

# Jesus: Let me clarify this 'eye for an eye' thing...

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[ 0 : 00 ] Would you open up your Bibles to Matthew 5, verses 38-42? We've been working through the Sermon on the Mount. And it's been rather challenging, hasn't it?

Let me bow one more time. God, it's not our natural inclination to love someone who slaps us across the face.

It's not our natural inclination to give a cloak. Our only cloak.

It's not our natural inclination to not only give someone a ride for a mile, but to take them where they need to go. And Lord, when we're begged for money or asked for someone to borrow money from us, our natural inclination isn't to welcome and love.

There is a work that needs to happen in us, God. And Lord Jesus, from Your lips, You call us to something beyond ourselves, a righteousness that exceeds the Pharisees here.

[ 1 : 12 ] It exceeds our ability. And so God, we're so thankful that not only You call us to an exceeding righteousness, You have an exceeding power that You've made available to us in Jesus to live the life You've called us to.

God, would You make us a people who shine as lights in this dark place. In Jesus' name, Amen. Amen.

Heart Set Life Slapped across the face? Have you ever been verbally insulted before? When you're verbally insulted, what's your first inclination?

I don't know about you, but when I get insulted, I'm like... I want to insult back. I want to swap wrong for wrong.

Our natural inclination when wronged is to wrong back. This morning, we're going to see Jesus. He's going to call us to something here that when we're wronged, we're not to retaliate in kind, but actually, we're to go beyond what is expected.

[ 2 : 29 ] It is quite a call this morning, but just to help you guys realize we're all in this together. When a sinner is wronged, a sinner tends to wrong back.

I think you guys probably remember from this summer, the whole thing with Paul Ryan and Donald Trump. And Donald Trump wanted Paul Ryan's endorsement, and Paul Ryan was a little reluctant to give the endorsement.

And he finally did some kind of endorsement. And then when it was Paul Ryan's time to be endorsed, remember Donald Trump was less than quick to endorse him.

A little retaliation going on there, I think. We see retaliation taking place in a variety of different places, not just in politics, but in families.

You see a wife who's offended by her husband and she retaliates in a variety of ways. Maybe it's a silent treatment.

[ 3 : 34 ] Maybe it's a slam door. Maybe it's a withholding of something. It's tragic when you see these kinds of retaliations escalating and escalating, and eventually, it just starts burning a marriage from both ends.

We see retaliation taking place between parents and children. A child doesn't get something that he or she wants from the parent, and they retaliate.

And other kinds of disobedience or making things hard around the house. We see retaliation taking place between brothers and sisters. And it's just not in our families, in our homes.

It takes place in God's family, the church. When a brother is offended by another brother, by some kind of an insult, that can lead to all sorts of retaliations.

Grudges, grudges, silent treatments, slander, gossip. Retaliation is a temptation that is common to man.

[ 4 : 50 ] And when a sinner is wrong, a sinner tends to wrong back. Maybe you came in here this morning, and you're already involved in some kind of escalating conflict with another person who has wronged you.

Maybe they insulted you some way with their words. Some kind of verbal backhand. Or maybe they are making demands on you that you know are selfish.

And your temptation is to retaliate. To slap back somehow. To respond to a demand with some demand of your own.

I'm going to give you your just desserts. I'm going to even this score. That injury, I'm going to swap for an injury of my own, buddy. And oftentimes, we justify our retaliation with things like this.

Hey, I'm just claiming my rights, pal. I have the right to protect my reputation. Thank you very much. I have the right to my own possessions.

[ 6 : 02 ] Thank you very much. I have the right to my own time. Don't you make a claim on it. I've got a right to my money in the way I want to spend it. Thank you.

At the heart of retaliation is a selfish claiming of one's rights. Or it can be. And what Jesus is going to call us to this morning is, He's going to call us to give up our rights so that we can love the one who offends us.

It's a radical call. When offended, our first inclination is to revenge. To retaliation.

