

SEQUOIA NOTES

Today's Sequoia Message...

The Power of Non-resistant Love

With Ryan Dawson - Lead Pastor
June 30, 2024



"Revenge, I have always said, is wild justice." *The Count of Monte Cristo* - Alexander Dumas

"Before you embark on a journey of revenge, dig two graves." Confucius

Matthew 5:38-42 (NLT) "You have heard the law that says the punishment must match the injury: 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.'³⁹ But I say, do not resist an evil person! If someone slaps you on the right cheek, offer the other cheek also. ⁴⁰ If you are sued in court and your shirt is taken from you, give your coat, too. ⁴¹ If a soldier demands that you carry his gear for a mile, carry it two miles. ⁴² Give to those who ask, and don't turn away from those who want to borrow."

- **Lex Talionis "the Law of Retribution"**

Exodus 21:23-25 (NLT) "But if there is further injury, the punishment must match the injury: a life for a life, ²⁴ an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, a foot for a foot, ²⁵ a burn for a burn, a wound for a wound, a bruise for a bruise."

Leviticus 24:19-20 (NLT) "Anyone who injures another person must be dealt with according to the injury inflicted— ²⁰ a fracture for a fracture, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. Whatever anyone does to injure another person must be paid back in kind."

Deuteronomy 19:21 (NLT) "You must show no pity for the guilty! Your rule should be life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot."

"Well", Buck says, "a feud is this way: A man has a quarrel with another man, and kills him; then that other man's brother kills him; then the other brothers, on both sides, goes for one another; then the cousins chip in—and by and by everybody's killed off, and there ain't no more feud. But it's kind of slow, and takes a long time." *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* – Mark Twain

"The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral, begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy. Instead of diminishing evil, it multiplies it. Through violence you may murder the liar, but you cannot murder the lie, nor establish the truth." Martin Luther King Jr.

Jesus offers a new way...

"Instead of the requirement of retribution, Jesus reveals that grace, love, and forgiveness can reverse the dangers of retribution and even more, create an alternative society." Scot McKnight

- **An example from physical injustice...**

³⁹ "But I say, do not resist an evil person! If someone slaps you on the right cheek, offer the other cheek also."

- **An example from legal injustice...**

⁴⁰ "If you are sued in court and your shirt is taken from you, give your coat, too."

- **An example from political injustice...**

⁴¹ "If a soldier demands that you carry his gear for a mile, carry it two miles."

- **An example from financial injustice...**

⁴² "Give to those who ask, and don't turn away from those who want to borrow."

Isaiah 50:6-8 (NLT) "I offered my back to those who beat me and my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard. I did not hide my face from mockery and spitting. ⁷ Because the Sovereign Lord helps me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore, I have set my face like a stone, determined to do his will. And I know that I will not be put to shame. ⁸ He who gives me justice is near. Who will dare to bring charges against me now? Where are my accusers? Let them appear!"

"Jesus' ethic is shaped by the Jesus Creed of loving God and loving others. Those who love will love even those who dish out injustices. A person shaped by the Jesus Creed responds to injustice not with retaliation and vengeance but with grace, compassion and abundant mercy in such a way that reverses injustice... Jesus followers dwell in an alternative society that protests systematic injustice and embodies an alternative love-shaped justice." Scot McKnight

Big Idea: Respond to violence & injustice with acts of grace.

- **Repent of our hard vengeful hearts.**
- **Rethink retaliation.**
- **Respond with grace & love.**

The Translation of the Bible Scriptures used in today's service are from the New Living Translation (NLT).



Sequoia Impact Communities are where we live out our identity as a Family of Servants on Mission.
To get plugged in email:
impactcommunities@sequoiachurch.org

The Power of Non-resistant Love
#12 of 26 - June 30, 2024

- 1) What has God revealed to you through the **Gospel Reading Challenge** this week? What have you learned or been able to apply?
- 2) Read Matthew 5:38-42. What is the **Context** for these passages? Who is the writer and the recipients? Where does this fit in the book as a whole?
- 3) **Observation:** What “jumps out” in these passages? What interesting details do you observe? What questions does it raise for you?
- 4) **Meaning:** What was the meaning for the original recipients? What meaning is inferred in this for us?
- 5) What is the Law of Retribution? Read Exodus 21:23-25, Leviticus 24:19-20, and Deut. 19:21. What are the problems with this and why does it work imperfectly?
- 6) How would you describe the “new way” Jesus is proposing for those who want to live in the Kingdom of Jesus?
- 7) Read Isaiah 50:6-8. How does Jesus and the Gospel embody the very thing He is teaching here in the Sermon on the Mount? How does this impact us and make living in this way possible?
- 8) **Application:** What resonates with you from this message? In what ways can you apply the teachings of Jesus today?
- 9) Read and reflect on this statement from Scot McKnight. What action steps can you take today to live in this way?

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