



July 13, 2025
Kevin Sneed
Matthew 5:38-48

Key Texts: Matthew 5:38-48, Romans 12:17-21, 1 Thessalonians 5:15

Icebreaker: How do you typically respond (internally or externally) when you are hurt or offended by others?

Discussion Questions

1. Re-read **Matthew 5:38-48** together as a group aloud. What initially stands out to you from the text? Is there anything surprising, confusing, challenging, or particularly noteworthy?
2. Re-visit **Matthew 5:38-39**. Kevin suggested that what Jesus meant by not resisting an evil person is that we do not resist by evil means. How does this reshape the way you understand the passage?
3. How have you seen the “myth of redemptive violence” (the best way to fight violence is with more violence) play out in our culture?
4. Re-read **Matthew 5:38-42**. What stands out to you from these responses that Jesus suggests? How are these responses demonstrative of active engagement that restore dignity, rather than passive surrender?
5. Read **Matthew 5:38-48** and **Romans 12:17-21**. How do these verses encourage us toward loving our enemies? What would it look like to genuinely seek and pray for the good of our enemies?
6. Is there currently a person or a situation that initially comes to mind when you think of the call to love your enemies? What might it look like for you to invite the Holy Spirit to lead you in creative, non-violent engagement? (Challenge: You may think you do not have enemies...but are there people you despise, intentionally or unintentionally avoid, or treat with contempt?)

7. How does this passage of the Sermon on the Mount connect with and deepen our understanding of the previous sections we have covered? What does it reveal about Jesus' intention for community and the way we love others?
8. Re-visit **Matthew 5:48**. Though God is without flaw, the invitation is not to be without flaw – it is an invitation to be mature as our Father is mature, to move in the direction of godliness, and to reflect God's love out into the world. How might God be inviting you or nudging you to be a person of self-giving sacrificial love? How can your group pray for you today?

Key Takeaways

- Jesus doesn't call us to passive surrender, but to breaking cycles of evil and violence through creative, non-violent engagement. We are called to find ways to restore dignity and not perpetuate violence.
- We are never more like God than when we love our enemies, as God loved us when we were His enemies (Romans 5:8).
- It's hard to hate people you pray for.
- Many times we come to this teaching looking for ways to justify inflicting violence, but Jesus' goal is ultimately love of the enemy - moving in the flow of the kingdom of God by turning enemies into neighbors and friends.
- The measure of faithfulness to Jesus has always been how much we love.
- The call to be perfect is an invitation to move in the direction of godliness and reflect God's love into the world.

Notes