

Exodus 20C

- We have begun our study of Law in Exodus
 - Specifically, we are studying the first ten laws or commandment
 - Though the Bible teaches that the entire Law of Moses is indivisible, nevertheless the first ten laws are distinctive
 - They deserve to be considered separately from the rest in the sense that they are very different in scope and style
 - They are at the beginning for a reason, and we do well to acknowledge and understand that reason
 - However, their distinctiveness is not an argument for divorcing these commandments from the rest of the law and expecting believers to keep them today
 - As we learned last week, the believer in the New Covenant receives a new and better law written on their hearts by the Holy Spirit
 - This new law replaces the old by incorporating all of the requirements found in the old yet in better ways
 - And it adds an infinite number of additional commands in keeping with holiness
 - The sanctification of a NT saint is accomplished by two principle forces
 - First, the Spirit of God indwells every believer as an agent of change, teaching, convicting and empowering believers into righteousness
 - Secondly, the word of God is fuel for the Spirit to use in accomplishing His work
 - Without a steady diet of the word of God, the NT saint will find his spiritual growth stunted
 - Yet even with Bible study, it still falls to the believer to respond to the work of the Spirit and follow Him into sanctification
 - This is why the writer of Hebrews calls the word of God the “sword of the spirit”

- So far we have examined the first two commandments
 - They were commands to have no other gods beside the Lord and to not make graven images or idols that substitute for worship of the Lord
 - As we said, both are closely related
 - Together they demand that we follow God with our whole heart
 - This expectation is also present in the NT law of Christ, which demands that we love and obey God without challenge or reservation
 - Today we move forward into the third commandments and beyond
 - Let's re-read the third commandment in Exodus 20

Ex. 20:7 "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.

- This command is directed at restricting Israel's speech or communication concerning the name of God
 - The name of God was spoken to Moses and repeated within Israel
 - As we learned earlier, the name was I AM and has a certain sound in the Hebrew language
 - However, the nation became so concerned with the possibility of violating the third commandment, they adopted a practice of never speaking His name at all
 - And in written form, they removed the vowels of God's name in the Hebrew language to prevent the pronunciation of His name
 - After the vowels were removed, God's name became YHWH, which has become known as the "tetragrammaton"
 - This shortened form of God's word is commonly pronounced Yahweh, but in reality we do not know how God's name was pronounced
 - As a result of this tradition, it became impossible to take God's name in vain within Israel, at least in the literal sense of a misuse of the actual name of God
 - But that didn't prevent men from violating the spirit of this Law

- Jesus condemned the Pharisees for thinking they were holy by avoiding swearing by things they felt had spiritual significance while avoiding other things that they thought ran afoul of this commandment

[Matt. 23:15](#) "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel around on sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.

[Matt. 23:16](#) "Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'Whoever swears by the temple, that is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple is obligated.'

[Matt. 23:17](#) "You fools and blind men! Which is more important, the gold or the temple that sanctified the gold?"

[Matt. 23:18](#) "And, 'Whoever swears by the altar, that is nothing, but whoever swears by the offering on it, he is obligated.'

[Matt. 23:19](#) "You blind men, which is more important, the offering, or the altar that sanctifies the offering?"

[Matt. 23:20](#) "Therefore, whoever swears by the altar, swears both by the altar and by everything on it.

[Matt. 23:21](#) "And whoever swears by the temple, swears both by the temple and by Him who dwells within it.

[Matt. 23:22](#) "And whoever swears by heaven, swears both by the throne of God and by Him who sits upon it.

- Notice they were willing to swear by the temple but if they swore by the gold in the gold in the temple, they were sinning according to their own rules
- Likewise, they would allow themselves to swear by the altar but not the offering
 - Jesus pointed out that their rules were stupid and contradictory
- If they desired to take an oath by binding themselves to some representation of God, then they were effectively binding themselves to God Himself, in violation of the third commandment
 - They were swearing by God, which was a diminishment of God's name
 - And it is presumptuous to expect that God would honor such pledges anyway
 - As Jesus said

[Matt. 5:33](#) "Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, 'YOU SHALL NOT MAKE FALSE VOWS, BUT SHALL FULFILL YOUR VOWS TO THE LORD.'

