability. Jesus, of course, supremely modeled this attitude in his passion.

1 PETER 2:22-23

“He committed no sin,
and no deceit was found in his mouth.”

When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but he **entrusted himself** to the one who judges justly.

ILLUSTRATION #2 – LEGAL SUIT

“If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, give your coat as well”

- “Shirt” (tunic) = inner garment
“Coat” (cloak) = outer garment (Ex 22:25-26)
- Since the willing victim ends up nude in the courtroom, here too Jesus’ teaching is hardly intended literally. It is a matter of being secure enough in God’s care (Matt 6:25, 30-32) to enable one not to insist on one’s rights, but empowering one to renounce them in the interest of others.

ILLUSTRATION #3: IMPRESSMENT

“If anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile”

This reflects the Roman practice taken over from the Persians, by which soldiers and government officials could compel citizens of the occupied country to carry their equipment a prescribed distance.

e.g. Matthew 27:32 – Simon compelled to carry Jesus’ cross
– same word is used: “impressed”/ ἀγγαρευω

Rather than resisting the evil government or plotting how to get even, the disciple is commanded to do more than the law requires.

ILLUSTRATION #4: GIVE FREELY

“Give to the one who asks of you”

ILLUSTRATION #5: LOAN FREELY

“Do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you”

Verse 42 goes beyond the initial point not to resist evil. Here we seem to move to a general spirit of charity to anyone who asks or who wishes to borrow

“DO NOT RESIST AN EVILDOER”

- Christians need to move past the idea of justice as fair play (“You did this to me; I deserve to do an equal amount back”) and ask instead, “If someone does something evil to me, how may I respond with only good in return?” The idea here is not to be a victim (“You hit me once; here, please, hit me again”), but to be a blessing, even to those who would do violence.”

“DO NOT RESIST AN EVILDOER”

- Does this teaching undermine the social order? Jesus is not legislating for all people or telling the state what laws to pass; he is telling his disciples what they are to do when they are wronged.
- The conduct of the disciple is filled with surprise for those who experience it. This element of surprise reflects the grace that is central to the gospel. As they have experienced the surprise of unexpected grace, so they act in a similar manner toward the undeserving among them. Kingdom ethics demands not compliance to rules but a lifestyle governed by the free grace of God.

“DO NOT RESIST AN EVILDOER”

“The cross is the only justification for the precept of non-violence, for it alone can kindle a faith in the victory over evil which will enable men to obey that precept. ... The cross is the only power in the world which proves that suffering love can avenge and vanquish evil. But it was just this participation in the cross which the disciples were granted when Jesus called them to him. They are called blessed because of this visible participation in his cross.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

“DO NOT RESIST AN EVILDOER”

Matthew 16:24-25

Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.”

The Lord’s Prayer

“Do not bring us to the time of trial but deliver us from the evil one.”

MATTHEW 5:43-48

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven, for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

MATTHEW 5:43 – “You have heard that it was said...”

“You shall love your neighbor”

“You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.”
(Leviticus 19:18)

MATTHEW 5:43 – “You have heard that it was said...”

“Hate your enemy.”

Psalms 139:21-22

Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD? And do I not loathe those who rise up against you? I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them my enemies.

Ps 137:8-9

O daughter Babylon, you devastator!

Happy shall they be who pay you back what you have done to us!

Happy shall they be who take your little ones and dash them against the rock!

MATTHEW 5:44 – “BUT I SAY TO YOU...”

Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you

- Kingdom values vs. earthly values
- The love Jesus describes is not an emotion but volitional acts for the benefit and well-being of others, even those we may dislike.

Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you

- In *Matthew*, Jesus makes love of God and neighbor the fundamental command on which all else depends (22:34-40) and makes the command to love enemies specific and concrete. In its absoluteness and concreteness, it is without parallel in paganism or Judaism.
- Jesus bases the command not on a humanitarian ideal, or a doctrine of human rights, or a strategy or utilitarian purpose -- but on the nature of God who loves all impartially

MATTHEW 5:45 -- RATIONALE #1

“...so that you may be children of your Father in heaven, for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous.”

- The children of the kingdom are called to reflect the character of their heavenly Father
- To love one's enemies is to treat them as God treats those who have rebelled against him.

MATTHEW 5:46-47 -- RATIONALE #2

“For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?”

MATTHEW 5:48 – RATIONALE #3

Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

- “Perfect” is not a problematic word Jesus tries to dilute, but a word he chose to sum up his demand in 5:21-48.
- The Hebrew word is *tamiym*, which means wholeness. To be perfect is to serve God wholeheartedly, to be single-minded in devotion to the one God.
- To be perfect means to fulfill the law through the acts of an unrestricted love (which includes even enemies) that is the reflection of God’s love.

CONCLUSION TO THE “SIX ANTITHESES”

“All valid interpretations cannot be a matter of watering them down, of finding a meaning that seems reasonable and with which we can live. Jesus’ teachings are not made to be “reasonable”, for they violate the common sense of this world and point to another reality. They ask us whether we are oriented to the God who had redefined power and kingship in the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth.”