But Jesus is calling us this morning to lay down our right to retaliate in order to love the one who has offended us.

And so this morning, I'm going to show you from this text. I'm going to walk us through Moses on retaliation, the Pharisees on retaliation, and then Jesus on retaliation.

[ 7 : 11 ] And we're going to spend most of our time on Jesus and what He has to say about retaliation. But we've got to set it up by starting with the Mosaic Law. And so, let's jump right in.

The Mosaic Law, the Law and the Prophets, actually addressed the problem of retaliation.

It came to be called, it came to be called, *lex talionis*. And it's Latin for the law of retaliation.

And we see it several places in the Old Testament. I'm just going to read several places to you. If you can keep up, please, by all means do. We'll start in Leviticus 24, 19 through 20.

We read this, if anyone injures his neighbor as he has done, it shall be done to him. Fracture for fracture. Eye for eye.

[ 8 : 11 ] Tooth for tooth. Whatever injury has given a person shall be given to him. That's *lex talionis*. Another passage is in Exodus 21, verses 23-24.

But if there is harm, you shall pay life for life. Eye for eye. Tooth for tooth. Hand for hand. Foot for foot. Burn for burn. Wound for wound. Stripe for stripe.

*Lex talionis*. The Law of Retaliation. Deuteronomy 19, verse 21. Your eye shall not pity. It shall be life for life.

Eye for eye. Tooth for tooth. Hand for hand. Foot for foot. The Law of Retaliation. *Lex talionis*. It's really important to understand why these passages are in our Bible.

There are two really important distinctions that we need to make here. Why this is here. Essentially, what the Law of Retaliation, these passages are getting at, is to provide just recompense when wronged.

[ 9 : 27 ] And so the heart behind it, the idea behind it, is that the use of eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth was intended to keep a conflict from escalating more.

It was to provide just recompense for an injury. So the eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth thinking commands.

It wasn't to breed revenge. It wasn't to escalate hostility. Rather, it was to pacify revenge. It was to provide a just punishment for a corresponding crime.

It was to make sure there was just compensation for an injury in right kind and degree.

An eye for an eye. A tooth for a tooth. Let me give you an example. If you rear-ended my 2003 pickup truck, *Lex talionis* would say, bumper for bumper.

[ 10 : 26 ] And so I would not require of you to buy me a new 2016 pickup truck. That's going beyond the principle.

So *Lex talionis*, the way that Moses was using it was instituted to ensure that there was a just compensation for an injury.

It was a corresponding punishment that fit the crime.

Corresponding compensation for an injury incurred. But that's only one part of Lex talionis. The second distinction is important too.

If you look at the immediate context around the Exodus 21 passage in the Deuteronomy 19 passage, Moses assumes judges will be the ones deciding what is a fair and just compensation for an offense or injury.

[ 11 : 33 ] Remember Exodus chapter 18, Moses is overwhelmed by all the decisions he's having to make. And his father-in-law Jethro says, hey buddy, you need some help. Call up judges that will help you decide these cases.

And he does so. And these judges were the ones who were deciding these kinds of issues. So they wouldn't have to go to Moses. Moses just handled the really heavy stuff.

But what's important to realize here is this. That the one who's deciding what the just compensation was, was not the one offended. It was an objective, godly third party.

And so what we see going on here with this mosaic eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth, it was to de-escalate conflict from moving towards personal vendettas.

By providing a just consequence and having someone, a third party, make the decisions. There's actually a lot of wisdom to it, don't you think?

[ 12 : 40 ] But that's not what the Pharisees were using eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth for. So we've seen Moses' use. Let's look at the Pharisees' twist of Lex Talionis.

We see that in Matthew chapter 5, verse 38. We read this.

You have heard that it was said, this is Jesus speaking of course, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. The Pharisees were misusing, misapplying eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth.

Jesus says, but you have heard that it was said. Would you look at Matthew 5, 21? You've heard that it was said. Now look at 5, 27.

