Living in a REACTIONARY TIME… *(Pg.#1)*

Last session we looked at the teaching of Jesus recorded in Matthew 5:38-42 (ESV) "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' (39) But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. (40) And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. (41) And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. (42) Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you.

-- Today we move on from these words of Jesus, to His last topic on the OT law found in Matthew 5:43-48 *(ESV)* "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' (44) But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, (45) so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. (46) For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? (47) And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? (48) You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect. – *(I ask you to Remember this call to BE PERFECT. - KRK)*
We have a higher calling *– Eng. "Neighbor" / Grk. - plēsion (play-see'-on) countryman, Christian or friend – Jesus requires much broader reflection of God shown, even to your enemies… (Verse 48)*
-- As Jesus moves on from His teaching on these OT laws, He causes us to ask ourselves…

What has GRACE got to do with it?
(Does God's grace determine how we should mete out justice to others?)

Indeed God's Grace shown to us by His incredible sacrifice, compels us to follow the command of Jesus to 'turn the other cheek', because forgiveness on our part is required to move on past mistreatment we've received from others.
-- In verses (43-44) Jesus goes on… "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' (44) But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, (45) so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven.

Q1. Does the OT Law state that you should hate your enemy?
-- No it does not… Jesus is correcting the way they've corrupted the Law that says "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as yourself." *(Leviticus 19:18)*
-- In fact, the OT Law commands that we must treat our enemy with goodness, not hatred. See Exodus 23:4-5 *(NIV)* "If you come across your enemy's ox or donkey wandering off, be sure to return it. (5) If you see the donkey of someone who hates you fallen down under its load, do not leave it there; be sure you help them with it.
Q2. If we are to "Love your enemies"… Can you love anyone that you cannot forgive? (Or do you think unforgiveness erodes our ability to love?) – *Also consider Jeremiah 31:31-35…*
*Comments:*_____

Q3. Why did Jesus say we must "pray for those who persecute us"? *(From Vs.44)*

-- We may be shocked by His answer in verse 45… "so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven." *(How does this reflect our Father?)*_____

Q4. And why would the fact that God "makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust", cause us to show love to our enemies?

*Comments:*_____

Continuing in verses 46-48… For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? (47) And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? (48) You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

-- This brings forth a two-part question…

Q5a. Is God perfect and just? ☐ Yes… ☐ No…

Q5b. In answer, read more of God's Law in Exodus 23:1-3… *(NIV)* "Do not spread false reports. Do not help a guilty person by being a malicious witness. (2) "Do not follow the crowd in doing wrong. When you give testimony in a lawsuit, do not pervert justice by siding with the crowd, (3) and do not show favoritism to a poor person in a lawsuit.
What points of purity and justice do you see in these commands?

*Comments:*_____

_____

Returning to in Matthew 5:46-47… For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? (47) And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?

-- Closing questions for discussion…

Q6. Does following Jesus mandate that we be DIFFERENT than the world around us?

*Comments:*_____

Q7. What do we <u>accomplish</u> by being DIFFERENT than the world around us?

_____

-- With that in mind we will close in a time of fellowship and prayer.

(For further discussion on forgiveness, SEE Jeremiah 31:34-35 in handouts.)

(Hand-out Bible verse) X4

Jeremiah 31:34-35 *(ESV)* "And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (35) Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar— the LORD of hosts is his name:
-- If God in mercy, has forgiven you, and forgets your trespasses, can you do the same?

Jeremiah 31:34-35 *(ESV)* "And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (35) Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar— the LORD of hosts is his name:
-- If God in mercy, has forgiven you, and forgets your trespasses, can you do the same?

Jeremiah 31:34-35 *(ESV)* "And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (35) Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar— the LORD of hosts is his name:
-- If God in mercy, has forgiven you, and forgets your trespasses, can you do the same?

Jeremiah 31:34-35 *(ESV)* "And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (35) Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar— the LORD of hosts is his name:
-- If God in mercy, has forgiven you, and forgets your trespasses, can you do the same?