

The Cost of Following – Collide

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MAIN VERSES

[Matthew 5:38](#) • [Matthew 5:39](#) • [Matthew 5:40](#) • [Matthew 5:41](#) • [Matthew 5:42](#) • [Jeremiah 31](#) • [Exodus 21:23](#) • [Deuteronomy 19:21](#) • [Deuteronomy 24:12](#) • [Deuteronomy 24:13](#) • [Exodus 22:26](#) • [Exodus 22:27](#) • [John 8:31](#) • [John 8:32](#) • [Romans 13:8](#) • [Romans 13:10](#) • [1 Peter 3:9](#)

Do you ever find yourself searching for something bigger than you? For a community to be a part of? A place founded on truth and love? A place to worship the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, and the Son of God? Welcome to Founded in Truth, where we're more than just a fellowship. We're a family. So welcome home.

I'm excited and nervous about this week's message because we've been working through this sermon given by this rabbi named Joshua from Galilee. This Yeshua. And this short sermon on a hill, he invites a revolution to take place. A revolution and an uprising that is focused on reflecting God's good creation and God's heavenly kingdom on earth.

And this sermon leads us through a series of uncomfortable descriptions of how this new kingdom people acts. This kingdom people that Yeshua invites you to become. This radical people. In this sermon, he describes what a [Jeremiah 31](#) person looks like. What a person who truly has the Torah and the reign of God written on their hearts. How they live.

An Invitation to Revolution

And when he presents this, The Sermon on the Mount, I was talking to my friend Tyler Rosenquist this morning, and she said something profound. The Sermon on the Mount, when applied, will get you killed. It will. And Yeshua does not sugarcoat that when he speaks. None of the gospel writers are intending you to walk away thinking that you can be a follower of this rabbi and the world will simply leave you alone and you will be unaffected by his reign and his spirit that will cause you to do the things that seem so upside down and radical in the face of this world. You will not. Do not think that you will walk away safe in your flesh. If you choose

to walk after this rabbi, because you will collide with the world around you, and the world will not like it.

And if we all do it together, it will make a stand, and it will reveal the mercy and grace of God's love into this world, but it will cost you.

And this is a hard sermon to hear, because we can talk about the Sermon on the Mount and we can talk about this or that, and a plank in your eye, and don't commit adultery. If you're angry, then you've murdered. Oh, I'm a murderer. This is real. This is real. And this is something that is demanded of you if you claim to be a follower. And it's something that we struggle with if we truly read the scriptures with a willingness to submit to them.

And I stand before you today with that heart of struggling, reading the words of Yeshua, telling myself: is there a way that I can say I did it but not when it comes to some of these things? And there's not. And there's not.

Righteousness and the Heart

The first people that Yeshua always upsets when he opens his mouth seem to be the religious, which is amazing, fascinating. Yeshua will always upset the religious first. Because they've already worked out in their minds that they are righteous because they have a checklist and they're doing these things the way that God intended them to be. And Yeshua is saying, well, no, no, you're not. That's great you have a checklist, but your heart does not reveal the [Jeremiah 31](#) heart, the heart that God yearns to have within his people.

And so, yeah. So I'll be honest, the past few weeks, if we take Yeshua seriously, this is the most brutal sermon that was ever written. What sermon have you ever heard that shows you how much you objectify other people in a single sentence? Not just that, it forces you to address how you treat others in your thoughts. Thoughts? That doesn't hurt anybody. No, it hurts you. And those thoughts don't belong in the kingdom and the world that God is creating.

So you've got to take care of that too. It forces you as a husband or you as a wife to look in the mirror and ask yourself, am I keeping my vows today? Am I truly, truly supporting them in sickness and in health and richer for poor? Am I doing what I need to do?

And then Yeshua just jumps out of nowhere, starts talking about taking God's name in vain through oaths. And I don't know about you, but this has been tough and convicting if you're reading it with a willingness to submit yourself and surrender yourself to.

One Thing: Love

And as we read this sermon, we can go home and we can ignore it. We can move on with our daily lives. And if we think that we have a choice on whether or not we have to change, we're wrong because Yeshua is clear. You're either pursuing the heart of God or you're not.

And this week we have another grenade thrown at us by this rabbi, radical rabbi. And Yeshua addresses the ideas behind justice and mercy and retaliation as they apply to individuals. He's addressing relationships. And he's calling a people not simply to be holy individuals, but to be truly human beings that engage with one another with the same love, mercy, and grace that God has given to us.

