

## Matthew 5:33-48

33 "Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.' 34 But I say to you, Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, 35 or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. 36 And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. 37 Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil.

38 "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.

43 "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.

### Community Group Study 18 July 2010



#### Introduction

The sermon on the mount is a sort of kingdom manifesto: a definition of the Christian life rather than mere rules.

The nature of a kingdom flows from the nature of the king. What king Jesus teaches here was so fundamentally different that those who heard had to re-evaluate everything they thought they knew.

Jesus is not teaching us how to make our lives better. We must be ready to die in His name.

Here we learn that as Christians we are to be utterly trustworthy. We have no desire to renege our word and therefore no vow can lend strength to what we say. We have nothing to hide. We gladly live this way because our identity is safe in Christ. We revere the light of His truth and are not children of darkness.

We do not revenge. We love others in the way that God loved and died for us, His greatest enemies. We do not gratify ourselves with justice because we recognize that the true exercise of justice would pay us back for all our own sins. Jesus has paid that price and we submit all justice to Him, living by grace instead.

We obey authority ungrudgingly because we affirm God's sovereignty over those whom He has put in power, thereby serving both them and God. We are generous, even to our enemies, as a reflection of God's generosity and love to us while we were His enemies.

Finally, we are called to be perfect, a feat only made possible by the power of God.

#### Discussion

>>How has Christianity to become weak and "cultural"?

>>Do you find Jesus' teachings utterly radical, flying in the face of common thought?

>>Name some practices that we have whereby we compromise our radical faith to be more compliant to our culture.

>>Are you ready to die by declaring Jesus as Lord?

#### Explanation

>>Why must a Christian be completely integritous?

>>What are we thinking about when we "turn the other cheek"?

>>Why do we choose to live by grace instead of by justice?

#### Application

>>Identify five things that we do culturally that in fact weaken our testimony and integrity. Stop doing them.

>>Find someone in need and be generous to them.

>>If Jesus Christ's teaching has not yet made you radically different from the way of the world, find some way to apply it so that it does!

>>Read the biography of a martyr.