

Secured by God

Matthew 5:38-42

Introduction

- Self-preservation is **natural** when we feel threatened
- When wronged, our reflex is **retaliation or control**
- In the kingdom, instinct is *not* authority

BIG IDEA: Kingdom citizens are freed from self-protection because they trust their Father.

The Law Quoted: Lex Talionis (v.38)

- Eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth (Law of retaliation) - **Exodus 21:24; Leviticus 24:20; Deuteronomy 19:21**
- Given to **limit vengeance** through **proportional justice** in the court of law
- Distorted into personal justification for **getting even**

The Command Given (v.39a)

“But I say to you, do not resist the one who is evil.”

- Resist- to oppose or stand against
- **Not** a command to enable abuse
- **Not** a denial of protecting the vulnerable
- A **refusal** to answer **evil with evil (Rom 12:17)**
- Personal vengeance is not *your* responsibility

When Our Dignity Is Attacked (v.39b)

“Turn the other cheek...”

- **Backhanded slap** = humiliation, not assault
- Today: public criticism, misrepresentation, online attacks
- **Instinct:** defend yourself, clap back, protect your pride
- Jesus: **absorb the offense** without returning it

When Our Security Is Threatened (v.40)

- Tunic = basic undergarment
- Cloak = **warmth, bedding, survival (Exod 22:26–27)**
- Legal conflict, financial loss, vulnerability
- **Instinct**: fight hard, protect every dollar, escalate

Jesus says: do not fight **greed with greed**. Meet it with **radical generosity**.

When Our Freedom Is Restricted (v.41)

- Roman military could **force** citizens to carry their gear for **one Roman mile** (impressment)
- Forced labor, humiliation, inconvenience
- **Instinct:** resentment, minimal effort, outward compliance
- **Jesus:** not just one mile, but two (above and beyond)

Not just **compliance**, but **willingness**.

When Our Possessions Are Demanded (v.42)

- **Situation:** someone asks, someone borrows, someone needs
- **Instinct:** calculate, measure, protect what is mine
- **We ask:** “Will I get this back?”
- **Jesus:** give without guarding your hand

The Deeper Issue (Why?)

Underneath every command is one question-

Who do you trust?

- We instinctively move toward **self-protection**
- Jesus calls us out of the retaliation cycle
- Not tit for tat, not “matching energy”, but **entrusting ourselves to the justice, and provision of the Father**

REFLECTION AND RESPONSE

3 Questions to Ask Yourself:

- 1. Where do I feel most tempted to “get even” instead of reflecting Christ?**
- 2. What does my reaction to insult reveal about my security?**
- 3. Where is Jesus inviting me this week to loosen my grip and live like someone already secured by God?**