And the framework of this people that Yeshua is inviting you to be, that he's gathering around himself, it's based on one thing. One thing is this foundation that he makes very clear. Remember when the man asked Yeshua what is the greatest commandment? And he does this very Jewish thing that some of us would probably find annoying. Like we're looking for a single answer and he gives us two. We didn't ask for two, but that's okay. So what were they? They were to love God and to love your neighbor. Love God, love man.

And what's the common denominator between these two? This is an easy one. It's love. Be a receptacle for God's love to others. This is how you live out the Torah when it's written truly on your soul and your heart and your inner being.

An Eye for an Eye

And so, we will jump right in. So if you join me in Sermon on the Mount, Matthew chapter 5, starting in verse 38. If you don't have a Bible with you, I've got it up on the presenter here. Yeshua speaks, and he's just continuing on, just driving this home.

You have heard that it was said, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I say to you, do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him also have your cloak as well. And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to the one who begs from you and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you.

Okay, so here we go. 2018, we're in the South and Jesus just said not to smack someone back if they smack you. Am I the only one that struggles with that? No one else? Everyone else is like, yeah, you don't slap them. If someone just comes up and sucker punches you, like, yeah, you don't fight back.

Do Not Resist

But Yeshua just said that he is reshaping the way that we see the commandment for an eye for an eye, that we perceive it, and that he disagrees with the way that we perceive this commandment. Yeshua just said that if an evil person comes against you, you don't resist. This is that moment where we as Christians, assumed believers, would turn off the switch and smile as we read these words of Yeshua and say, that's so good and walk out unchanged. That's the moment to do that. If that's you today, go ahead and flip that switch because I've flipped it so many times before—just flip it. Yeah. Amen. Jesus is real righteous.

Yeshua was calling a people that would be as radical as he was. And he looked at the world around us and he said, this is not right. This is not my father's creation. I want a people that's going to live out his creation. And we are going to establish heaven. We're going to birth a new creation here. And the rain of heaven will crash into this world in a way that will change everything. And he invites you to follow him in doing that.

A Literal Cross

When Yeshua walked out his ministry, He wasn't just doing it to pave the way. He was doing it as an example for you to follow. We always take it when he tries to warn us about persecution and suffering because his ways are not like the ways of the world. Take up your cross and follow me. And we're always like, yeah, that's metaphorical because that person said that bad thing to me on Facebook. And so I'm just going to endure and carry my cross. I had that friend at work who's an atheist and he makes fun of my faith. Oh, I'm being persecuted. Just take that cross.

And we never stop and realize what Yeshua meant: you will most likely find yourself carrying a literal cross one day, walking to a hill to die for the sake of the gospel. That's what Yeshua was pointing to. And we don't like to talk about that. But here Yeshua is saying, listen, this is how I'm reshaping this.

This Is the South

And we want to say, Yeshua, no, no, no, you don't understand. This is the South. Every home does not simply just have a firearm. Every home in the South, we got an armory. That whole militia thing and the Constitution, like we are on top of it, right?

Gun owners, I am among you. I'm among you. Why do we have so many guns? I'll say it as a gun owner because we're scared. We're scared we won't be prepared for something. So we want

to prepare.

Now, if you're like me, when you prepare, the scenario you're preparing for isn't probably just someone going to come in my house and rob me. That's probably a fantasy we think about. Yeah, I got all my guns. No, we act as if Russia is going to side with Mexico and fly in here and drop troops and take over the US.

Wolverines, right? And that's what we're preparing for. That's what we do. And if someone hits us, let's hit back. And if someone cusses at us in America, we don't typically respond in a way that blesses them, do we? In my past, I have not always responded in a way that blesses them. Someone talks about our mama. Oh, yo mama. And this is what we call justice. And justice is right, and justice rules, and justice is deserved, and justice is fair. I deserve. I have the right to retaliate if someone comes against me.

Justice Versus Mercy

And here Yeshua disagrees. Yeshua is forming a new people who represent God's kingdom, and its foundation is love. It's love within relationships. And this ethic that Yeshua presents here is shaped on the grounds of loving God and loving others. And those who love as a kingdom people love even those who pursue injustices against them. Those who love as a kingdom people love even those who pursue injustices against them.

This follower of God that Yeshua is presenting—this Christ follower—is molded into the image of Messiah. They do not respond to injustice with retaliation. They do not respond with revenge. And Yeshua says they respond with grace and mercy and compassion in such a way—this is key—they respond in such a way that it reverses the injustice that was brought against them in the first place. That's Yeshua's expectation. These Yeshua followers live in this total alternative reality where systematic injustice is protested and a love-based justice is employed and implemented instead.