You've heard that it was said. Verse 31. It was also said. Verse 33. Again, you've heard that it was said to those of old. In verse 38, you've heard that it was said.

[ 13 : 44 ] Next week we're going to focus on verse 43. You've heard that it was said. You should love your neighbor and hate your enemy. What Jesus is getting at is not what the Bible actually says, but what the Pharisees were saying, what they were teaching.

Jesus is taking issue with what the religious leaders of His day were teaching the people. So He's seeking to correct His disciples in a misunderstanding and application of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

So what you need to understand is that this is corrective. Jesus is helping His disciples understand the true meaning of an eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth.

If Jesus wanted to actually appeal to the Bible, He would have said, it is written. Hmm. That's what He does in Matthew 4 at least. And so here's the Pharisaical twist.

Apparently, they were reinterpreting an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth in order for one's personal vendetta to be met for personal gain.

[ 14 : 53 ] It was misusing the intent of it instead of de-escalating conflict. The Pharisees were using an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth in order to get what was due them.

And it would increase conflict. It would escalate things. So it would kind of work out somewhat like this if you could imagine.

Let's say a Pharisee is offended by something that he didn't get. The Pharisee would say, you know what? That's wrong. That's do me. You know, eye for an eye.

Tooth for a tooth, buddy. Where Moses would be saying, you know what? It does seem like there was an offense here. And we want to make sure you get a just compensation.

An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. See the difference? One is looking to de-escalate. The one is other. The one is claiming their rights. So what the law of Moses was intending to do in terms of restraining personal retaliation, the Pharisees were somehow using an eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth in a distorted, tweaked way to get what they wanted.

[ 16 : 12 ] To justify their retaliation. You wrong me. I'm going to wrong you back. Eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth. And Jesus speaks right into that.

He seeks to correct it. Because we all deal with retaliation. It's a temptation common to man. And so, let's turn now to, we've looked at Moses on retaliation.

We've looked at the twist, how the Pharisees were justifying their gripes and complaints with this eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth.

Now let's look at Jesus. And we see it beginning in verse 39. Jesus says, but I say to you, do not resist the one who is evil.

But I say to you, do not resist the one who is evil. What I'd like to show you right now are four things. In understanding what Jesus is getting at with, do not resist the one who is evil.

[ 17 : 16 ] What I want you to see first is the principle that Jesus is getting at. And then the practice. Jesus is going to take this principle and show it in practice in four scenarios.

And then I want to help you think through, what is the power behind this? And then the perspective that it gives. And so we're going to look at principle, practice, power, and perspective.

Now let's look at this principle. You've 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.

The one who is evil. The first thing you need to understand about this principle that he's giving is, he's not talking about just war theory. He's not making a claim on how a police department should use force or not.

That's not what he's doing here. We see that talked about in Romans 13. No, Jesus is very much focusing in on personal relationships.

[ 18 : 22 ] The everyday stuff where we're offended. And we want to claim our rights real quick. The key word of it all is this word resist.

What does Jesus mean by resist? Do not resist the one who is evil. I mean, are we to be doormats here? Are we just going to let crime happen? What is Jesus getting at here?

Well, given that Jesus is clarifying the true meaning of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

He's wanting to help us see what the law of retaliation really is intended to mean.

It's best to understand that word resist as retaliate. But I say, do not retaliate against the one who is evil.

He's not denying that you're going to be sinned against. What Jesus is saying is, don't retaliate against them. Do not retaliate against the one who intends some kind of evil against you.

[ 19 : 29 ] Don't trade wrong for wrong. Jesus seems very much to be limiting the focus of his teaching here on the different kinds of personal offense.

And we'll see that played out in the scenarios he gives out in a second. And so what I just want you to make sure you're understanding is he's not speaking of the role of a government. It's military or it's police force here.

He's addressing the frequent evils of insult and imposition. When someone is being self-focused and demanding and imposing on us.

