

Blooming in the Dark

Long Beach Alliance Church • February 28, 2016 • Elder Keith Bowers

1) Are we growing closer to God?

A) 2 Peter 1:2

2) Contrasting the “Kingdom of America” with the Kingdom of Heaven

A) What are some American values?

B) What did Jesus say about the Kingdom of Heaven?

i.) Matthew 4:17

ii.) Matthew 5:20

C) What characterizes citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven?

i.) Romans 14:17

3) “Turn the other cheek”

A) Matthew 5:38-42

i.) The Law of Retaliation.

ii.) Context and meaning.

iii.) Do not fight against the one that is evil.

a.) Matthew 5:39

iv.) Give him your coat also.

a.) Matthew 5:40

v.) Go further.

a.) Matthew 5:41

vi.) Give.

a.) Matthew 5:42

4) An Old Testament example worth considering

A) Joseph, son of Jacob.

i.) Genesis 50:19-21

5) Tapping the source of “right living”

A) The good news.

i.) John 16:32-33

B) Yielding to Him.

i.) Matthew 27:50

GROWTH GROUP GUIDE • WEEK 8: MATTHEW 5:38-42

OPENER

"It was my duty to shoot the enemy, and I don't regret it. My regrets are for the people I couldn't save: Marines, soldiers, buddies. I'm not naive, and I don't romanticize war. The worst moments of my life have come as a SEAL. But I can stand before God with a clear conscience about doing my job."

- Chris Kyle

Today's passage seems nearly impossible for us to relate to...

Are we supposed to take Jesus literally here?

BIBLE STUDY

Read through Matthew 5:38-42

1. Do not _____ the one that is evil.
2. How are you to respond to someone hitting you?
3. What does Jesus say to do when someone sues you?
4. If someone forces you to go out of your way, how does Jesus say to respond?
5. _____ to the one who _____ from you, and do not _____ the one who would _____ from you.

Read through 1 Peter 3:17-18

1. For it is _____ to suffer for doing good.
2. Might it be God's will for you to suffer for doing good?
3. Who did God will to suffer for doing good?

Read through 1 Corinthians 6:7

1. Who in this passage is mistreating Christians?
2. What are the two questions Paul asks believers?

DISCUSSION

1. The Bible clearly states that Christians will be mistreated, and it encourages Christians to prefer to be wronged over demanding their rights. This is true whether or not the mistreatment comes from Christians or unbelievers. What American values does this challenge? When you are wronged, do you value being a citizen of the Kingdom of America, or the Kingdom of Heaven?
2. It seems like Jesus is speaking in hyperbole sometimes. It seems like He expects His followers to be maimed rather than sin, give away everything they have for others to the point of having nothing left, speak simply, and to be the most abused people in our communities. Do you think we are to live like that? Did Jesus live like that?
3. Is there a situation where you are being wronged at this point where you can follow Christ's example? Is anything stirring in your spirit that you should do in response to this? Share and pray with your group.

MAKING ROOM TO MAKE DISCIPLES

Missions Conference is starting soon, and this year we want to be obedient to what we are learning about the Kingdom of God in this passage. We are going to do a service project in which we collect items that refugees need when they move here. We will first canvas our neighborhoods passing out flyers asking them for items that we will come and collect at a later date, and inviting them to join us for Easter. As a family or group of friends, go door to door in your neighborhood passing out flyers and knocking on doors, praying for your neighborhood. You'll get to 1) Prayer Walk, 2) Serve the Poor, and 3) Evangelize, all in obedience to this passage. More information to come! Pray for this chance.

CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for being maimed and abused for us. Thank you for not demanding Your rights so that we could become Your children. Help us please.