It's a man by the name of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. He's a German pastor who opposed the Nazi regime. And he promoted nonviolence and he led a bold life of pursuing a Messiah-like life. And he began making shockwaves during this time of warfare, political uprising. And long story short, he was hung by the Nazis. They accused him of conspiring against Hitler and he was hung. But he said this. He said this. Wow. You can't fight evil with evil. It doesn't work that way.

The Incarnation and Kingdom Living

And Yeshua, the very presence of God come into flesh, the incarnation of God. See, when Yeshua walked among us, the world was shaken and stirred. The world was shocked to see a man the way God intended him to be walking among flesh. That's what shocked the world. To see an actual fully human being living out the reality of what a godly image looks like. Look at his life. Look at his ministry. It's a picture of how we were meant to live all along. This is how God yearns creation to be. This is how God yearns to see you. This is how God yearns to see the world.

And Yeshua showed up. And he showed what it means to fully submit to God with every ounce of who you are. Scripture says that Yeshua was manifest in this human experience, in this human reality. Scripture says that he emptied himself, emptied himself of the glory. And it says that he became a servant. It says that he made himself likened unto man, submitting to the frailty of this human flesh. And he did this to show us what it looks like to fully submit yourself under the reign of God and be empowered by his spirit.

It's not just about looking at Yeshua as your savior, like this person who loves you. Yeshua is very much so in the Greek, the karyos, the Lord. He's your Lord. And I have to ask you: if you have a Lord today—I'm not even gonna ask. It's a fact. If you have a Lord, it means that you're a servant. It means that you serve. It means that you follow him.

Surrender and Transformation

And we have this instinct as human beings known as fight or flight. Anyone ever experienced this chemical phenomena in your life? It's kind of weird to look back on. Everything kind of gets blurry. You hyper-focus on something. Some of you see red. And it's a chemical mechanism that's triggered when you feel threatened, right? When you feel threatened or something that is yours is threatened, and it's a self-preservation mechanism.

And in that moment, you have to decide the best way to keep yourself secure or the things that are threatened secure. And you can either A, lash out and fight, or you can hightail it out of town to protect what you want to protect.

And Yeshua is calling a people that will surrender to him and that would have the courage to be changed by him. And this people who have encountered this Yeshua would have encountered the grace of the living God. And their pursuit from this moment forward, they can't help but to be changed from this human being bent on focusing on self-preservation. They can't help but to go from that to a human being that is now bent on self-giving sacrifice and self-giving love. This is the transformation that Yeshua expects his followers to have—not treating relationships and

not treating love throughout this world and not being the example of something that's based on getting things and getting what you want in life, but to have a completely life-transforming experience where whenever you see any relationship, your only heart's desire is to give and to serve.

True Freedom

Why? Because that's what the king we follow taught us to do. This king who gives freedom in his reign. [John 8](#), 31 says, Yeshua said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples." So if you hold to his what? Then you are his disciples. Right? Seems like a good workflow. Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you. Love that verse, right?

If you hold to his teaching, if you hold to his example, his halakha, if you submit to his teaching, submit, right? If you give up your own desires and pursuits, if you follow his desires and pursuits, if you give up your definition of good and evil, if you give up your selfish desires, if you give up the things you feel are yours and you follow him and the things that he claims are his, you will be his disciples. Submit, obey, and be a follower is what he demands of his disciples.

And what happens if you take this teaching of this rabbi upon yourself? Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free. And this is something that we've heard many, many times. And I'm sure it just kind of glosses over, but I would ask you to meditate on that. Because it's a verse that's spoken about so many times in different sermons throughout the centuries for a reason.

The freedom that he's speaking about is not like a freedom that we recognize in the U.S. See, and here we have freedom. We are a free people, right? You can say yes because that's liberty, right? And we're free to do what? We're free to live the way we want most of the time. We're free to protect what is mine. It's my freedom to protect it by any means possible. It's my freedom to do whatever I want and be my own person and not be subjected to someone else's authority upon me. That's not the freedom that Yeshua offers here. Yeshua offers a freedom to live selflessly because our greatest enemy, guys, our greatest enemy is not Satan or the devil. Our greatest enemy that we're going to fight and experience more and more and more than any other is yourself. It's your own flesh. Yeshua has come to set us free from that.

And so we surrender to Yeshua and we are set free to live for God and to live for others. And these things all orbit around love—loving God and loving others.