And so he's dealing with the realm of personal relationships. A realm we live in every day. In our marriages. In our parenting. In our workplaces.

In our schools. Here's what Jesus is getting at. Here's the principle. When you are insulted or imposed upon by another person.

[ 20 : 34 ] Do not retaliate. Do not retaliate. He says do not resist the one who is evil.

And what he means by do not resist, do not retaliate is you don't sin back. But what we're going to see now as we turn to the practice of this principle.

There's more to it than just not sinning in return. So let's now look at verses the second half of 39.

All the way through 42. And we're going to see four examples of this principle in practice.

So you are not, when you're insulted or imposed believer. By another person. Don't retaliate. In second half of verse 39 we see this.

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. This right cheek slap was a certain kind of slap.

[ 21 : 47 ] It was, most people were right handed. And so in order for you to do a right cheek slap. It had to be a back hand. Otherwise you'd have to do some kind of contortion move.

In order to slap them on the right cheek with an open right hand. And so this right handed back hand was an insult. It was considered more of an insult than an open handed slap to the left cheek. This was across your face. And it was an insult of your person. Now, nowadays we don't really do much of this right handed back hand against the, cross the face.

But we have our own kinds of insults, don't we? That are just as slappy. Often times they're verbal insults. And it has the effect of a verbal back hand.

You're so incompetent. You're so incompetent. You're so arrogant. You're useless. Has anybody been called those before?

[ 22 : 46 ] Or some other kind of insult of your person? It's a verbal back hand. And what Jesus is telling us here is this. When you receive a back hand of some kind, across your right cheek, turn your other.

So notice what he's saying. There's two things. Jesus is saying, don't retaliate. Don't slap them back. Rather, go beyond what is expected.

And position yourself for another insult. Turn your cheek. And so when Jesus talks about resisting the one who is evil, not only is he saying, don't retaliate.

What we're going to see played out in these examples is, you go beyond what's expected. We see that played out in the next example, in verse 40.

And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. The idea there is someone's bringing you a small claims court for your favorite outfit.

[ 23 : 56 ] And so the tunic was something that was worn. It's not your underwear, but it is, you know, pants in your shirt. And what Jesus is bringing up, hey, if someone imposes this demand on you for your favorite outfit, don't retaliate.

Don't sue him back. Rather, give them your outfit. But then he goes one step further. He says, and also give them your cloak. Do you know what he's talking about? Do you have a favorite parka that you wear in February here in Wisconsin?

I got a favorite parka. Man, this thing is awesome. I could wear a t-shirt underneath it in 30 below weather, and I'm just happy. I only got one of them. According to Mosaic law, it was wrong for one Jew to sue another Jew for their cloak, because it's the only thing they had.

And so what Jesus is saying here, if someone sues you for your tunic, give them your tunic, and voluntarily give them your favorite parka too. What Jesus is saying here is don't retaliate.

Yeah, don't swap out suit for suit. Rather, go beyond what's expected. When you're insulted, go beyond what's expected. This next one's very interesting.

[ 25 : 21 ] Verse 41. And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. If the first one was an insult of your person, and the second one was the imposition on your possessions, this one is an imposition on your time, your energy.

Somebody imposes, demands something of you to do a task that you weren't planning on doing. Thank you very much. A good example of this is Simon of Cyrene.

Do you remember him? Jesus is about to be crucified, and he's having to carry his cross out to Calvary, and the Roman guards, they impress upon Simon of Cyrene, who was in Jerusalem, to carry Jesus' cross.

Simon did not show up to Jerusalem to volunteer to carry Jesus' cross that day. He was forced to do that. It was legal for him, for the Romans, to do that to Simon of Cyrene.

And so what we're being talked about here is when someone imposes something on you, a task of some sort, that you weren't planning on today, that's going to take time, and it's going to take time away from whatever else you were doing.

[ 26 : 42 ] Jesus says, hey, don't retaliate. Rather, go another mile. Now, if you're like me, I start thinking like this.

