



Week of Apr 9 - a

Scripture: Mt 5:38-42

Main Idea: The reference to, “an eye for an eye” was a part of the Old Law and was about an injured person or property and the right of that person to just compensation (which would address one’s desire for retaliation) not being too little or too much. Jesus teaches his followers a better way. He tells them to not worry so much about their personal rights and to return good for evil. A fitting scripture is 1 Peter 2:23 (ESV), ²³ When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.

Questions

Preschool: Is it hard to be nice to people who have been mean to you? Why would Jesus want us to still be nice?

Grade school: Jesus knows that hitting people is wrong. If someone hits us, that’s wrong. But if we hit them back, (other than self-defense) we would also be doing wrong (called retaliation, or revenge). Instead, Jesus wants us to return good for evil. He wants us to be the better person and not lose our temper. It’s hard, but if we pray and ask Jesus to help us, he always will. Have you had a situation like this before?

Teen: How much more strength does it take to not retaliate, when someone has been less than kind to you? Has there ever been a time when you treated someone badly & they were kind in return? How did that make you feel? How does this passage connect with Proverbs 15:1

Adult: Is your unrestrained nature vindictive? Once riled up, do you go for the jugular? Jesus is teaching us that this should not be our response. If this is not how you react, be grateful. If, like many, you must work at this, think about a situation where you felt you were in the right and someone wronged you. How could you have reacted more Christ-like in your interaction with the person?

PRAYER REQUESTS

PRAY:

For God to help us to worry less about how we are treated fairly, and more about us treating God with the honor he deserves

April Memory Verse:

Psalm 56:3 (ESV)

³ When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.



Week of Apr 9 - b

Scripture: Mt 5:43-48

Main Idea: Jesus teaches on the difficult topic of “loving our enemies.” He points out that our Holy Father in heaven leads by example as he sends sunshine and rain on the evil and the unjust. Then he points out that if we only love those who love us, we are no different than anyone else. But God calls us to love and pray for our enemies. (Note: The Greek word translated “perfect” means “to be complete, full of age.”)

Questions

Preschool: Does Jesus tell us to pray for and love our enemies? Is it hard to love people that are mean to you?

Grade school: I know what you might be thinking.. Why should I be nice to someone who is mean to me? Here’s why: Have you ever done anything wrong before? Even though you have made mistakes before, your family loves you, and Jesus still loves you. So when someone makes a mistake, we should still love them. What do you think? Can you love your enemies? How can you show love to those who are mean to you?

Teen: Why are we called to do more than what the world expects? What benefits come from praying for your enemies? What benefits come from loving your enemies?

Adult: How hard is loving our enemies really? The neighbor or coworker who continually pushes your buttons, the driver who cut you off...wait, you say, “those aren't my enemies, just annoyances.” Jesus' teaching is about treating someone better than they treat us. Under those terms, they are “enemies.” Can I wish the best for that neighbor (and not just that they get a great new job clear across the country)? Can I feel bad when the coworker gets bad news? Can I see that driver pulled over by the police down the road and not grin? How can we make our eyes see our enemies as God does?

PRAYER REQUESTS

PRAY:

For God to help us to treat our enemies lovingly, and to pray for them

April Memory Verse:

Psalm 56:3 (ESV)

³ When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.