Love That Lays Down Life

Romans 13, 8 states, and verse 10 goes on to say, "Love does no wrong to a neighbor. Therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law." Love does no wrong to a neighbor. This love that Paul speaks of here, this love that Yeshua speaks of, this love that is the foundation of the proclamation of the gospel is not a selfish love. It is a self-giving love. It is a love that his followers partake in and that he demonstrated for us. And it's a love that would enable someone to lay their lives down for another human being.

And this love is not simply like—it's not just like a friend, like I'll lay my life down for a friend. This love, this radical love, would also enable you to lay your life down for someone who wants to see you suffer and who wants to see you in pain and who wants to come against you. That's the love that Yeshua offers to instill in us. This is the love of God manifest. This is why the gospel is that big of a deal. Because it's that radical.

Encountering Peace

In 1956, there was a mission trip to eastern Ecuador to bring peace. And the mission was to bring a victory of the gospel of Christ to the Jorani people. It was a small tribe, also known as the Aka tribe. They had a different name, different story. But the Jorani people. And this small tribe that lived in the jungle had no technology. Really? They did not have the iPads or the radios, never seen a car, never had a Snickers or a Coke.

This is deep Ecuador tribal people. And they had a history of warfare and violence, not just against outsiders, but against other tribal factions. They were brutal. Stuck in the Stone Age, they used blowguns and wooden spears. And this mission team of five families decided to move to Ecuador, and they found out about this people. And they said this people is known for violence and warfare. They have never experienced the peace of God in their life, and they've never heard of the man that we know of as Jesus Christ. They don't know that name. So these five families moved to Ecuador with their kids and everything to learn Spanish and the tribal language, whatever they can learn, so that they can make contact.

And they can introduce these people, not to a warlord, but to a Prince of Peace. Can you imagine just that commitment? The names of the five men that were really pursuing this were Peter Fleming, 27 years old; Jim Elliott, 28 years old; Ed McCauley, 28; Roger Yoderian, 31; and Nate Saint, 32 years old.

The Yellow Plane

Upon first contact, they seemed okay. Either Jim or Nate was flying the plane. They had this little yellow plane that would fly around the jungle, looking for contact. Finally they looked down and saw someone. The tribe thought it was a big bumblebee flying around the sky. What is this big yellow thing? What is this little plane?

They devised a method to introduce themselves. They got a big line down from the plane, and the idea was to fly the plane around in a circle, and the line would stay still in the middle, so they could accurately drop a package in the camp. They dropped gifts to the camp—now these people knew the big bumblebee gave them gifts. This seemed like a pretty friendly situation. They needed to introduce themselves.

They decided to land one day at Palm Beach or Palm River, where two rivers come together. They landed in this patch of sand with their airplane, and these five men got out to meet these people for the first time. A couple ladies and a couple young men came up to meet them, just curious. "What? Who are you people? What is this?"

As they tried to communicate, they saw the plane. One guy asked, "What is that?" The pilot asked, "You want to take a ride?" They took him up in the plane. It was amazing—just flying around the jungle, looking down at the tribe, waving from the plane.

The Misunderstanding

After landing, the men walked back. A couple of the older women stayed to communicate and talk with these five missionaries. They were very interested. Later that night, as the women were on their way back to camp, they got caught by the tribal guard. It was a great offense in the camp to walk without an escort if you're a woman. The women were scared because they got caught. Someone made up a story about how they got separated because these visitors, these outsiders, had attacked them and threatened them. So they ran away.

Big uproar. Actually, the older women came back to camp and tried to tell everyone that wasn't the case. Long story short, the camp thought these men were aggressors, despite other witnesses coming forward and saying they weren't. The warriors left the camp, along the beach, with their spears. They saw the five men there, and the five men thought, "Good, we have more of the tribe." They radioed into the families saying, "Yeah, there's more of them coming. We'll radio back in a couple hours." And they were one by one speared to death by these who would be known as savages, the Aka. They never got to see their families again. First contact. Speared.

Sacrificial Love

Jim Elliott had a quote: "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose."

Before they took off in the plane, they brought guns with them. They didn't like the idea, but they understood the risks. "If we have guns, we'll shoot them in the air as a precaution," they thought. There was one guy who swung a gun out and tried to shoot it a couple times in the air, apparently hitting someone off to the side, away from the warriors coming toward him. That was the only instance of that.

