



**Sunday, March 6, 2011: Turning the Other Cheek**

**Scripture: Matthew 5:38-42, Titus 3**

**Speaker: Joe Boot**

**Sermon Notes:**

1. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is teaching the implications of the law of God, rightly applying it and interpreting its meaning.
2. Jesus had already dealt with anger, lust, divorce and oath taking. Now we're dealing with the intention of God's law with respect to justice.
3. In addressing 'eye for eye", Jesus corrects the Pharisees' wrong interpretation of the law with respect to justice.
4. Pharisees taught that it is the right and duty of private individuals to get even.
5. The principle of biblical justice is restitution, i.e., that the punishment should fit the crime.
6. On the personal level, Jesus teaches that we need to control our desire for personal revenge or retaliation.
7. We all struggle with sinful desires to get even. We are tempted to plot our revenge. We desire to justify ourselves.
8. Jesus says we need to subdue our desire to set everything straight in the personal sphere.
9. Martin Lloyd Jones rightly noted that Jesus is not offering a new kind of law to replace the old Mosaic law. Rather Jesus emphasizes the spirit and intent of the law.
10. Jesus' commentary on "eye for eye" is in light of the context of the sermon on the mount and a wrong application of the Mosaic law by the Pharisees.
11. In the Scriptures, law and grace are complementary: God's law is a gift to us to guide human conduct; God's grace empowers us to live holy lives in conformity to God's law (cf. Romans 3:31).
12. Crime and punishment can be distinguished only by the law of God.
13. Eye for eye is not a code of barbarism, condoning maiming those who hurt you. It is a principle for the administration of justice, namely that the punishment should fit the crime (see Exodus 21:23-25, Leviticus 24:17-22).
14. The concern of biblical justice is restitution, i.e. to restore God's order after a violation of God's law.
15. In most cases restitution takes the form of a monetary fine or damages (cf. Exodus 21:29,30).
16. How can we identify tyranny or anarchy except by a higher standard of justice?
17. The well-respected twentieth century judge, Lord Denning, condemned the recent severance of law from religion, noting that: "Without religion, there can be no morality, there can be no law."
18. Jesus gives us a connected thought: do not resist the one who is evil.
19. Because of the Roman occupation, a Jewish peasant could be compelled to serve a Roman soldier for a mile.
20. Israel was a problem area, with constant rebellions in Jesus' time; many Jews lived and breathed revolution.
21. The world is transformed by the gospel, not by revolution. The spirit of revolution is destruction and madness.
22. Jesus offers simple, wise counsel for those oppressed. Jesus gives instruction for believers' conduct when facing a personal wrong.
23. What Jesus spoke against was the practice of applying the judicial principle (namely, the punishment should fit the crime) to the personal sphere.
24. In Titus 3:1-2, Paul addresses the concerns of personal conduct in the world, calling on believers to speak evil of no one, to be gentle, to be submissive, to show perfect courtesy to all people.
25. It's the washing of regeneration which transforms our character from hated and hating one another (Titus 3:5).
26. As the people of God, we live not by violent ferment, but the regenerating power of God.
27. Hatred and sin aren't broken when evil is returned for evil; only good overcomes evil.
28. This passage doesn't teach pacifism, nor does it oppose the magistrate's administration of criminal punishment.

29. Radicals have taught that this passage opposes all punishment and attempt at justice.
30. To make such claims is to rip Jesus from the context and to put Him in opposition to His own law; you make Jesus teach absurdity if He is opposing all justice.
31. It is not wrong to seek the right administration of justice. When Jesus was being illegally struck He challenged it; Paul demanded justice when he was illegally arrested as a Roman citizen.
32. Jesus said, "If anyone will come after me, he must deny himself", giving up all his so-called rights (see Mark 8:34,35).
33. We must die to our desire to take offense, to get revenge, to get my own way, to retaliate, to set the record straight, to justify ourselves.
34. When you repay good for evil, you provide a remarkable opportunity for gospel witness.
35. Only the Holy Spirit can enable us to live out Jesus' application of the law regarding personal wrongs.

#### **Application Questions**

1. How did the Pharisees misapply the "eye for eye" principle?
2. Was Jesus refuting the Mosaic judicial principle, *lex talionis* (eye for eye)? Explain.
3. Explain the practical wisdom of humbly accepting personal offenses or injustices.
4. Are there situations of personal offense or injustice in my life that the Lord is calling me to humbly accept, instead of seeking justice or plotting revenge?
5. Can "turning the other cheek" be a means for me to share the gospel with someone this week?
6. Compare Jesus' teaching on "turning the other cheek" to Paul's in Titus 3:1-2?
7. What is the theological reason to motivate the believer's conduct in Titus 3:3-8?
8. Am I meditating upon and exalting God's law as David did in Psalm 119?