[Matt. 5:34](#) "But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God,

[Matt. 5:35](#) or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by Jerusalem, for it is THE CITY OF THE GREAT KING.

[Matt. 5:36](#) "Nor shall you make an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black.

[Matt. 5:37](#) "But let your statement be, 'Yes, yes' or 'No, no'; anything beyond these is of evil.

- So merely forgetting the literal name of God isn't a barrier to violating this commandment
 - Like all the commandments of the Law, this commandment is present in the Law of Christ in a greater way
 - Besides Jesus instructions not to swear oaths on God's name, the NT writers expand the intent of this commandment to include any speech that is degrading

[James 3:5](#) So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire!

[James 3:6](#) And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell.

[James 3:7](#) For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race.

[James 3:8](#) But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison.

[James 3:9](#) With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God;

[James 3:10](#) from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way.

- The Law of Christ teaches us that when we speak ill of another person, who was created in the image of God, we are violating the spirit of the third commandment
 - The OT Law stipulated that we ought not to diminish the name of God in any way

- But the NT Law extends this commandment to its full purposes
- The name of God is more than a word
 - Names in scripture are the embodiment of a person, their character, reputation and their work
 - The Lord's name represents His goodness and the perfection of His work
- So when we speak degrading things about another person, someone created in the likeness of God, we are degrading the Lord's work and therefore the Lord Himself
- The fourth commandment is found in vs. 8-11

[Ex. 20:8](#) "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

[Ex. 20:9](#) "Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

[Ex. 20:10](#) but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you.

[Ex. 20:11](#) "For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.

- The Lord commands the nation to observe a sabbath day on the last day of each week, which is Saturday in the Jewish calendar
 - The occasion for this commandment is the Creation itself
 - The Lord asks Israel to repeat the actions the Lord took following the complete of Creation
 - After the Lord spent six days creating all things, He ceased from His work on the seventh day
 - That final day was therefore set apart from the other days in that it was different from the rest of the days
 - The first seven days were days in which work was done
 - But the seventh day was a day in which only rest from work took place
 - Therefore that day is holy, the Lord declares

- The word holy simply means set apart from sin
- So the final day of each week is set apart from the rest, just as the Lord Himself is set apart from sin
- The nature of this command is simply to abstain from any form of work
 - The word “work” in this case means common labors
 - The ordinary ways men work to sustain their lives
 - The Law itself expounds on various ways in which work must be curtailed
 - We’ve already seen the Lord tell Israel not to gather manna on the sabbath
 - Later Israel will be told not to gather wood, kindle fires, or bear heavy burdens among others
 - But overall the expectation is that men simply rest in the work that had already been done during the prior days, as did God
 - The Pharisees and lawyers took this commandment and greatly increased its burdens on Israel over the centuries
 - These added restrictions grew and grew to the point of ridiculous
 - Today, orthodox Jews who observe a sabbath will refrain from even turning on a light switch in the home
 - So on Friday afternoon, they will turn on all lights in the home to preclude the need to turn them on during the sabbath day
- Like the rest of the Law, this commandment no longer applies for the NT saint today
 - Though the Lord’s sabbath existed from the days of Creation, the Law of Moses was the first time the Lord mandated men follow His example
 - Some teachers argue that since the sabbath existed from Creation, then it is a law that didn’t go away when the Law of Moses was fulfilled by Christ

- So, believers today should observe a strict sabbath on Saturdays as did the Jews under the Law
- But there is no example in scripture of God ordering any man to observe a sabbath prior to the giving of the Law, nor do we see any man practicing a sabbath prior to the giving of the Law
 - Even the order concerning gathering manna is considered to be an early preview of the delivering of the law to Israel
 - Furthermore, God has never required Gentiles to observe a sabbath
 - And the NT teaching specifically states that no sabbath day exists for the Christian

[Rom. 14:5](#) One person regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind.

[Rom. 14:6](#) He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God.