This is what happens when a believer realizes they're part of another kingdom with another king. They realize there's a conflict between the two worlds. One world has enslaved you and placed you in bondage of selfish pursuits, where love is based solely on what you can get and obtain. In the other kingdom, love is displayed and implemented on the basis of what you can give and how you can serve others. It's based on the fundamental Christian identifier known as sacrificial self-giving love. This is how people know you're a follower.

Jim Elliott and the other missionaries understood this. They understood what it meant to be called a believer. These were whole families that moved down there for one goal—to introduce them to Yeshua. Many of us would sit here as Americans and say, "Well, that was a waste. Obviously it wasn't a good decision to go down there and move your families because as soon as they landed, they got speared to death, right?"

Well, see, I haven't even gotten to the interesting part of the story. This is where it begins.

The Gospel Takes Root

Because two years later, Rachel Saint (Nate's wife), Elizabeth Elliott (Jim's wife), and Valerie (Elizabeth's daughter) went to live with these people. They entered the jungle. They landed on the same beach where their fathers and husbands were slain. They boldly walked into the jungle with an interpreter to tell them about this son of God.

They went in and used the language. The name for God in the camp was Wangagi. They told them that Wangagi had sent his son, who was speared, but his son did not spear back. Wangagi had left his carvings in the Bible to mark the trail of how to follow him. These women were there to teach them how to live as believers and how to experience this heavenly kingdom on earth.

The Jerani people were willing to receive Rachel and Elizabeth because they didn't think they were a threat. They knew they came in peace. But they remembered—when telling the story,

they knew who these women were. And they remembered the men had guns but did not fight back. The men did not fight back.

If anything, one of the men is recorded as saying in broken language, "We're here to help you. Why are you stabbing? Why are you killing us?" This he said as the spear went through him.

They also had a memory that came up in the tribal record of the day the missionaries died. They said that they saw a bright canopy of light opening in the sky and heard many voices singing among the trees. They didn't know what that meant.

But as a result of these women's boldness and their witness in sharing their lives, 80% of the Jorani tribe heard the gospel story, and 40% became believers that day. "We want to experience that life. Show us how." This included the men who speared the five missionaries.

Baptized by the Man Who Killed His Father

Nate's son lived out his childhood in Ecuador but spent his summers with his aunt among the Durrani people—the people that killed his father. At age 14, he was baptized by Menkaie, one of his father's attackers who became a Christian and an elder. That's him standing there. I think it's this guy, one of the men who was involved with killing his father.

At 14, he was ready to participate in this rite of passage in the Christian faith. One of the men who killed his father—who participated in spearing him—was saved by his mother and became an established leader in this church. He baptized him on this day.

Here's another picture of Steve when he's older. He's standing with four tribe members. Three of these members who he's standing with in this photo were among the group that slayed his father and the four other missionaries. McKay, the one who baptized him, adopted him into the tribe. He felt this was the only right thing to do. He killed his father, so he adopted him into the tribe as his son. Steve's children call this man grandfather.

God's Radical Love

This is what showing God's love looks like. This is what God's love—this radical, upside-down way that we view God's love—looks like. And being willing to spend everything to encourage a relationship between someone else and Yeshua.

So I say all of that before we go into what Yeshua is saying here. This is what this transformation that Yeshua demands of his followers looks like. This is tough. This is tough.

You Have Heard It Said

"You have heard it said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, don't resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, then let him have the cloak as well. And if they force you to go a mile, go that extra mile. Give to whoever begs of you. Do not refuse those who borrow from you."

Now, first off, Yeshua is actually quoting Torah, roughly. [Exodus 21:23](#) and [Deuteronomy 19:21](#) are two places where this phrase is introduced: "But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise."

The Ancient Law of Revenge

This is a concept that's pretty universal, right? It's tip for tap, equal weights and measures. In order for something to be fair and equal, an offense needs to be offset equally, right?

It's actually an ancient law known as Lex Talianus. It's a revenge law that says if someone does something to you, you have the right to do the same to them. Not more, but just the right to do it. It's expected. And this is what the Pharisees took this commandment and turned it into.