Okay, I have a friend. He needs to get a ride out west, and so he gets in the car. I turn my odometer thingy to zero, and I'm watching this go click to one mile.

Got it. I'm now entering the second mile, and I get to mile number two, and I pull over to the side of the road, and I say to my friend, hey, buddy, I got you the extra mile.

I know you've got three more miles to walk, but I want the extra mile for you. That's not what Jesus is getting at. Jesus is simply getting at the point of going beyond what's expected.

When someone demands your time and energy in a way that you weren't planning for, the last example that Jesus gives of this principle to not retaliate, not to resist the one who is evil.

[ 27 : 54 ] We see that played out in verse 42. Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you. All of a sudden, we're in the world of someone wanting money from me.

Someone asking for money. Give me some money. It's challenging. What Jesus' response is this.

He's saying, don't retaliate, but go beyond what's expected. Now, we are faced on a regular basis. I don't know about you, but I'm regularly encountering people who are asking money from me.

What am I supposed to do? Do I give them everything in my pockets? Do I go to an ATM and cash out everything we got and give it to them? What am I supposed to do? Well, the bottom line is what

we're going to see is, well, we don't retaliate, but we're going to go beyond what's expected, and the way that we do that is by loving this person who's asking for money, and that doesn't necessarily mean we give them everything we got, but it definitely means helping them and understanding them and taking them the next step.

Now, I don't have an easy answer for you this morning on that one, but I can point you to something. This is a book that has been tremendously helpful for me and for people from our church and understanding how to respond to people in need, and when you're put on the spot, ask for money.

[ 29 : 28 ] It's called when helping hurts. The bottom line is to go beyond what's expected, we're going to do that in a way that pleases God, and so we want to help people without hurting them.

So, for example, if I'm outside of shenanigans and I have a guy who's got alcohol in his breath coming up to me and asking for five bucks, I'm going to say no. Do you know why?

It would be unloving of me. Another example would be this. If I had someone coming up to me and asking for money, and I know this person had a chronic problem with finding a job, and it wasn't that he wasn't looking, it was because he didn't want to work.

I would not be inclined to help them out with money. I'd want to help them out in a different way. I'd want to admonish him, as 1 Thessalonians would say.

Admonish him to work. The Apostle Paul says some hard things in 2 Thessalonians 3. He says, hey, if you're not going to work, you're not going to eat. That's the rule I tell all the churches.

[ 30 : 40 ] And so what we want to do, whatever it is, when someone presents a real physical need, is we want to help them in a way that's really going to help them, not going to hurt them in the long run.

And so I want to commend to you this book, When Helping Hurts. It also has a, there's a free video series online. That's called Helping Without Hurting.

I think there's six videos. They're really, really helpful, and they will help you know how to respond when you're put on the spot when someone asks you for money. But the principle is this.

When someone asks you for money, don't retaliate. Don't be sinful back. Rather, seek to go beyond what's expected. I'll help you with that in just a second.

In all this practice, of not retaliating and going beyond what's expected, I think we need to ask a question. What's underneath this?

[ 31 : 45 ] Jesus, why are you talking like this? What's driving this? Why not just stop with non-retaliation? What's this business of going beyond what's expected?

Where's this coming from? Well, it's not explicit in this passage, but it becomes explicit in a passage later in Matthew. Would you turn to Matthew 22? In Matthew 22, verses 34-40, Jesus says something that is really helpful for us.

Quickly to summarize it, it's this. A lawyer comes up to Jesus and asks him a question to test him. He says, Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law? And he's asking, What is the greatest of commandments? And Jesus says to him, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.

And then he says, This is the great and first commandment, and a second is like it. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. And now look at verse 40. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.

[ 33 : 05 ] What Jesus is giving us right here is a way to understand how we're to fulfill an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. Lex talionis is filled by the law of love.

Lex amoris. So what Jesus is saying here is, when someone asks you for money, love them. Love them. Treat them as you would want to be treated.