- The believer is free to observe a sabbath day or not
 - But we do not sin if we work seven days a week
 - Nor do we sin if we observe a sabbath day on Sunday or any other day of the week
 - Paul teaches that each should do as they feel convicted, because the Law of Christ does not demand such an observance
- Nevertheless, this law is still found in the Law of Christ in a new and better way, as are all the Laws of the Old Covenant
 - Paul teaches how in Colossians

[Col. 2:16](#) Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day –

[Col. 2:17](#) things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.

- Paul says that the commandments of the OT Law like the dietary restrictions and festivals and seasonal observances and even the Sabbath Day itself were all shadows

- A shadow is anything in scripture given in a lesser form to represent a something of greater spiritual significance coming in the future
 - In this case, Paul says the greater spiritual significance is Christ Himself
 - So dietary rules and festivals and the Sabbath Day were carefully constructed by God to teach about Christ
 - During the Creation account, the Lord takes a day to rest, which is a strange statement when you think about it
 - Why would the Lord need rest? Surely, He never tires, since He is all spirit
 - Now we understand that His rest wasn't a matter of physical rest for God...it was to teach us about Christ
- So what do we learn about Christ from the Sabbath?
 - The Sabbath in the Law teaches that a man's work can end
 - And that rest from work is a good thing, something that men look forward to each week
 - But under the Law, that rest had a limit
 - Before long, the sabbath ended and the work resumed
 - It was a temporary rest and therefore it was one that could never truly satisfy
 - The kind of rest men long for is that which never ends
 - On the other hand, the Lord has never gone back to work
 - His sabbath continues to this day
 - He is still resting from His work of Creation
 - So it leads men to a question...how can we share in THAT rest?
 - How can we share in the Lord's rest, the one that never ceases?
 - Hebrews gives us that answer

[Heb. 4:1](#) Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it.

[Heb. 4:2](#) For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.

[Heb. 4:3](#) For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said,
 “AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH,
 THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST,”

although His works were finished from the foundation of the world.

[Heb. 4:4](#) For He has said somewhere concerning the seventh day: “AND GOD RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORKS”;

[Heb. 4:5](#) and again in this passage, “THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST.”

[Heb. 4:6](#) Therefore, since it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience,

[Heb. 4:7](#) He again fixes a certain day, “Today,” saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before,

“TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE,
 DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS.”

[Heb. 4:8](#) For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that.

[Heb. 4:9](#) So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God.

[Heb. 4:10](#) For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His.

- The writer was concerned for some within the church who hadn't come to faith but were merely hanging around the crowd
 - And the writer uses the term “rest” as a description of coming to faith in Christ
 - In v.3 he teaches that by believing in Christ we can enter (or share in) the Lord's rest
 - The Lord speaks about disobedient not entering “His” rest
 - The Lord's rest is the rest He established when He ceased from all works
 - This is the permanent rest that everyman longs for
 - A rest that never ends and allows men to cease from all their works

- But in Hebrews we learn that the ultimate intent of the Sabbath was to picture a spiritual rest, not merely an earthly rest from labor
- As the writer says in v.10, we cease from our works when we believe
- By entering into the New Covenant, we enter into the Lord's sabbath, never again bearing a burden of works for salvation
- We rest in the work of Christ on the cross
- So the Law of Christ also has a sabbath law requiring rest
 - We keep that law through our faith and reliance in Christ's work
 - And therefore, NT believers do not observe the shadow of the sabbath, that is a physical rest on Saturday
 - Instead, we observe the greater Sabbath, which is to rest in Christ everyday
- Now to the fifth commandment

Ex. 20:12 "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you.