❖ Sunday School Class on September 23, 2001



PRAYER

“I am a failure at prayer. When people ask me about my prayer life, I feel like a bulimic must feel when people ask about her favorite dish.” (BBTaylor)

THE LORD'S PRAYER

"And in praying do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them...

Pray then like this: Our Father who art in heaven....



THE LORD'S PRAYER MT.6:9-13

- The Lord's Prayer is not just a prayer; **it's a vision for life in Christ's inbreaking kingdom.**
- It's an acknowledgment of the injustice, hunger, and evil of this broken world. **It's a statement of faith, a call to worship, and a battle cry.** It's a bold pleading for divine glory, social renewal, and heaven-on-earth transformation.

(The Gospel Coalition)

GOD & US

PRAISE & PETITION

- YOUR NAME
- YOUR KINGDOM
- YOUR WILL BE DONE
- GIVE US THIS DAY
- FORGIVE US
- LEAD US NOT

OUR FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN

- PLURAL PRAYER “*OUR*”
- *ARAMAIC ABBA – DADDY - INTIMACY*
- WHO ART IN HEAVEN
TRANSCENDENCE





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HALLOWED BE THY NAME

WHAT DOES IT
MEAN TO
HALLOW
SOMETHING?

???



**THY KINGDOM
COME**

**THY WILL BE
DONE
ON EARTH
AS IT IS
IN HEAVEN**

*“We are asking God to be
God.” (F. Buechner)*

A pair of hands is shown holding a small, colorful globe of the Earth. The globe is centered on the Atlantic Ocean, with North and South America visible on the left and Europe and Africa on the right. The text is overlaid on the globe in a white, serif font. A thin white horizontal line is positioned below the main title.

WHAT WOULD OUR
WORLD LOOK LIKE

IF THIS WAS FULFILLED TODAY?

THY
KINGDOM
COME

“Again and again I tell God I need help, and God says,

‘Well, isn’t that fabulous? Because I need help too. So you go get that old woman over there some water, and I’ll figure out what we’re going to do about your stuff.’ ”

– Anne Lamott



**GIVE US
— THIS DAY —
OUR DAILY
BREAD**

- *MANNA FROM
HEAVEN*

And Forgive Us Our Debts...



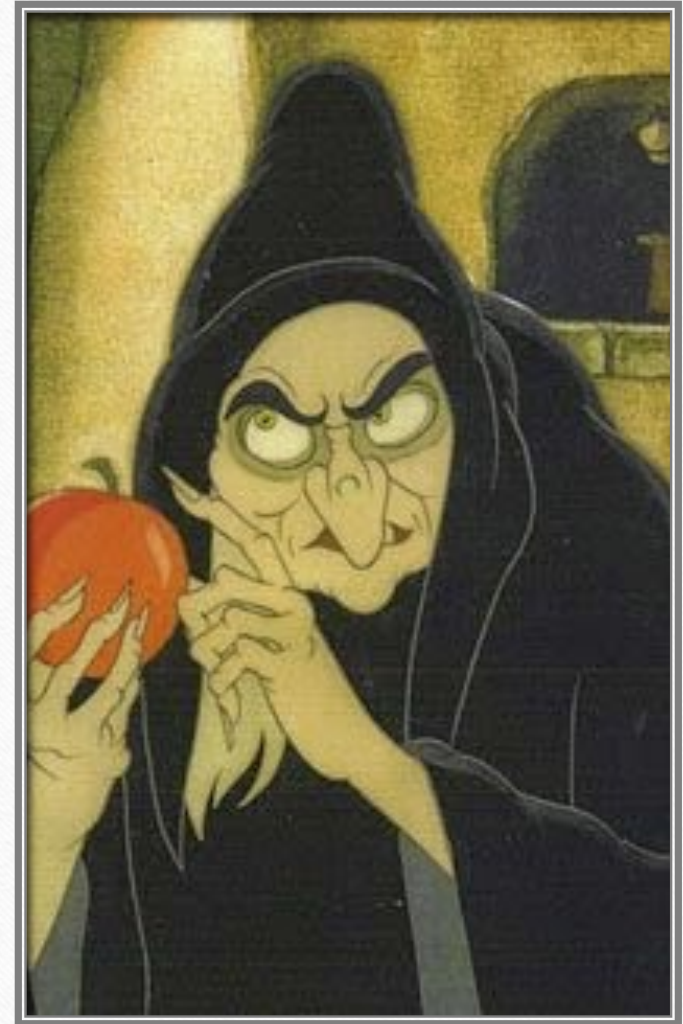
- Theme particularly in Matthew
- Debts / Sins
- Quid pro quo?

• *As we forgive our debtors*

DELIVER US!

And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil

*"Give me chastity and temperance
— but not yet." St. Augustine*



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FOR THINE IS THE
KINGDOM
AND THE POWER
AND THE GLORY
FOREVER.

Didache/ Doxology



PRAYER

- *“Prayer is not asking for what you think you want, but asking to be changed in ways you can't imagine.”*
- Kathleen Norris

TO ME, PRAYER IS...



Q&A/THOTS/RXNS?

Next week:

Read Matthew 6: 19-34

...Seek Ye First...

Blessings!

