

10-09-2022, COTR Texarkana

Title: Jesus Said, WHAT? Pt-4

Purpose: Provoke people to keep their word, resist the desire for revenge and love our enemies.

Truth for Today: Jesus wants us to keep our word, resist the desire for revenge and love our enemies.

Text: Matthew 5:33-48

Topic: Sermon on the Mount, Integrity, Vows, Revenge, Love, Enemies

Series Title: Jesus said, WHAT?

Series purpose: Provoke people to apply the teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount to everyday life.

Jesus Said, WHAT? Pt-4

I. Introduction

A. Review series: Jesus Said, WHAT? It's about applying the teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount to everyday life. His 1st sermon shaped the moral and ethical basis of western civilization. Jesus' words are relevant to us today.

B. Today Jesus will teach us 3 things we can apply to everyday life: Truth for Today: Jesus wants us to keep our word, resist the desire for revenge and love our enemies.

C. Title: Jesus Said, WHAT? Pt-4

II. Life application #1: Jesus wants us to keep our word, i.e., do what we say.

A. Context: Jesus is teaching a crowd but at this point in the sermon He's addressing 5/6 OT teachings that the Pharisees were misapplying, murder, adultery, and divorce.

B. [Mt. 5:33–37 (NLT) “**You have also heard that our ancestors were told, ‘You must not break your vows; you must carry out the vows you make to the Lord.’** (ESV) *shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.*”) (Ex. 20:16 *swear falsely, 8/10*), Deut. 23:21, *break an oath/ promise or commit perjury*¹) 34 **But I say, do not make any vows (ESV oaths)!** Do not say, ‘By heaven!’ because heaven is God’s throne. 35 And do not say, ‘By the earth!’ because the earth is his footstool. And do not say, ‘By Jerusalem!’ for Jerusalem is the city of the great King. 36 Do not even say, ‘By my head!’ for you can’t turn one hair white or black. 37 **Just say a simple, ‘Yes, I will,’ or ‘No, I won’t.’** Anything beyond this is from the **evil one.**

1. Background/ summary: Pharisees were notorious for giving their word or making an oath and not keeping it. They had extra-Biblical laws called the Mishnah (written Jewish oral traditions) for valid and invalid oaths.⁴ Many Jews viewed swearing by “heaven, earth, Jerusalem, or one’s head” as less binding than swearing “by God”.³ The fact that oaths were used at all emphasized the wickedness of man’s heart by dishonesty and lying.² It was kind of like an ‘out clause’ in a contract if you change your mind or crossing your fingers. Jesus wants His followers to keep their word and do what they say without having to promise or make an oath/ vow.
 2. To promise/ vow/ swear/ oath is to pledge to do something while calling upon God or a sacred object as a witness.¹ Jesus is not saying all oaths or swearing is wrong, e.g., in court I swear to tell the truth so help me God, Paul [Gal. 1:20 (ESV) (In what I am writing to you, **before God**, I do not lie!)] Jesus. [Mt. 26:63–64 (ESV) the high priest said to him, “**I adjure you by the living God**, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.” 64 Jesus said to him, “You have said so...]
 3. Bottom line: Jesus was invalidating the Pharisees traditions on oaths that let them break their word and He encouraged His followers to simply keep their word and do what they say. We call it integrity and we should live our lives this way.
- C. Vs. 37...Anything beyond this is from the **evil one**. Jesus attributed the Pharisees ease of breaking vows to satan who uses our wicked hearts to lie and deceive.
- D. [Ecc. 5:4–6 (ESV) **When you vow a vow to God** (*NLT promise to God*), do not delay paying it, for he has no pleasure in fools. **Pay what you vow**. 5 It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay. 6 Let not your mouth lead you into sin...Why should God be angry at your voice and destroy the work of your hands?] App. Don’t make promises to God lightly; when we make a vow do it no matter what!
- III. Life application #2: Resist the desire for revenge and love our enemies.
- A. [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.’ (*Ex. 21:24*) 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.

1. Resist: TEV "Don't try to get even," "Don't go seeking revenge," or "Don't take someone who wrongs you to court to get revenge.¹ He's talking about personal revenge not breaking just, civil laws without consequence.
2. Summary: Jesus says the law of retaliation means don't act out of vengeance but show restraint and kindness to open a door of God's grace to the person who wronged you. Illus. [Acts 7:59–8:1 (NIV) While they were stoning him, Stephen ...60...fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, **do not hold this sin against them.**" When he had said this, he fell asleep. 1 And **Saul** approved of their killing him.]

