

Small Group Discussion Guide — Read Matthew 5:38-42

- How do we answer the objection that this way of life described here is impossible to live out? What is true about the Christian, in salvation and in union with Christ, that makes it possible to live out this radical lifestyle?
- How was this principle of “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth” meant to be applied under the law of Moses? How had the Pharisees distorted this law?
- How do we see the “spirit of the Pharisees” in us? How are we prone to retaliate, fight back, and demand our rights? Are there ever ways that these could “right” desires?
- How does keeping in mind that Jesus is addressing here our interpersonal, individual relationships, and specifically with those who might oppose us for our faith, keep us from misapplying or misunderstanding these verses?
- What does it mean to turn the other cheek, give your cloak, go the extra mile, and give to those who beg from you? What might be practical examples of what this would look like in our daily lives?
- How do you see these examples needing to be “fleshed out” in your life? Are there specific situations in your life where you are struggling to be Christ-like in these ways?
- Have you ever wronged someone that did not retaliate and seek vengeance but loved you instead? If so, how did this impact you?
- Is there someone toward whom you are afraid or unwilling to practice non-retaliation? How would Jesus instruct you to respond to the person’s insults or persecution?
- Is there someone you are reluctant to practice giving or lending? How would Jesus instruct you to loosen your grip on your stuff or your rights?