- The fifth commandment requires that Israel show respect for their parents
 - The word for honor literally means something weighty or burdensome, but it can also be used euphemistically to mean something of honor and significance
 - I think both sense are applicable here
 - As children we are to honor our parents authority
 - This honor means obeying, respecting and trusting them for no reason beside the fact they are our parents
 - Then as we become adults and they come to depend on us at some point, we bear that burden gladly
 - We honor them by continuing to respect and defend them

- We may not always agree with what they think or say, but as much as possible we show deference and respect for their views and their needs
- This commandment is the first to include a promise of blessing for obedience
 - Since the commandment was given to Israel by the Covenant, the promise is limited to Israel as well
 - If Israel continues to observe this command, their obedience will prolong their time in their land
- This promise is interesting for two reasons
 - First, the fact that the Lord is promising to “prolong” Israel in their land implies that He knew Israel would one day be required to leave the land
 - The nation was eventually dispossessed from the land
 - They were scattered into the nations as a result of idolatry and disobedience under the Law
 - Secondly, the Lord says the key to Israel avoiding that punishment was strong, godly families
 - Therefore, we conclude that a breakdown in the family was the starting point for the sin and idolatry of Israel
 - And this eventually leads to the nations judgment under the Old Covenant
- The family structure is the lowest common denominator within society from which God rules over the hearts of people
 - When the family unit becomes weak by tolerating disrespect, disobedience, rebellion, and dishonor, the stage is set for a corruption of society as a whole
 - This was Israel’s fate and it’s certainly happening in our world today, as Paul predicted

[2Tim. 3:1](#) But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come.

[2Tim. 3:2](#) For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,

[2Tim. 3:3](#) unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good,

[2Tim. 3:4](#) treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,

- As with the earlier commandments, the Pharisees preached obedience to this commandment while disobeying it in practice
 - And Jesus called them out for it

[Matt. 15:4](#) "For God said, 'HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER,' and, 'HE WHO SPEAKS EVIL OF FATHER OR MOTHER IS TO BE PUT TO DEATH.'

[Matt. 15:5](#) "But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother, "Whatever I have that would help you has been given to God,"

[Matt. 15:6](#) he is not to honor his father or his mother.' And by this you invalidated the word of God for the sake of your tradition.

[Matt. 15:7](#) "You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you:

[Matt. 15:8](#) 'THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS,
BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME.

[Matt. 15:9](#) 'BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME,
I TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.'"

- The Pharisees recognized that honoring parents meant providing for their financial need when circumstances warranted
 - But to avoid parting with their money, the Pharisees made an exception if the money had been given to the temple instead
 - Jesus said this was a hypocritical rule contrived to avoiding doing one's duty because the law required that both parents and God be honored, not one or the other
- How has this commandment been improved upon in the the Law of Christ for the NT believer?
 - First, it's simply repeated in several places

[Eph. 6:1](#) Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

[Eph. 6:2](#) HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise),

[Eph. 6:3](#) SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH.

- And a promise has been extended to the NT saint as well, though in a new form
 - Believers are promised to enjoy a long life rather than time in the land
 - How would disobedience to this commandment lead to a shorter life?
 - First, there is always the possibility that the Lord might execute supernatural judgment against us for disobeying our parents
 - Like my mom used to say to me when I misbehaved, “I hope you have twins just like you!”
 - But even natural experience tells us how rebellion to parental authority can lead to a shorter life
 - Not respecting a parent’s wisdom can lead to accident, injury, danger, disease, and assorted calamities
 - Like Adam in the garden, when we set aside the instructions of a wise parent, we set ourselves on a road to destruction
 - As Mark Twain once said:
 - When I was a teenager, I was amazed at how little my father knew and when I turned twenty, I was amazed at how much he had learned
- The Law of Christ also broadens this commandments
 - Jesus taught that believers become part of a new family, the Body of Christ, and we gain new relationships we must honor and obey
 - And these relationships take precedence over even our natural family relationships

[Mark 10:28](#) Peter began to say to Him, “Behold, we have left everything and followed You.”

[Mark 10:29](#) Jesus said, “Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel’s sake, [Mark 10:30](#) but that he will receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal life.

