

## Bible Study, Series 2, Following Christ, Week 4

### Personal Bible Study

#### Day: 1

Read: *Matthew 5: 38-48*

1. **Verse 38:** have a look at *Exodus 21: 23-25, Leviticus 24: 19-20* and *Deuteronomy 19, 18-21* this law has originally been given for the following reasons:
  - To give proper punishments for crime
  - To contain retaliation
  - To place punishment in the hands of the law instead of in the hand of everyone.
2. Some of the scribes interpreted it as a positive command and started teaching the people that it is a duty an honor to retaliate against wrong doing.
3. **Verse 39-42:** Take special note of how Jesus says that His followers should act when they are insulted (39) in injustice (41) and when inconvenienced (42)
4. **Verse 43:** This is what they taught the people - but what God actually meant was *Leviticus 19:18*.
5. **Verse 44-48:** What has to happen be for a person can be like this and live like this? Have a look at *2 Corinthians 5:17* and *14* and *Romans 5: 5*
6. **Verse 44-48:** Have a special look at verse 44, the two arguments in verse 45-47 and the high ideal in verse 48. Do we have to see verse 48 as meaning "without sin" or do we have to see it, specifically, in context with verse 44-47?

#### Day: 2

Read: *Romans 12: 9-21*

1. **Verse 14:** "Bless your enemies; no cursing under your breath". How is this possible? Have a look at *Luke 23: 34* and *2 Corinthians 3: 18* as well.
2. **Verse 17:** "Repay no one evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men." Have a look at *Psalm 35:12* as well. Augustinus said: evil for good - that is from the devil; evil for evil - that is human; good for evil - that is godly. Verse 17b gives the answer, it is stated very good n *The Message* - "discover beauty in everyone." Also look at *Philippians 4: 8*.
3. **Verse 18:** Here we have clear instruction for today and every day! Let us look for opportunities to do it today.
4. **Verse 19-21:** What are the three reasons given here why a Christian should not retaliate?

#### Day: 3

Read: *Romans 13: 1-7*

1. Write down everything that is said about the government with a reference to the applicable verse.
2. Now look for at what Paul teaches us about a Christian's conduct towards the government.
3. Who were in power when Paul wrote this letter to the Christians in Rome? Was it a Christian government? (For me as a South African this is very significant as we have a completely heathen government)

#### **Day: 4**

*Read: Ephesians 5: 22-33*

1. Verse 22-24: Say in one word what a wife's attitude should be toward her husband. Why should she act like that? Get the answers in today's reading.
2. Verse 25, 28-29 and 33: Write down what a husband's attitude should be towards his wife. It can be summarized in one word, what is the word?
3. Take special note of the measure's given in verse 25, 28 and 33.
4. In verse 25-27 and 30-32 Paul uses the picture of a groom and bride as illustration of the relationship between Christ and the church. What do we learn about the relationship between a husband and wife in a marriage on the one side and on the other hand the relationship between Christ and us?
5. What would you say is the big lesson of Ephesians 5: 22-33 as far as marriage goes? Try and say it in one sentence, getting it from this piece.

#### **Day: 5**

*Read: Ephesians 6: 1-9*

1. How does verse 1-3 describe the duties of a child as a believer?
2. What does verse 4a mean exactly. What does "Take them by the hand and lead them in the way of the Master" mean?
3. Verse 5-8: Here we find a whole series of instructions for servants (any worker or employee in today's terms.) Make a list of these and make a note of the verse of each.
4. What is the duty of an employer that is a Christian according to verse 9?
5. What would you say is the most important lesson of Ephesians 6: 1-9 as far as family life and labor relations are concerned?

#### **Day: 6**

*Read: Isaiah 53: 3-12*

1. How do we know without any doubt that that Isaiah is speaking about Jesus Here? Also have a look at Acts 8: 32-35.

2. Verse 9 and 12 stresses Jesus' innocence. Read it again and really think about it. Why is it that He is willing to suffer like this even though He is innocent? Look at verse 7-8 and 12.
3. Count how many times it is said in verse 4-12 that He suffered and died in our place.
4. How is it possible that Isaiah could speak about His coming, His death on the cross and what it means, 700 year before it happened? Have a look at 2 Peter 1: 1 and 2 Timothy 3: 16.
5. What is the end result of Jesus' humiliation and suffering? Read Isaiah 52: 13 and 53: 10-12.
6. Now read 1 Peter 2: 22-25, that will be our reading for our group study, and see how many time Peter quotes Isaiah 53.

### Group Bible Study

*Read: 1 Peter 2:11-25*

**Verse 11:** "this world is not your home" you have no rights or status where you are now, "don't make yourselves cozy" it is temporary.

**Verse 12:** "Live an exemplary life among the natives so that your actions will refute their prejudices" The people that were enemies of the Christians spread all kinds of lies about the Christians. Now Peter says they must live in such a way that people will not believe the people spreading all these lies.

**Verse 13-17:** When you are reading these verses keep in mind that it was written in a time when the Roman Caesars' persecution of the Christians and Peter himself probably died a martyr.

**Verse 18:** "servants" servants that worked in the houses as well as farm workers and slaves. Many of the Christians were slaves. "Masters" a strong word actually meaning "despot" these slaves were the master's possessions and the master could do with them whatever the pleased.

**Verse 21:** "know how to do it, step-by-step" the original meant something like a text book for calligraphy, on top of each page were an example of how you had to write the letters, correctly, the example you had to follow in your own writing.

1. What are the reasons given in verse 11-12 to inspire the Christians to a holy life?
2. Verse 21 says Christians are followers of Christ. Keep Christ's example in mind and then formulate on the grounds of verse 13-17 a Christian's standpoint about the correct attitude toward the government. Decide on the grounds of that what the implications are for a Christian's participation in politics.
3. Keeping verse 13-25 in mind discuss the following: "freedom fighters and terrorists cannot be Christians as they want to overthrow the present government." How do you feel about it on a personal level, what do you personally feel these verses are telling you.
4. What should the calling be of Christians that have to live under the reign of an atheistic government?
5. What does Jesus' death on the cross ask of us? Keep verse 18-23 in mind.
6. Formulate a Christian's attitude toward foul play in sport, keeping the above in mind.

