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What are the drawbacks of an “eye for eye” mentality?

How did Jesus say we should respond to those who do evil to us?

How can doing this change a bad situation?

Why is this difficult?

*Ask God to show you if you have a grudge or personal vendetta you need to let go of. Ask Him for the strength to show kindness to those who are cruel or rude to you this week!*

### Friday

Read Matthew 5:43-48 and 1 John 4:11. How does God treat good and evil people the same way?

What two specific things does Jesus say we need to do for our enemies?

How can praying for an enemy help you to forgive and care for that enemy?

*Pray for some specific “enemies” today: People who seem to hate you; those opposing you at work; those who use violence and oppression here and abroad, etc. Ask God to bless them in some specific way.*

### Saturday

This weekend we plan to go back to Matthew 5:33-37 for a focused look at that passage. Read those verses today. How are you at truth-telling: Do you communicate honestly and sincerely, or do you sometimes lie or exaggerate? Why is truth-telling essential to healthy relationships?

*Pray that God will use the weekend services for His glory and will teach all of us life lessons about truth-telling!*

### For amazing relationships, I will be a...

#### 1. Peace \_\_\_\_\_ (5:21-26; 38-42)

“You have heard that it was said... ‘Do not murder’... But I tell you, that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment...” *Matthew 5:21* (NIV)

##### • Speak \_\_\_\_\_

“Anyone who says to his brother ‘Raca’ is answerable to the the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell.” *Matthew 5:21b-22*

##### • Settle \_\_\_\_\_

“Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother... Settle matters quickly with your adversary...” *Matthew 5:23-25a*

##### • Stop \_\_\_\_\_

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.” *Matthew 5:38-39*

#### 2. Promise \_\_\_\_\_ (5:27-32)

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” *Matthew 5:27-28*

Sow a \_\_\_\_\_, reap an \_\_\_\_\_ ;

Sow an \_\_\_\_\_, reap a \_\_\_\_\_ ;

Sow a \_\_\_\_\_, reap a \_\_\_\_\_ ;

Sow a \_\_\_\_\_, reap a \_\_\_\_\_

“It has been said, ‘Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.’ But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery.” *Matthew 5:31-32*

#### 3. Plain \_\_\_\_\_ (5:33-37)

“Simply let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes’, and your ‘No’, ‘No’.” *Matthew 5:37a*

More on this next weekend!

#### 4. People \_\_\_\_\_ (5:43-47)

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, **that you may be sons 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.” *Matthew 5:43-45*

## Bottom line

### Be an agent of \_\_\_\_\_

“But you must always act like your Father in heaven.” *Matthew 5:48* (CEV)

## Daily Meditations

### Monday

Read Matthew 5:21-22 & Ephesians 4:29. The Pharisees felt they were righteous as long as they didn't murder. But Jesus gets to the intent of that commandment: Loving one another. Why did Jesus zero in on the emotions behind our violent actions?

What modern equivalents to “Raca” or “fool” do you ever get tempted to use?

How is anger and name-calling like murder?

When do you tend to get angry at people?


*Ask the Lord for strength in overcoming anger and name-calling. Ask Him to help you control your emotions.*

### Tuesday

Read Matthew 5:23-26 & Colossians 3:13. If a person becomes aware of a relational problem, how quickly should he or she act, according to Jesus? Why?

Why is it worth even interrupting worship to deal with something like this?

Why is it better for Christians to resolve their differences privately before they become public?

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Is there a situation like this you need to resolve? What is it?

*Ask God for the strength to resolve any such issues today!*

### Wednesday

Read Matthew 5:27-30, 1 Corinthians 6:18-20, and 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7. What are some of the consistent themes in all of these passages?

Why are there so many warnings about sexual immorality?

Also see Ezekiel 20:30. Here the prophet condemns pornographic images — in his day, pictures or statues. Why does Ezekiel condemn those who “lust after them”?

What other sin is pornography connected with in this passage?

Although we didn't have time to fully explore this passage in the sermon, it's clear that Jesus did not mean for us to literally pluck out our eyes if we lust, or, as one early church father said, soon we'd all be blind. I believe Jesus was teaching: Minimize the opportunity. For example, if the internet or cable TV is causing an addiction to lust for you, stop the service, or get a content filter; this is “plucking out the eye” in your circumstance. What are practical steps you have taken to avoid the trap of lust in your own life?

*Ask God to help you stay pure from the inside out!*

### Thursday

Read Matthew 5:38-42 & 1 Peter 2:20-23. Why do you think movies about retaliation and vengeance are so popular?



Memory Verse

“You have heard that it was said,  
‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’  
But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray  
for those who persecute you, that you may be  
sons of your Father in heaven.”  
*Matthew 5:43-45a* (NIV)

over 