

Jesus Clarifies His Calling

Matthew 5:38-48

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Read Matthew 5:38-48. Jesus is bringing new light to Old Testament laws that have been distorted and drawing us into a new life that is radically transformed. Look for key words and phrases, or things that are emphasized or repeated.

What are the drawbacks to an "eye for eye" mentality? What is the background of this idea?

Where do we draw the line between our rights and our responsibility to be forgiving and patient?

What is the rationale behind Jesus' idea that love overcomes evil? In what ways have you been seeking vengeance or an opportunity to pay someone back for a wrong done to you? What grudge or personal vendetta do you need to lay aside?

Sometimes people try to soften the commandment of 5:48 by insisting that it tells us to be "mature" rather than "perfect." Yet the same Greek word (*teleios*) is used both of us and God. What would be wrong in using the term "mature" to translate the word *teleios* here?

What is Jesus wanting us to see here?