Of how they can use this commandment on a personal level to seek revenge on others. And this commandment was not meant to be used on a personal level between offenses. It was meant to establish a form of justice in a community. It was a good thing. But it was being used in a perverted way. And it's amazing because when we talk about tit-for-tat and revenge, we as a society eat this up. Anyone else? We love this concept as Americans. I mean, I'll be honest, I love it. We love revenge films. We eat them up, right? Where there's like a victim, right? And then the victim, justice is not served to their aggressor, but the victim somehow finds the strength to come against and find the aggressor in their life. And then all of a sudden, they learn how to shoot really big guns really well in a short amount of time. And then they find their aggressor and they blow them away. Doesn't anyone feel that satisfaction in our American culture? That's what needed to happen. We love these films. We love superhero films. Why? Because superheroes, they make the bad guys pay for what they did. We love it. And as Americans, we really like martyrdom films where there's a hero, right? Fighting to the death and taking as many of these transgressors and bad guys with him. Like, we love it. Like a Samson ending, you know? Yeah, take them all out. Die in glory. We love it. But that's not how justice works in the kingdom of Yeshua. That's the issue. In the kingdom of Yeshua, judgment

belongs to who? And we are called to serve. And we're called to surrender our wills. And we're called to love.

In the Kingdom of Yeshua

In the kingdom of Yeshua, the hero dies. The hero dies not to see how many of the bad guys he can take. In the kingdom of Yeshua, the hero dies so that his transgressors can live. It's about showing what a relationship with God looks like, even at the cost of dying. In other words, when you're in this situation—blowing this guy away, right? Reacting, responding to his assault towards you, right? If this guy's coming against you and he's robbing you, or let's say this guy's throwing threats at you, he's talking about your mama, like what response? Is your response going to negatively affect his relationship and exposure to God, or is it going to positively affect his relationship and exposure to God? The words that come out of your mouth in response to their slander—is it going to embrace them and connect them with the God of the universe, or is it going to push them farther away? That's what this comes down to. This is hard to digest. But when did Yeshua ever say anything that was easy for our flesh to digest?

And Yeshua continues. He says—now, this verse is typically taken out of context to be primarily focused on violence. And we can talk about pacifism. We can talk about world social heroes like Gandhi who boldly stood in the face of violence and said, no, this is wrong. And if you hit me, you're still wrong. And you're weak too, because you can't solve problems the strong way. I think that's very close to what Yeshua is saying. Hacksaw Ridge. Anyone see that movie? It's fantastic. Pacifists who joined the military in World War II. There's something about standing up to a bully who's threatening to violently pummel you and looking at them in a way not to run away. Not to say, oh no, I've got to get out of here. Not fight or flight. No, to subvert that entire mentality and to look at them and say, you're doing something very weak right now. You will solve nothing. This is evil. Do you realize that you're evil? Do you realize that this is a weakness? You don't have the boldness to stand without violently hurting someone, causing pain. That's not a human thing to do. There's something about the strength of that that amazes me. But this verse says—this verse is speaking about something very specific. It's not violence per se, not to dismiss that, but we actually spoke about this in the Grace Anatomy series a long time ago about honor and shame.

Honor and Shame

If someone came up here, Brad's a great example. So if Brad came up here and slapped me, please don't, but if he slapped me, it would be kind of embarrassing, right? Like, it'd be a little

embarrassing, right? So contrast that atmosphere. He just comes up here and slaps me, right? I don't know if I'd still be standing, but slaps me, right? So imagine just that situation happening. How do you feel? Like, ooh, like it's getting thick, right? So now imagine if he just runs up here and socks me, bam, right? I'd almost rather be punched. That's manly. Take it. But if he comes up here and just slaps me, that's not causing physical damage. He's not going to break my neck or anything with that. You're not going to be sitting here like, oh no, he's going to die. No, it's wow, that's so humiliating. It's shame that happens. If you're right-handed and there's a right cheek there, you have to backhand someone, right? It's a whole different atmosphere that occurs there.

In the Mishnah, it actually speaks about different compensations for whether you're punched or slapped. If you're punched, you have to pay him a couple bucks in court. If you slap someone, it's a hundred times more because of the shame that's associated with it. And like I said, this isn't speaking about necessarily violence and death threats and whatnot. And no, that's not an excuse to justify tit-for-tat violence. That violence doesn't work is, I think, the core message of the biblical narrative. The story of the flood shows that. Violence does not defeat evil is what the story of the flood teaches us. Yeshua did not call his people to be violent, brutal people. You can't defeat evil that way. But this has something to do with something much deeper. This has to do with revisiting shame with shame, retaliating with that measure. It has to do with facing persecution in the form of character assassination. It has to do with not responding to hard-heartedness with hard-heartedness. Do not respond hatred with hatred. This is not the way of the king. Do not get defensive. Show them how weak it is for them to act like that. Turn the other cheek. You want to humiliate me more? It's weak. Your actions are nothing. They're establishing nothing. Do not respond the same way they did, because what different are you? In whose kingdom are you serving?

