

# WOMEN IN THE WORD FELLOWSHIP BIBLE CHURCH

## THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Scripture Reference Notes

Week 6: True Righteousness (Pt 3) – Retaliation and Love

### Matthew 5:38-42

**Elkins:** “Matthew 5:38-42 gives scholars the most difficult time. It’s arguably the toughest passage in the Bible to interpret, and even tougher to apply.”

**Book:** The Sermon on the Mount is “the countercultural vision of the good life that Jesus is bringing into the world.”

**Matthew 5:38** - “You have heard it said, ‘eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth.’”

Old Testament Mosaic Law, Israel’s earliest law code, ancient law known as the ‘Lex Talionis.’

Exodus 21:23-25; Leviticus 24:19-20; and Deuteronomy 19:21

**Bible Project:** “The intent of the law (Lex Talionis - the Law of Retribution) was the opposite of retaliation and puts a ceiling on vengeance getting out of control, a stopper from overcompensating, getting even, take my eye, I’ll take your life, or over escalation from generation to generation.”

**Stott:** “It’s purpose was both to lay the foundation of justice, specifying the punishment which a wrong-doer deserved, and to limit the compensation of his victim to an exact equivalent and no more.”

**Matthew 5:39** - “But I tell you (or - but I say to you, in some translations) do not resist an evil person.”

**Sinclair B. Ferguson:** “The word ‘resist’ in verse 39 is an explicitly legal term and might be translated ‘take to court’ or ‘give testimony against.’”

**Elkins:** “to fight, strive against, oppose, withstand.”

**1 Peter 2:21-23** - “To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his steps. He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth. When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.”

**Luke 23:34** - While hanging on the cross, “Jesus said, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”

Four real life scenarios:

**Matthew 5:39b** - “If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.” This is in keeping justice fair and limited.

**Ferguson:** “This kind of strike to the cheek was more an insult than a violent crime.”

**Leviticus 19:18** - “Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord.”

**Matthew 5:40** - “And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well.”

**Matthew 5:41** - “If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.”

**Ferguson:** “Jesus’ point is clear: The Christian does the unexpected, because grace makes him or her seek to win others by love rather than retaliate on the basis of ‘rights.’”

**Matthew 5:42** - Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.”

**Deuteronomy 15:7-8, 10** - “If there is a poor man among your brothers in any of the towns of the land the Lord your God is giving you, do not be hardhearted or tightfisted toward your brother. Rather, be openhanded and freely lend him whatever he needs. Give graciously to them and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to.”

**Psalms 112:5** - Good will come to him who is generous and lends freely, who conducts his affairs with justice.

**Luke 6:31** - “Do to others as you would have them do to you.”

**1 Peter 2:1-2:** “Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.”

**Elkins:** Imagine forgoing your rights and ‘just causes’ just for the sake of others seeing your Father in you!”

**Matthew 5:43-48**

**Matthew 5:43** - “You have heard that it was said, ‘love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’”

**James 2:8** - “If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, ‘love your neighbor as yourself,’ you are doing right.”

In regards to hating our enemy, the **Reformation Study Bible** says: “This is not in the Old Testament, but a false conclusion in scribal teaching drawn from the narrow understanding of ‘neighbor’ as simply one’s fellow Jew.

**Matthew 5:44** - “But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.”

**Elkins** describes our enemies as, “someone who curses and hates you, reviles and persecutes you.”

**Romans 13:8-10, 12b:** Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. The commandments, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘do not murder,’ ‘do not steal,’ ‘do not covet,’ and whatever other command there may be, are all summed up in this one rule: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.”

**Galatians 5:14** - “For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: Love your neighbor as yourself.”

Active love - **Exodus 23:4-5** - “If you come across your enemy’s ox or donkey wandering off, be sure to return it. If you see the donkey of someone who hates you fallen down under its load, do not leave it there; be sure you help them with it.”

**Application Study Bible:** “Our desire should not be to keep score, but to love and forgive. This is not natural-it is supernatural. Only God can give us the strength to love as He does. Instead of planning vengeance, pray for those who hurt you.”

**Romans 12:14** - “Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.”

**1 Thessalonians 5:15** - “Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else.”

**Romans 12:17, 19-20** - “Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written, ‘it is mine to avenge, I will repay,’ says the Lord. On the contrary, if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.”

**Romans 12:21** - “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

**Mathew 5:45** - “that you may be sons of your Father in Heaven.”

**Ferguson:** “as followers of Jesus and extraordinary like our Father is extraordinary.”

**Matthew 5:45b** - “He causes the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and send rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.”

**Evans:** “God extends common grace to all. There are certain blessings that he gives to all people. You don’t have to be a Christian to feel the sun shine and to breathe oxygen.”

**Psalm 145:9, 15-16:** “The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made. The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at proper time. You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing.”

**Matthew 5:46-47** - "If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that?"

**Stott:** "The real test of love does not come in how we relate to the kind and lovable but in how we relate to the cruel and despicable. Nowhere is our need of the Holy Spirit more obvious (whose first fruit is love) more compelling."

**Matthew 5:48** - "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

**MacArthur:** "an unattainable standard."

**FF Bruce:** "We should manifest the family likeness by doing good to all, even those who deserve the opposite. So, said Jesus, go the whole way in doing good, just as God does."

**Leviticus 20:26** - "You are to be holy to me because I, the Lord, am holy, and I have set you apart from the nations to be my own."

**Ephesians 5:1** - "Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God."

**Philippians 2:13** - "for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose."

*Next Week*  
*Week 7 – A Godward Life*