Love your neighbor as yourself. In fact, first, love God with everything you've got, and then love this person. And so, when you love God first, you know what you're going to want for your neighbor?

You're going to want them to love God with everything they've got. So no matter how I help somebody, I'm going to help them in a way that's going to aim them at God Himself. So that they would love Him with all of their heart, soul, mind, and strength.

And so, underneath this, these words of Jesus, I want to help you think in terms of there is a law of love. Do good to the one who insults you.

[ 34 : 14 ] Love the person who puts a demand on you. And love them, and what it means is, do the greatest thing you can for them. Do what's most wise for them.

And sometimes, that will be something they don't want, but you know it's the most loving thing you can do. Quick question.

Jesus, did you practice what you preached? Jesus, did you do this very thing you're talking about here? When you were insulted, did you not retaliate?

Did you go beyond what was expected? When you were imposed upon, did you not retaliate? Did you go beyond what was expected? Of course, we know the answer.

The cross of Jesus Christ is the greatest example of non-retaliation and going beyond what's expected the world has ever seen. At the cross, God went beyond our expectations.

[ 35 : 26 ] What did we deserve? We deserve punishment. In the cross, what it shows is, God did not come to retaliate in Jesus.

He came to forgive. He came to forgive sinners who slapped Him. He gave to forgive sinners who swapped Him out to worship what He created.

He came to save the ones who were offending Him. The cross is the greatest example of this principle of non-retaliation and going beyond what's expected.

The cross of Jesus Christ is not lex talionis. It's the law of love on display. Lex amoris. The law of love. Now when you realize what Jesus is talking about, you realize He's practicing what He preaches.

this gives us eyes to see these practices in a new light. What's underneath all this is the law of love. So we're not to respond, retaliate to the one who insults us because it wouldn't be loving.

[ 36 : 38 ] It wouldn't be loving my neighbor as myself. And I'm going to go beyond what is expected. Even though they insult me, I'm going to turn my cheek. I'm going to give my cloak.

I'm going to go the extra mile because that's what God and Christ has done for me. There's no way to put it other than this.

What we see happening in Matthew 5, 38-42 is a call to die to your rights. That's what Jesus is calling us to.

He Himself did that. And He's calling us to the same. I'm going to do for the one who insults me what Jesus did for me.

So the law of love isn't just limiting our response to non-retaliation, but it's going beyond expectations because that is what God has done for each of us in Christ.

[ 37 : 47 ] And so all of these practices that Jesus is showing here of this principle of non-retaliation ends up being ways we love our neighbor as ourself. It's the law of love.

Now the question becomes, man, really, seriously, how am I supposed to do that? Because it sounds great, but how do you actually do that?

How do I, when someone is insulting me, respond in love to them? Because that's where it gets in the nitty-gritty, right? How do you do that?

Well, you need a power that's not of your own. And the power that we need comes from the one who's speaking these words. Jesus power, gospel power, cross power.

What gives us the ability to love those who insult us? What gives us the ability to love those who impose a demand upon us? Jesus does.

[ 38 : 47 ] The cross of Christ does. Me being united to Jesus does. And so let me point you to a couple passages. Ways in which this works out in life.

life. The first thing you've got to realize is you've got to die to yourself. That initial reaction to retaliate, it's got to die.

There's this passage in 1 Corinthians 6. The Apostle Paul is calling these Corinthians out of sexual immorality. And he says this by way of summary.

He says, you're not your own. You were bought with a price. So glorify God with your body. See what he's saying? You're not your own.

You have no right to claim. You've been bought with a price. Jesus' blood. Gospel truth.

[ 39 : 50 ] Cross. Right there. So glorify God with your body. Here's what that means. Because I'm not my own. All that I am belongs to Jesus now.

Do you know what that includes? My reputation. So when I'm insulted, the reputation that I want to protect, I'm going to submit it to Jesus.

