

Study of Matthew
October 23rd, 2022

Discussion Question: Do you resist the right things?

Matthew 5:38-42

Jesus again addresses the issue of what you have heard people say, but here is what is truth. When someone just reads it and doesn't take the whole council of God, they will really, really mess this one up.

Without the other things God has commanded us we would think, well if someone is slapping my wife or daughter, someone is beating my son to death, I'm just to stand by and take it. Don't resist. That is not the intent of what Jesus is saying...if it is then HE contradicts Himself as the Living Word and we all need to throw our Bibles away.

What do we believe Jesus is addressing here:

- Jesus does not negate the law... these sayings were judicial in nature. The judicial system, of which ours is built on, was to render justice and at times demand retribution.
- God tells us in Romans that the law is there as a restraint to evil men and they are to bear the sword.
- 1 Peter 2:13-14 *"Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution (authority), whether it be to the emperor as supreme, 14 or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good."* [ESV]

The law of nature, and all laws, human and divine, justify self-defense when life is in danger. It surely cannot be the intention of Jesus that we can't resist when there is danger of harm.

Jesus is speaking of us taking revenge.

In our day it would be ... cancel culture, being intolerant of opposing views; creating drama; being a Karen; but more importantly it would be playing the pay back game.

The fact that Jesus uses somewhat trivial matters as examples should give us great insight.

- Getting slapped
- Being taken to court over the outer garment
- Being forced to walk a second mile with someone
 - Due to the Roman occupation of Israel, a Roman could require a Jew to carry things for him for a mile. Jews detested the Romans. Jesus said, mess him up and carry it for two.
- Letting people borrow things

These are not big issues. Jesus is not dealing with weightier matters such as murder, sexual assault, physical assault, people breaking into your home; etc. when it comes to not resisting.

He is saying, don't take revenge on every little trivial thing that happens in your life.

Peter would have been sitting there with Jesus when HE gave this sermon and Peter clearly says that government is there to punish those who do evil...note Peter did not quote Jesus and say, if you are in government do not resist when evil happens.

If anyone understood this verse it would have been Peter.

- In a moment of revenge...at the arresting of Jesus, Peter cuts a man's ear off
- Jesus, who told him to carry a sword says put away your sword
- This is not the moment for revenge.

How are we to live in this tension? Knowing when to resist and when not to resist.

I believe Peter gives us some good insight in 1 Peter 5:5 – 9

1. Submit to God (vs. 5 – 7)

We must humble ourselves under God's mighty hand. We must cast every care on HIM

Submit is a military term implying that we come under the authority of one over us.

We will understand what to resist when we first know who to surrender to!

Submission is a great step of faith...submitting to another means that you are trusting your life to another in their decision making.

2. Sober Minded (vs. 8)

Sober is to be free from the influence of intoxicants

Our minds can be intoxicated with the things that are evil and because our thought life gets mingled with impure thoughts, we will look to take revenge when we shouldn't.

On the other hand if we have our minds stayed on Christ as our Commander in Chief we will think right, not be in revenge mode and deal with evil that needs to be dealt with.

The second term is vigilant...which is having a watchful mind; give strict attention to

Why? Because satan is a deceiver, a destroyer, an accuser and adversary.

Those that are sober minded and vigilant don't get caught up in his little schemes of revenge nor do we get caught up in making accusations that are not true. Even accusations against our greatest enemy.

I know that my adversary wants me playing the pay back game and I will give strict attention to my thoughts.

3. Steadfast (vs. 9)

Here is the resisting that keeps us from resisting things that don't matter.

We resist...set ourselves against, stand opposed to the devils evil schemes and we never get caught up in taking revenge;

Steadfast is to be fixed and unchanging; loyal

Steadfast in the faith!