



Group Leader Guide

Sermon Recap 🎬

Pastor Jason began the message by sharing his reaction to the recent presidential debate, expressing a mix of frustration and a longing for Jesus to return. He used this moment to remind us that our faith shouldn't be placed in human institutions like the government, but in Jesus Christ. Pastor Jason then introduced the idea of slowing down our study of the Sermon on the Mount so we can really dig deep and apply its teachings to our lives. He admitted that he tends to preach a lot of content and wants to take smaller chunks of scripture to explore more thoroughly.

As he transitioned into the main content of the message, Pastor Jason used the metaphor of a shaken Coke can to illustrate how we often live in constant tension with God, others, and ourselves, and how Jesus' teachings we will look at today aim to bring healing and freedom from these tensions.

Looking at Matthew 5:38-42, we focused on the principle of non-retaliation. PJ explained that the "eye for an eye" law, found in Exodus 21, Leviticus 24, and Deuteronomy 19, was originally meant to limit retribution and prevent escalating violence. But Jesus calls us to a higher standard, urging us to resist evil not by mirroring aggression but by responding with humility and love. Pastor Jason made it clear that this approach isn't about being a doormat; it's about standing firm in our identity and dignity without resorting to the same demeaning behavior. He emphasized that Jesus' teachings are meant to transform how we respond to tension and conflict, encouraging us to act in ways that reflect God's love and justice.

Pastor Jason then explored the cultural context of Jesus' teachings, like turning the other cheek, giving your coat, and going the extra mile. He explained that being slapped on the right cheek was a severe public insult meant to humiliate. By turning the other cheek, Jesus' followers were to demand to be treated as equals, thus exposing the injustice. Similarly, giving your coat when sued for your shirt and going the extra mile when forced by a Roman soldier were actions that subverted the expected response and highlighted the oppressor's unjust behavior. These actions were revolutionary because they exposed the injustice and forced the oppressor to

see the oppressed as equals. By choosing to respond in unexpected and counter-cultural ways, Jesus' followers could transform their interactions and bear witness to a different way of living rooted in the gospel.

Pastor Jason also drew parallels to modern examples, like the civil rights movement led by Martin Luther King Jr., to show how these principles can bring about societal change. He recounted how King taught his followers to resist nonviolently, even practicing sit-ins to prepare for real confrontations. This method of peaceful resistance, rooted in Jesus' teachings, was effective in exposing the brutality of segregation and gaining public sympathy. Pastor Jason emphasized that as Christians, "we are called to act differently from the world, embodying Jesus' teachings in our daily lives."

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This means consciously resisting the urge for revenge and instead responding with actions that reflect God's love and justice. He warned against becoming the very thing we hate, noting that unresolved anger and trauma can lead us to replicate the behaviors we despise.

In conclusion, Pastor Jason encouraged us to engage deeply with Jesus' teachings, allowing them to transform our hearts and minds. He invited us to sit with the Lord in prayer and solitude, to confront our frustrations and tensions, and to seek healing and freedom through the truth of the gospel. He shared his own practice of sitting with the Lord, allowing the Holy Spirit to reveal underlying issues and bring healing. The sermon ended with a call to commitment, urging us to act on our faith and trust in Jesus' process of transformation.

Ice Breaker

If you had to carry something for a mile (or an extra mile) like in Jesus' teaching, what would be the funniest or most unusual item you'd choose to carry? Why?

Discussion Questions

1. Pastor Jason used the metaphor of a shaken Coke can to describe the tension we experience in our lives. What are some areas in your life where you feel this kind of tension? How do you typically respond to it?
2. Jesus teaches us to turn the other cheek and go the extra mile. What does it mean to 'turn the other cheek'?
3. How do you interpret these teachings in the context of your daily life?
4. Can you think of a situation where you chose to 'turn the other cheek' and what was the outcome?
5. Can you think of a situation where you applied or could apply the principle of the extra mile? Or the coat?

6. Pastor Jason explained the cultural significance of turning the other cheek, giving one's coat, and going the extra mile. How does understanding the cultural context of these teachings change your perspective on them?
7. The sermon referenced Martin Luther King Jr. and the civil rights movement as examples of nonviolent resistance. How can we apply these principles of peaceful resistance in today's societal and personal conflicts?
8. What is a specific area in your life where you can practice responding differently to avoid becoming the thing you dislike?
9. How can practicing non-retaliation and meekness be a powerful witness and bring transformation to the world?
10. Pastor Jason explains that the idea of non-retaliation and meekness is a powerful witness and a way to bring transformation to the world.
11. In what ways can you demonstrate non-retaliation and meekness in your relationships and interactions with others?
12. **Personal Transformation:** Pastor Jason emphasized the importance of sitting with the Lord and allowing the Holy Spirit to reveal and heal underlying issues. What steps can you take to incorporate this practice into your daily routine? Why is it important to focus on transformation through application, rather than just listening? What is one practical way you can apply the teachings from this sermon in your everyday life?

Practices to Develop the Habit of Transformation:

1. **Daily Reflection:** Set aside time each day to sit quietly with the Lord. Engage with Him by talking and listening. Reflect on areas of tension in your life and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal underlying issues that need healing. What is God saying through the Bible (this message and/or your reading)? What is going on in your heart and mind as you process?
2. **Scripture Meditation:** Meditate on the scriptures referenced in the sermon, particularly Matthew 5:38-42 and John 8:31-32. Allow these verses to guide your thoughts and actions throughout the week.
3. **Practice Non-Retaliation:** Identify a situation where you are tempted to retaliate or respond negatively. Consciously choose to respond with humility and love, following Jesus' teachings.
4. **Seek Accountability:** Share your commitment to transformation with a trusted friend or mentor. Ask them to hold you accountable and pray with you as you seek to apply these teachings in your life.
5. **Community Engagement:** Look for opportunities to engage in acts of peaceful resistance or community service that reflect the love and justice of God. Consider participating in or supporting initiatives that promote reconciliation and healing in your community.

Prayer 🙏

- Please share any prayer requests you may have.

Scriptures Referenced in the Sermon

1. **Matthew 5:38-42:** "You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you."
2. **Hebrews 4:12:** "For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."
3. **John 8:31-32:** "To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, 'If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.'"
4. **Romans 12:14-18:** "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."
5. **Exodus 22:26-27:** "If you take your neighbor's cloak as a pledge, return it by sunset, because that cloak is the only covering your neighbor has. What else can they sleep in? When they cry out to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate."
6. **Proverbs 30:21-22:** "Under three things the earth trembles, under four it cannot bear up: a servant who becomes king, a godless fool who gets plenty to eat."
7. **John 5:5-9:** "One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, 'Do you want to get well?' 'Sir,' the invalid replied, 'I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me.' Then Jesus said to him, 'Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.' At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked

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