

## Discussion Guide

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Message: *Following Jesus in Difficult Relationships*

April 7, 2024

### PRIMARY PASSAGE: Matthew 5:38-48 (ESV)

*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 the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you." 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 sons of your Father who is in heaven. For He makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust." 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, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*

### MESSAGE HIGHLIGHT

Jesus invites his followers to deal with the difficult relationships in their lives in a very counterintuitive and countercultural way. Instead of retaliation and revenge, He invites us to go above and beyond in showing kindness and doing good. Instead of behaving like those who hurt us, He invites us to imitate him and take on the behavior of our heavenly Father. In short, Jesus invites us to live supernaturally through the power of His Spirit in order to overcome the evil around us.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Is Jesus' teaching to turn the other cheek in verse 39 unrealistic and impractical? Why or why not?
2. In what difficult relationship might Jesus be challenging you right now to change your response, and what would the new response look like?
3. Besides the fact that Jesus commands it, why is it important that we do not do to people the same bad things that they do to us?
4. What does it mean to be as perfect as our heavenly Father, and how do you think you can start doing this?

### PRAYER

***Oh Lord, help us to imitate You rather than the world in dealing with the difficult relationships in our lives. In Jesus's name we pray. Amen!***