



Recap from last week:
Fulfilled
Matthew 5:17-20

- The Law focused on external sin.
- Jesus fulfills the Law.
- Now we are to steward our internal motives, living in purity of heart before the Lord.

Faith
FELLOWSHIP
MATT.
5:38-48

NON-RESISTANCE

THE WAY OF THE CRUCIFIED CHRIST

38 “You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’
39 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. 40 And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. 41 If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. 42 Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

43 “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ 44 But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 46 If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? 47 And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? 48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.



LET'S EXPLORE MATTHEW 5:38-48 WITH A LITTLE CROSS-REFERENCING & CONCORDANCE USE

Observe:

- Which verse stands out the most? Why?
- In Matthew 5:39, Jesus starts out by saying, “Do not **resist** an evil person...” (emphasis mine)
 - Look up “resist” in the concordance
 - **Tip:** Strong's Greek 436 ἀνθίστημι - anthístémi
 - Found on page 26 in the second half of the Strong's Concordance in your table basket.
- Read Isaiah 53 (pay special attention to verses 7 & 10)
- Now jump ahead and read Matthew 16:24-26
 - Look up “deny” in the concordance
 - **Tip:** Strong's Greek 533 ἀπαρνέομαι - aparneomai
 - Found on page 33 in the second half of the Strong's Concordance in your table basket.
 - Feel free to head back to Matthew 5:38-48 in your Bible to continue answering the following questions.
- What other instance in the Gospels is there an example where Jesus rebukes resistance? (Hint: John 18:10-11)
- What questions do you have regarding these passages?

Interpret:

- What do you believe these passages mean?
- What is God speaking to you personally through this study?
- Compare your interpretation with a trusted commentary.

Apply:

- How can you apply these passages to your life?
- What specific steps can you take to put them into practice?
- What obstacles might you face in applying these passages?



NOW, LET'S READ THE AFTER-SUMMARY TOGETHER

Matthew 5:38-48 challenges us to move beyond our natural instincts for revenge and self-preservation, urging us instead to embrace a radical form of love that reflects the heart of God. In everyday life, this can be seen in how we respond to offenses—whether it's a coworker who takes credit for our work, a stranger who cuts us off in traffic, or a loved one who speaks harshly. Rather than retaliating or harboring resentment, Jesus calls us to respond with patience and grace. When we forgive, let go of anger, and pray for those who hurt us, we mirror the unconditional love and mercy that God shows to us daily. This approach doesn't just diffuse conflict, and break the cycle of hostility; it opens the door for us to understand God's heart better and positions us as agents of reconciliation, just as Jesus was described in Isaiah 53:7—silent, humble, and non-retaliatory even in the face of suffering.

Jesus' call to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us pushes us to expand our capacity for compassion. In a world that encourages division and payback, we can apply His teaching by reaching out to those who are difficult to love. Whether it's offering kindness to a challenging neighbor or engaging with someone whose beliefs differ from ours, this radical love breaks the cycle of hostility. Matthew 16:24-26 reminds us that following Jesus means denying ourselves and embracing sacrifice, much like Isaiah 53:10 points to God's greater purpose through suffering. By stepping out of our comfort zones and choosing love, we reflect God's heart and become peacemakers in a divided world, fostering unity and grace wherever we go.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- When faced with a situation where I am wronged, how can I intentionally choose forgiveness and grace over retaliation or holding a grudge?
 - In what ways can I actively love and pray for those who may be difficult to get along with, who have hurt me, or have different views than me even when it feels challenging?
 - And how can I begin to see them through the lens of God's love, praying for their well-being and seeking reconciliation?
 - In what areas of my life am I holding onto anger or bitterness, and how can I let go of these feelings to embody the kind of radical love and mercy that Jesus calls us to in this passage?
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Closing Prayer...

Heavenly Father, help us to live out Your call to radical love. When we are wronged or face situations that stir up anger or resentment, remind us to respond with patience and grace, just as Jesus did. Give us the strength to forgive quickly, to release bitterness, and to pray for those who hurt us. May our hearts mirror Your mercy and love, reflecting the peace and reconciliation that You offer us every day.

Lord, expand our capacity for compassion, especially toward those who are difficult to love. Teach us to see others as You see them, and give us the courage to love beyond our comfort zone. Help us to embrace sacrifice, denying ourselves and following Jesus in every aspect of our lives. May we be agents of Your peace, spreading unity and grace in our communities, and reflecting Your heart in everything we do.

