

Announcements

Want to keep up on what's going on around here? Drop your info card in the offering plate and we'll add you to the email newsletter list.

Foundations Class will restart in 1/09!**Advent Conspiracy Market is open today - LAST DAY - Everything Half-Off!****Communities:**

This is where we gather to pray, study and encourage one another as part of the work of the Gospel. We would love to get to know you more, and this is one of the best ways to get planted /attached as a part of Seaside.

Please consider joining a Community to strengthen not only your family, but also the larger community.

Contact eric@seasidechurch.com for info on where groups meet or to lead/host one.

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v.38 - An Eye for an Eye? This is one of the more popular verses in the Bible (Ex. 21.24; Lev. 24.20; Deut. 19.21), even among those who would claim it no more than a historical document at best. It was primarily a *physical* and *exact* response, with a *judicial* bent rather than a *personal* one. The religious leaders had taken it out of the physical realm and moved it into the monetary. When someone was hurt it was paid out like an L&I claim - what was the hurt worth? This naturally caused a shift

v.39 - But I say to you... Jesus is again pushing into their understanding of God's purpose in redemption. To be struck in the right cheek would have been a horrible *personal offense*, one punishable at one time in Egypt with *1/3 of a years wage*, and this was the norm - to pay for the offense - in Israel as well. Jesus instead says it is not enough to take the offense, but instead to offer up your body to further abuse, and even loss of face before men, for a greater purpose and cause.

v.40 - If anyone wants to sue you... Once again, Jesus not only *seems* to be running contrary to cultural norms, but, in this case actually *runs counter to the OT!!* Oh the humanity! To give up your shirt was actually acceptable - personal clothing had value (they gambled for Jesus' garments remember?) - if you had used it as collateral for a loan or promise. But according to Ex. 22.25-27 & Deut 24.12-13 taking this *Himation* or outer coat was never allowed, for if a man had not this cloak, what would he sleep in? But Jesus asks us to go beyond our own personal comfort and offer up something no legal opponent in those days would have ever dared to ask for, to renounce *any* right for the sake of showing love.

v.41 - Whoever forces you to go one mile... It was not uncommon for the Roman soldiers to enlist the people of the area to do their grunt work (Simon carrying the cross for Jesus for example). He tells them it is not enough to just bear that burden one mile, but to offer up two instead. At this point we start to see a little more of what He is getting at - it is one thing to grumble at helping for a mile, but to willingly offer up a second turns the table on the soldier? That's a different story.

v.42 - Give to him who asks from you... This has deep roots in Deut 15:7-9. It is here that He pushes into an area of much dispute, one that we often run to Matt. 7.6 to avoid. Will we willingly give, regardless of personal loss or personal thoughts of those of whom we think little of, or to those who have little means to repay?

The root sin here? Justification of self to self and to men. Jesus is again seeking to break the bonds between our hearts and the world - we cannot expect to follow Him if we demand to justify and bring honor to ourselves over and over again before all men, and especially before those who come to persecute and insult us as prescribed in 5.10-12. Our *righteousness* may not seem like the thing being assaulted, but it is the desire and purpose of satan and his dominions to bring down any foundational trust in Him to make us whole. And really, this bond to the world and self keeps us from being made whole. We must be willing to not only bear under the injustice, but to even go beyond it and show them the love of Christ. It is not really our reputations that are at stake, but their coming to the knowledge of their Lord and Savior. It is really not our ego at stake, but the acknowledgment of His place, not only the Redeemer of our souls, the Protector and Bearer of our burdens as well. Will we let God be our Justice? Our Peace? Our Joy? Our Satisfaction in all things? *Does He indeed have the power to make us whole and not leave us high & dry?* That really is the whole question of our growing faith is it not?