Retaliation and Response

If someone seeks to slander you, seeks to verbally assault you in front of others, when people say things that make your blood boil because no one's ever had that happen before, so you lunge at them with the same, if not more vile language from the darkest places of your heart, Yeshua is saying that you are participating in the world, not the kingdom, when you respond that way. In God's kingdom, we don't retaliate to hate, malice, and shame with hate, malice, and shame. We retaliate in the way that is most edifying. You ready? We retaliate as believers in the way that is most edifying for the attacker. This is the moment where your flesh just rips. No, that's not fair. I'll look to Jesus for all of my examples. Should we revisit that? As believers, their

relationship with God is our mission. And that's what's supposed to give us the boldness to stand. And again, the idea of standing in the face of violence, not running away, not revisiting violence with violence, standing boldly for what is right and declaring this is wrong is completely within these bounds. Even the early church, we have writings where the sanctity of life was so consuming for the early church that people would go put in jail because they refused to join the Roman military. But this is showing something that is much harder.

Yeshua is saying that if you're his follower, you don't make people pay for when they hurt you. You endure, you sacrifice, and you take it because that's what love does. That's what Yeshua's love does. That's what Peter says in [1 Peter 3, 9](#). And it hurts just thinking about it, doesn't it?

Possessions and Generosity

So Yeshua's moving realms here. He was in the realm of honor, defending your honor, and now he's moving toward something that's very close to home. As Americans, possessions. We love our possessions. If someone sues you and takes your tunic. So there's pretty much two types of clothing in the biblical narrative. You have your outerwear, which is like a long coat. It's very fancy. It's what you sleep in. It's like a sleeping bag with sleeves. Really cool. And then you have your innerwear, which is essentially your underwear, right? And it's fascinating because Yeshua says this on purpose. Like, why would anyone want your underwear? Well, Yeshua's trying to make a point here because Torah states that you cannot take someone else's outerwear coat. It's illegal in [Deuteronomy 24, 12 through 13](#) and [Exodus 22, 26 and 27](#). It's illegal. God says, listen, if you get a pledge, if you have, if you obtain someone's coat, you need to give it back to them before night because that's all they have. That's their sleeping wear as well. And if they cry out to me, I'm going to come and I'll get angry, right?

And so Yeshua is addressing this. That's why he's saying that, because someone can't—an Israelite can't sue you for your coat, but they can sue you for your underwear. And Yeshua is saying that when someone takes you to court for the only thing they can get from you, no matter how petty it is, give that to them and give them the thing that they're not entitled to as well. Give them the thing that they're not entitled to. Wow. Be that radical. We are called to be selfless and we can fight this accusation.

Protecting Yeshua's Honor

We can go to court. We can argue. We can slander. But a person who's tasted the salvation of God through Yeshua is someone who's going to be more concerned with Yeshua's honor than

their possessions in this scenario. That's hard. That hurts. But it's the truth. The desire is to protect Yeshua's honor and even see that your enemy who is suing you come into knowledge and grace of Yeshua. Why? Because it's not I, but him that resides within me. It's not about you. It's about him.

The Guard and the Mercy of God

Remember when Paul and Silas were in prison and the earthquake came? They were praying and singing praises and the lights went out and the guard got up and thought they'd escaped, so he pulled the sword out. This is the guard that abused them, spit on them, cussed at them. He's stupid. Pulled his sword out. He's ready to kill himself because he thought he lost the prisoners. And he's about to do it. Now, I don't know about you, but I know the bounds of my flesh. I may have thought about letting him do it. Just let him do it. Yeah, good. Paul speaks up: hey, bro, don't do that. We're still sitting in our jail. We're just hanging out. You don't have to kill yourself. Don't do that. Even though you probably deserved it and anyone else would want you to do that, we don't want you to do that. We're still here. At that moment, the guard got a glimpse of the love of God and the mercy of God. And the question that he asked Paul is, How do I be saved? How do I experience this kingdom that you're a part of?

Going the Second Mile

And if someone forces you to go a mile, go with him two miles, give to the one who begs from you and do not refuse the one who borrows from you. Roman military personnel could organize bands of unpaid laborers from the common people to construct roads and fortifications and building materials. If they saw you on the side of the road, they could force you to carry their weapons and backpacks for a little while, right? The most familiar New Testament scene is when Simon is just hanging out and here comes Yeshua and drops his cross. And the Romans say, Pick up his cross. By law. Okay, I've got to do this. By law. This is what Yeshua is speaking about.

