

Sermon on the Mount part 8  
**Eye for Eye (Matthew 5:-38-42)**

**1. Opening:**

*Ask:* What do you think you'd want to do if someone punched you? Why?

**2. Jesus Says "Turn the Other Cheek"**

*Read Matthew 5:38-42 (while youth follow along in Bibles).*

*Ask:* Does that sound extreme? Why?

*Share this info:*

- The "eye for eye" law was in the Old Testament.
- The law was supposed to be used by the judicial system for fair penalties, but people were perhaps using it for personal revenge.<sup>1</sup>
  
- But, Jesus seems to go beyond just saying: take it to court for justice instead of handling it yourself.
- He seems to say: instead of getting revenge or even justice, give.
  - He says: Don't fight back or take revenge, but turn your cheek.
  - If someone tries to sue you, give them more than they ask for.
  - If someone demands something from you, do twice as much.
  - If someone asks you to give or lend something, give it.

*Ask:* What do you guys think about that?

**3. What it May Not Mean:**

Jesus teaching may not mean:

- ...let someone seriously hurt you. Jesus, himself slipped from a crowd who tried to throw Him off a cliff.
- ...let someone hurt other people. We've got to do what's most loving for others. (If they hurt you and might hurt others, they need to be stopped.)
- ...give unwisely. First of all, Paul said if someone doesn't work they shouldn't eat – so we shouldn't necessarily enable a bad situation. And also, if giving to someone who was not really in need meant your family wouldn't have enough money to meet your obligations, that seems unwise.

We shouldn't just do what Jesus says here without thinking! We need to take it in relationship with the rest of what the Bible says too.

**4. Joseph's Example:**

Joseph is a good example of following Jesus' teaching...

*Give a brief summary of what Joseph's brothers did to him (by selling him as a slave, etc.).*

*Then read Genesis 50:15-21 (while youth follow along)*

*Then ask:*

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<sup>1</sup> John R. W. Stott, *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount*, The Bible Speaks Today series (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1978), 104-105.

- How did Joseph repay evil w/ love here?
- How's that an example for us?

### **5. God's Example:**

God, Himself, is a good example of following Jesus' teaching...

God does not demand punishment we deserve, as Christians, for our sins against Him

- We sinned against Him and deserve punishment.
- Instead, He gave His Son as a sacrifice for our sin, if we accept Jesus as our Savior!
- (Jesus even asked God to forgive those who were crucifying Him.)

The point is that we don't have to stand up for our rights.

- Instead of trying to get revenge or justice, we can be forgiving and giving.
- Even if people are cruel to us, we should be loving to them.

### **6. Application Case Studies:**

*Have youth discuss together as a class how they could follow Jesus' teaching and example in these cases, keeping everything the Bible says in mind...*

1. *Someone's mean to you or gossips about you.*
2. *Someone seriously hurt you.*

### **7. Closing Prayer.**

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