B. Background: The law of retaliation prohibited an overly severe punishment that didn't fit the crime, but morphed into the right to get even, take revenge. Def. Revenge: getting back at people; doing harm to someone because they harmed you; getting even. The slap was an insult, not an absolute requirement that Christians must subject themselves to physical danger, abuse or can't defend themselves.³ (Jesus told his disciples to buy a sword). Jesus teaches that Christian kindness should transcend revenge and getting even.³

C. Jesus is asking His followers to do more than the law required. Why should we resist retaliation and show kindness to people who wrong us? [Vs. 45 In that way, **you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven.**] Love and kindness can break through the hardened sinner's heart and open a door of grace for salvation. [1 Peter 2:23 (NLT) He (*Jesus*) did not retaliate when he was insulted, nor threaten revenge when he suffered. He left his case in the hands of God, who always judges fairly.]

1. [Romans 12:17–21 (NLT) Never pay back evil with more evil...19... never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God...20 Instead, "If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap **burning coals of shame** on their heads." 21 Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.]

D. There's a balance that must be sought from the HS in prayer. We should be willing to forego personal rights, and to allow ourselves to be insulted and imposed upon but there are times when a Christians can use of civil laws to prosecute wrongdoers.³ Jack

IV. Life application #3: The power of love can change our enemies.

A. Context: revenge, going the extra mile, [Matthew 5:43–48 (NLT) “**You have heard** the law that says, ‘**Love your neighbor**’ and **hate your enemy**. 44 **But I say, love your enemies!** Pray (“ask God to bless” or “pray to God to help.”¹) for those who persecute you (“those who cause you to suffer or harm you,”¹ 45 In that way, **you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven.** (“so that people will know that you are children of your Father in heaven.”¹) For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. 46 If you love only those who love you, what **reward** is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much...48 **But you are to be perfect**, even as your Father in heaven is perfect. (i.e., mature “There must be no limit to your goodness, as your heavenly Father’s goodness knows no bounds.”¹)

1. Background: The command, *love your neighbor*, comes from Leviticus 19:18, and it was always interpreted so as to apply to fellow Israelites, not to other people. NAB translates “You shall love your countryman,” and TEV “*Love your friends.*”¹ Def. love: “be concerned for their welfare,” “show love for.”¹
2. The Pharisees taught that one should love those near and dear to him, but that Israel’s enemies should be hated.² The command *hate your enemy* (TEV “wish evil toward.”¹) cannot be found in the OT. However, there are many passages which not only permit but even encourage hatred and revenge against one’s enemies, e.g., David killing Goliath. Therefore, it is quite likely that Jesus’ words reflect popular attitudes of his day, if not actual teachings.

B. Bottom line: When we show love to people who hate us, we are acting ‘perfect’ like true, mature children of God and God will reward us.

V. Conclusion (Remain seated/ bow head)

A. Summary/ Prayer: (1) Jesus wants us to keep our word, (2) Jesus wants us to be mature Christians and resist the desire for revenge and love our enemies.

VI. Response

A. Prayer

B. Souls

VII. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

1. Newman, B. M., & Stine, P. C. (1992). [*A handbook on the Gospel of Matthew*](#) (p. 143). United Bible Societies.
2. Barbieri, L. A., Jr. (1985). [*Matthew*](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 31). Victor Books.
3. Blomberg, C. (1992). [*Matthew*](#) (Vol. 22, p. 112). Broadman & Holman Publishers.
4. Morris, L. (1992). [*The Gospel according to Matthew*](#) (p. 122). W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press.

VIII. Supplemental Material

- A. II, From the context it is clear that Jesus' objection is not to the use of promises in religion, but to the false distinctions made by Jewish teachers between different formulas used in taking vows¹
- B. To swear does not mean to curse or use bad words but to affirm the truth of a statement using God's name.
- C. III, Verse 40 is clearly limited to a legal context. One must be willing to give as collateral an outer garment—more than what the law could require, which was merely an inner garment (cf. Exod 22:26–27). *Coat* and *shirt* reflect contemporary parallels to “cloak” and “tunic,” though both of the latter looked more like long robes. Verse 41 continues the legal motif by referring to Roman conscription of private citizens to help carry military equipment for soldiers as they traveled.
- D. III, And if a Roman officer commandeers you to act as a baggage-porter for one mile”). *One mile* was presumably the distance a Roman soldier could force a Jew to carry his equipment. ¹
- E. III, Not only must disciples reject all behavior motivated only by a desire for retaliation, but they also must positively work for the good of those with whom they would otherwise be at odds. In v. 42 Jesus calls his followers to give to those who ask and not turn from those who would borrow. He presumes that the needs are genuine and commands us not to ignore them, but he does not specifically mandate how best we can help. As Augustine rightly noted, the text says “give to everyone that asks,” not “give everything to him that asks” (*De Sermone Domine en Monte* 67). Compare Jesus' response to the request made of him in Luke 12:13–15. It is also crucial to note that “a willingness to forego one's personal rights, and to allow oneself to be insulted and imposed upon, is not incompatible with a firm stand for matters of principle and for the rights of others ³

