

# DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

*Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.*

July 2013

## *The Sermon on the Mount*

### **Lesson #6: Personal Relationships (Part 3)**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

When have you been wronged?

#### **OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION**

Read Matt 5:38-42

*Note: Striking a person on the right cheek suggests a backhanded slap from a typically right-handed aggressor and was a characteristic Jewish form of insult. Jews also considered it one of the most demeaning and insulting forms of disrespect, affecting one's honor. Jesus tells us not to trade such insults even if it means receiving more. In no sense does v. 39 require Christians to subject themselves or others to physical danger or abuse, nor does it bear directly on the pacifism-just war debate. Verse 41 continues the legal motif by referring to Roman conscription of private citizens to help carry military equipment for soldiers as they traveled. <sup>1</sup> A shirt or tunic was an undergarment and a cloak or coat was an outer garment sometimes used as a blanket for the cold at night. The court could not demand the cloak, but it could be offered in payment for a debt so as not to offend an adversary. "A Roman soldier had the right to require a citizen to travel a mile with him, for Roman law permitted him to compel any subject to carry his burden. So the principle is to exceed your stipulated minimum duty." <sup>2</sup>*

1. If the original intent of the verse 38 law (Ex 21:23, 24) was to limit punishment to the extent of the crime, why would Jesus change it? Rom 12:19; Isa 50:6; 1 Pet 2:20-23
2. Why does uncontrolled retribution (by the victim) often escalate? Dt 19:21
3. Since Jesus is not saying, "Give everything to him who asks", how can you know if someone's need (ask) is genuine? Lk 12:13-15
4. How does one's willingness to forego personal rights compare to the need to stand on matters of principle? Mark 11:15,16;
5. Tolstoy's War and Peace said that the elimination of the military, the police and other forms of authority (antinomianism) would lead to a peaceful utopian society. Why won't that work? Rom 13:4

Read Matt 5:43-48

*Note: This is a strong statement that God's ultimate standard of righteousness is Himself. Dt 18:13 Of course we (as humans) cannot achieve such perfection except in Christ. 2 Cor 5:21 There must be a theological balance between salvation being accepted as a free gift of God through Christ (positional sanctification), and striving toward Christlikeness, (progressive sanctification). <sup>3</sup> The term "perfect" means complete or mature.*

6. What situations does Jesus provide to measure spiritual maturity?
7. How does Jesus refer to God in these verses? Why is that such a radical concept to Jews?
8. A country can expect loyalty from its citizens. What greater standard of conduct would be expected of sons and daughters?

#### **APPLICATION**

- What challenges you the most about living out these verses of the Sermon on the Mount?

<sup>1</sup> Blomberg, C. (1992). Vol. 22: *Matthew*. The New American Commentary (113–114). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

<sup>2</sup> Mills, M. S. (1999). *The Life of Christ: A Study Guide to the Gospel Record* (Mt 5:38–42). Dallas, TX: 3E Ministries.

<sup>3</sup> Utley, R. J. (2000). Vol. Volume 9: *The First Christian Primer: Matthew*. Study Guide Commentary Series (47). Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International.