

A DEEPER DIVE

July 5, 2026
Joshua 10:28-43

Prayer Focus— Each day this week as you meet with your savior, lift up in prayer the places in the world where there is war, destruction, and little hope. Also pray for the missionaries that you know of and support. Pray for our nation and our leaders, and also your local church and community. Pray daily for our Pastors and Elders. Finally, follow the instruction in Philippians 4:4-7 make your prayer personal. Remember 1 Peter 5:7.

Monday: Reading – Matthew 5: 38-42; Exodus 21:24; Leviticus 24:20; Deuteronomy 19:21

Consider this – Long ago in a land far away...

The Code of Hammurabi (no, I haven't read it, I am relying on my AI buddy), when dealing with crimes or harmful behavior, mandates "exact physical retaliation, but only between people of equal social status; otherwise a predetermined monetary fine was paid."

Read through the verses from the Old Testament. Why was this idea so important for early societies?

There were three things that this idea of an eye for an eye was trying to accomplish, or curtail. First, it is to restrain vengeance. Second, it is to prevent excessive punishment. Third, it moves power from the individual to the courts. What would a society which did not restrain things like vengeance or excessive punishment, or one with no active and independent court system be like?

Tuesday: Reading– Matthew 5: 38-42

Consider this – You have heard it said...

Jesus says "You have heard it said...but I tell you..." a number of times in the Sermon on the Mount. Why does he say this? Is he contradicting Moses, or opposing the Torah? Wiersbe notes that, "The OT law dealt only with outward actions; but in the kingdom, we must beware of sinful inward attitudes." Do you look on some people whose life choices you strongly disagree with and condemn them in your heart or mind? Do you see someone less fortunate and wonder why they don't just get a job? Do you think to yourself that they must have made some bad choices in their life so they made their own bed so to speak? What do you do when you recognize those kinds of thoughts or feelings creeping in?

Wednesday: Reading – Matthew 5: 38-42

Consider this – Four examples

Jesus gives us four examples of what it looks like to go beyond the "eye for and eye." Do you look at these examples as illustrations, or as things we should actually do? Do you see this as an exhaustive list, or do you see it as some themes for application?

The first three are responses when we are attacked, sued, or compelled to do something. Why do you think Jesus uses these three examples? What do you do in your responses to times when you feel hard done by, or put upon? Do you grin and bear it, all the while muttering under your breath? How does Jesus want us to act in these situations—both outwardly and inwardly?

Thursday: Reading – Matthew 5: 38-42

Consider this – Does he really mean that?

In the fourth example, what does Jesus say about giving? I don't know if he coined the phrase "radical generosity," but GK Chesterton lived by this view. In this view, giving money is an administrative act, not one of generosity. True generosity meant giving yourself away. By that Chesterton meant that Christian generosity required personal entanglement. How do we see Jesus modeling this? Chesterton believed that Christ's example, not only his teaching, is our ultimate model of generosity. Finally, and as a warning to all of us and our attitudes in our society, he said this. "Among the Very Rich you will never find a really generous man, even by accident. They may give their money away, but they will never give themselves away; they are egoistic, secretive, dry as old bones. To be smart enough to get all that money you must be dull enough to want it."

Friday: Reading – Matthew 5: 38-42; Hebrews 10:34

Consider this – Pretty extreme.

Look again at the examples Jesus uses. Do not resist the one who is evil. If you are slapped on the right cheek, offer the other. If you are sued and your tunic is taken, give your cloak as well. If you are forced to go one mile, voluntarily go another mile. Contrast these things with what we are taught in our society. Stand up for your rights; fight for yourself, don't just sit back and take it. What other ways does our society teach us things that are in opposition to what Jesus is saying? Also, we live in an extremely litigious time. The courts are overwhelmed, and not just with criminal cases. How does Christ want his followers to be a group that is a counter-culture? Read Hebrews 10:34. Would you say that this statement is true of you and your attitudes? Do you think this verse has relevance today?

Saturday: Reading – Matthew 5: 38-42; 1 Peter 1; Galatians 5

Consider this – Growing in Christ.

Wiersbe says that, "We must go higher [than what the average person does] and imitate the Heavenly Father. The word "perfect" in verse 48 points the way to maturity of character." This maturity is explained in the two passages mentioned above. Read those passages and reflect on what the Lord is telling you through them.

From the Henri Nouwen Society–

God is not in the distant heavens or in the hidden depths of the future, but here and now. God has pitched a tent among us. Even more than that, God has made a home in us so that we can make God's home our home.

Sunday - Go to church with the anticipation of hearing from the Lord.

Questions? Comments? Email me, Steve Callaway, at stvcal13@gmail.com.