It's His. My reputation is His. My tunic and cloak is His. My time and energy is His. My money is His. All of that He's entrusted to me. I'm going to steward unto Him. So what the cross does for us is it helps us to die to our selfish claiming of rights so that we can live for our King.

And then when we are positioned to do that, we are now able to love our neighbor as ourself. A couple of my favorite passages.

[ 40 : 52 ] 2 Corinthians 5.15 says, And He died for all that those who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who for their sake died and was raised.

He died for me so that I can live for Him. He died for you so that you could live for Him. He died for you so that when you're insulted, you don't respond in kind, but you go beyond what's expected.

That's why He died for you. Galatians 2.20 I have been crucified with Christ. It's no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me in the life I now live in the flesh.

I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself up for me. There's gospel. He gave Himself up for me so that I could live for Him. So when someone puts an unrealistic, selfish demand on me, I don't respond in retaliation, vengeance.

I love them as God in Christ has loved me. This is how we die to ourselves in order to live for Christ and it all has to do with Christ's work on the cross.

[ 42 : 03 ] That's where the power is to enable us to do this. And so, let's say that you are insulted by someone and you're face to face. Do you know what you could be doing? I'm hearing what this person is saying and I really want to reach out with my verbal backhand right now and slap them right across the face in return but you know what?

Jesus, You died for me so that I could respond to this person not in kind but in love. I'm not going to retaliate back.

I'm going to love back. That's the power of the cross. That's what God enables us to do. Now having said that, let me give you this perspective.

This is a game changer. When you realize what God in Christ has done for you and that you belong to Him and you don't really have any rights to claim anymore, you're on His agenda.

All of who you are is for Him now. And so, here's what this means. The next time you're insulted, it might be this afternoon or tonight.

[ 43 : 18 ] Do you know what that actually is? God's sovereign over it all. Your insult is His opportunity to advance His kingdom. My being imposed upon is His opportunity to advance His glory.

I'm living for Him so it gives me the opportunity to see things as they are. Opportunities to advance His kingdom.

That's the perspective this gives us. My insults are His opportunities for His glory. So when you're insulted, don't think about yourself.

Don't think about the one who's insulted you. Think about Jesus. Cross. Love. Reconciliation. Reconciliation. This is an opportunity. I'm not going to retaliate.

I'm going to go beyond what is expected out of love for this person. The question becomes, it's no longer am I obligated. The question becomes, in light of the cross, what is the most loving thing I can do for this person right now within reason for the glory of Jesus?

[ 44 : 32 ] See how that's a game changer? That totally flips our insults on their head. Totally flips these demands into opportunities for the living God to advance His glorious purpose.

There are opportunities. Is it possible that this is part of our God's strategy to advance His kingdom on earth?

Using those who insult us and our impositions to advance His Christ-like love and glory. We've seen Moses on retaliation.

It was to restrain retaliation. We've seen the Pharisees on retaliation. It was to justify retaliation. And now we've seen Jesus on retaliation.

Your insults and your impositions are my opportunities to bring glory to my name. The principle when wronged don't retaliate back, love back.

[ 45 : 46 ] The practice whether insults or impositions don't retaliate love again and again. The power is cross power. He died for us so that we could lay down our rights and love others.

And then of course is the perspective. Your next insult is your next opportunity to be a witness for God's go beyond expectation kind of love.

Jesus didn't come to abolish the law. He came to fulfill it. And He calls us to a righteousness that exceeds even the Pharisees.

We love when we're insulted. Because Jesus loved us. Let's pray. God in heaven help us throughout the rest of this day to live in the good of the gospel here.

To live in light of the cross. That our rights are no more. That we're living for you now. God in heaven and so God when we're insulted when we are made demand people put demands on us God would you help us to respond in the way that you responded to us.

[ 47 : 18 ] That we wouldn't retaliate that we would go beyond what's expected. God would you would you build your church would you advance your kingdom through us your people as you change us.

Jesus we ask this in your name Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.