- F. III, Jesus isn't saying civil laws can be broken without consequence. Jesus pointed out, however, that while the rights of the innocent were protected by the Law, the righteous need not necessarily claim their rights. A righteous man would be characterized by humility and selflessness. Instead he might go "the extra mile" to maintain peace. When wronged by being struck on a **cheek**, or sued for his **tunic** (undergarment; a **cloak** was the outer garment), or forced to travel with **someone a mile**, he would not strike back, demand repayment, or refuse to comply. Instead of retaliating he would do the opposite, and would also commit his case to the Lord who will one day set all things in order (cf. Rom. 12:17–21). This was seen to its greatest extent in the life of the Lord Jesus Himself, as Peter explained (1 Peter 2:23).²
- G. III, Jesus is, of course, still dealing with great principles, not laying down rules. We must not think that he held that his followers should never right wrongs, for example, nor that he felt that they must give to every beggar who approaches them. Were this so, all Christians would live under tyranny and in a state of destitution. But the principles that we are to refrain from asserting our rights and that we should put the needs of others before our own run through all of life and mark the difference between the servant of God and the worldling.⁴
- H. Romans 12:17–21 (NLT) Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. 18 Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone. 19 Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, "I will take revenge; I will pay them back," says the Lord. 20 Instead, "If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads." 21 Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.
- I. IV, To be *sons* (or, children) of God in the biblical sense is to reflect the character and likeness of God, for which the second half of the verse provides specific illustrations. For example, the Father in heaven provides sun and rain for all people, without discriminating between the bad and the good. In the same way, if Jesus' followers are to prove that they are sons of God, they must show love to their enemies and pray for those who persecute them. *Sons* is meant to include both men and women.¹

- J. IV, As far as providing the blessings of sunshine and rain to people, he treats all alike, both the good people and the bad, both those who obey his laws and those who do not.”¹
- K. IV, The *tax collectors* referred to in the Gospels are probably the Jewish employees of the chief collectors. The Roman system for gathering taxes made for inequality and oppression, and that is one reason that in the Gospels tax collectors are quite often grouped together with sinners. To emphasize the derogatory connotation of the term, Br¹c translates “the renegade tax collectors.”
- L. IV, Many translations have fairly literal renderings of *tax collectors*. They have, for example, “people who collect money for the government” or “people who make everyone pay money to the government.” Some say “to the Roman government” or “to the emperor (or, king) in Rome.” Other translations reflect the low esteem in which tax collectors were held by saying “those unpatriotic (or unscrupulous, or oppressive) tax collectors.”¹
- M. IV, Be perfect therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect. His message demonstrated God’s righteous standard, for God Himself truly is the “standard” of righteousness. If these individuals are to be righteous, they must be as God is, “perfect,” that is, mature (*teleioi*) or holy.²
- N. IV, Luke 6:32–36 (NLT) — 32 “If you love only those who love you, why should you get credit for that? Even sinners love those who love them! 33 And if you do good only to those who do good to you, why should you get credit? Even sinners do that much! 34 And if you lend money only to those who can repay you, why should you get credit? Even sinners will lend to other sinners for a full return. 35 “Love your enemies! Do good to them. Lend to them without expecting to be repaid. Then your reward from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be acting as children of the Most High, for he is kind to those who are unthankful and wicked. 36 You must be compassionate, just as your Father is compassionate.
- O. Following this idea, then, translators could say “you must be perfect (or, flawless or, completely faithful) in your devotion to the Lord, just as God your heavenly Father is perfect (or, flawless or, completely faithful) in loving you,” or “you must be completely devoted to doing what God requires in the same way that God your Father in heaven is completely devoted to the people he loves.”¹

¹Brc Barclay