And Yeshua is stating, as a believer, a witness of the birth of new creation, an ambassador of God's kingdom, you are so sold out to God, and you're so grateful to God, and you're so excited to serve in any capacity whatsoever, that you are willing to give yourself away. And you're willing to give even your time. Walk with us one mile, peasant. Oh, wait, here's a mile. You need me to go for another mile with you? Can you imagine the look? Sure. All right, let's do it. This is how you subvert the powers of this world. You have just taken all of the power that was

meant for harm away from the attacker, and you've made it into a blessing for them, showing what God's mercy and grace looks like.

Three Desires We Must Surrender

Wow. Each one of these statements is targeting three things. Essentially, the desire to protect your honor, the desire to protect your possessions and your property, and the desire to protect your time. The three things that you give to anything that you love. And each one of these examples is employing the reality of what is best for the person in front of you. That's what Yeshua is calling his followers to do. Welcome to the rabbi from Galilee that changed the world. Stop thinking about yourself and think about them.

What Are You Unwilling to Give Up?

And so I ask you today, what are you unwilling to give up? I would assume that you're probably doing the same thing I am and making the list. What are you unwilling to give up? What hurts you the most? What makes you go no the most? Is it your pride? Is it your possessions? Is it your time? Self-sacrificial love is what we are willing to give for the sake of others. But what about finances? That's something that hits home. We don't care about our coats in America. We care about our money. Are you good stewards of what God has given you with your income? It's an honest question. It's a taboo subject. The pastor just brought up finances. Yeah, I did.

The Stewardship of Our Money

Because if God has brought you to the mission field of Ecuador, guess what? You're expected, you're required to give of your time and your energy and your money. If God brings you to a family in need, guess what's expected of you? Your time and your energy and your money. If God calls you to be a part of a community fellowship somewhere, God calls you to make a choice on whether or not you're going to give yourself to that community that he's called you to. Will you give your time and your energy and your money to that? You can always tell who's been called by God either at a fellowship or here or in the mission field because these are the ones who are on fire for serving and giving anything and everything they possibly can for the sake of the mission that they know God has them on. And that's incredible. Incredible.

Calling and Community

Because if they know that God has called them to be a part of a community, wherever that would be, he's called them to pour into it. So what boundaries have you placed on being a self-giving, sacrificial giving believer in your walk? Would you have run home when the spear was thrown? Or would you have seen, "Wow, my husband just walked like Yeshua did and he followed Yeshua"? So Jim Elliot's wife said that was confirmation for her that they were meant to be there when she found out her husband was impaled. Because that's what Christ did. He was impaled. My husband died in similar fashion to Christ. Wow, God has brought us here to witness to these people. We're here for a reason. Worship team, you guys can get set up.

Yeshua's Self-Sacrificial Love

Yeshua lived this attitude out. Remember the night of his arrest? Yeshua struggled with self-preservation as well. Remember the prayer? Fight or flight. He was ready for flight. He was ready for it. Take this cup from me. I don't... But what happened? Self-giving sacrificial submission to God. We learn from that. Through his self-sacrificial love, God's mercy and grace was revealed to the world. And this was Yeshua's charge. This is Yeshua's charge to you today, reading from the scriptures. When will you put down your fists and stop making it about you? When will you realize that you represent your king in your actions? When will you make a stand against the way that this world says judgment should happen and collide with this world in the most radical way?

The Cost of Following

It's hard to forgive. It's hard to give up things that you feel entitled to. We love being greedy. It's hard to surrender when you feel passionate about a certain topic in your life or subject. It's hard not to be consumed by revenge and retaliation in this world, in this present day. Yeshua did it for you, and he calls you as his follower to do the same. Your pride, your anger, your entitlement are getting in the way of the experience of God's kingdom on earth. That's what's being told to us here. And we're called to trust in Yeshua and choose to give back to him all that we are. So I don't know your story this week. But Yeshua called us to put the integrity of our relationships first and as fully human beings pursue God's justice, reflect God's righteousness, and show the mercy and strength of God's love as his representative. So I want you to walk away today. Next time you're in conflict and someone's come against you, next time someone surprises you with an insult, next time someone demeans you, next time someone steals your honor, I want you to ask yourself as a believer, what do I do now to make sure I promote their

relationship with God? That's what we're called to do. That's the cost of following. Shalom, I'm Matthew Vanderells and I hope you enjoyed this message.

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