- Notice that Jesus speaks of the disciples being forced to leave natural family behind for the sake of the Gospel
 - Jesus is speaking about priorities, not absolutes
 - No believer is automatically required to turn their back on their natural family in order to be a disciple of Jesus
 - But if the natural family makes an ultimatum and the believer is required to choose, then the believer should choose Jesus
- And when this happens, the believer will inherit a new family, the family of believers in the body of Christ
 - This new family must be honored just as we do our best to honor our natural family
 - We obey our elders and authorities over us in the church
 - We respect and share the burdens older members of the fellowship just as we might our own parents
 - And if pushed to choose, we must honor the family of God over our earthly family
- The sixth commandment comes next

[Ex. 20:13](#) “You shall not murder

- This command prohibits the unlawful taking of a human life
 - This commandment says nothing about the killing of animals
 - Murder is, by definition, the unlawful taking of a human life by another human
 - Animals can’t “murder” one another and we can’t “murder” an animal

- So this commandment deals specifically with a man taking another man's life
 - Some think the sixth commandment outlaws all forms of killing, including capital punishment and acts of war
 - But there is a difference between lawful and unlawful killing both in scripture and in our laws, which descend from the Law of God
 - Murder is the unlawful taking of human life
 - The word murder is ratsach in Hebrew
 - But Hebrew uses another word for lawful killing: harag
 - Lawful killing is a taking of human life in keeping with the rules of law
 - For example, God's law provides for the taking of human life when certain serious crimes have been committed
 - And in war, God prescribes for the killing of combatants - and even entire cities - to further His purposes in establishing Israel or eradicating sin
 - So when we act under the rule of law to carry out justice or to participate in war, we are not automatically committing murder
 - However, if government has become corrupt or cruel
 - Or if war is conducted in unjust ways, then killing can become murder again
 - The question is whether our act of killing is justified and proper according to law
- If the Jew was commanded not to murder, then why did individual men kill in war and why did the Law itself allow a person to take another person's life at other times?
 - The confusion comes in conflating the rights and responsibilities of governments with those of individuals
 - An individual has the right to take another human life only in defense of self or others, according to law

- The NT echoes this right for men to be prepared to defend oneself with deadly force if need be, even Christians
- This is how Jesus encouraged the disciples to be prepared for rough times after His crucifixion

[Luke 22:36](#) And He said to them, “But now, whoever has a money belt is to take it along, likewise also a bag, and whoever has no sword is to sell his coat and buy one.

[Luke 22:37](#) “For I tell you that this which is written must be fulfilled in Me, ‘AND HE WAS NUMBERED WITH TRANSGRESSORS’; for that which refers to Me has its fulfillment.”

[Luke 22:38](#) They said, “Lord, look, here are two swords.” And He said to them, “It is enough.”

- The Greek word for sword in this passage refers to a small dagger, which was common carried by an individual for self-defense purposes
 - Apart from that case, however, an individual has no right to take life
 - If we take life other than in self-defense, we do it unlawfully
 - Therefore we commit murder and violate this commandment
- When people act as governing authorities, however, they have the power to take human life as punishment for crimes or in times of war
 - The key to understanding the difference is to remember that God is the giver of life
 - Therefore He also has the authority to determine when it may be taken
 - And God has authorized human governments to take human life at times according to His specific instructions.
 - For example, beginning in Genesis 9 after the flood, the Lord delegated authority to human government to take life for capital crimes

[Gen. 9:6](#) “Whoever sheds man’s blood,
By man his blood shall be shed,
For in the image of God
He made man.

- As Paul explains as well in the New Testament:

[Rom. 13:3](#) For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; [Rom. 13:4](#) for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.

- When Paul reminds us that governments “bear the sword,” he is speaking about the right to execute men for crimes
 - This right was given by God to government so it may act as a minister of good
 - Not that all governments act properly toward their citizens, of course, but the institution of government is something God established for good
 - Imagine what kind of world it would be if evil men were not restrained by governments with their courts and judges and jails and even executioners
- Secondly, we know that God commanded Israel at times to prosecute war against ungodly peoples who stood in the way of God’s purposes in Israel
 - Remember, all men die and the day and manner of death is appointed by God
 - If you die in your sleep, God took your life
 - If you die on a battlefield at the hands of a soldier whom God sent to kill you, God took your life
 - God is no more guilty of a crime when he takes your life in your bed than when He employs the services of a soldier
 - So when Israel waged war in Canaan according to God’s direction, they were acting lawfully (not murdering) because the Giver and Taker of life had directed their actions
- Nevertheless, Jesus’ words and the Law of Christ do broaden the prohibition against murder in challenging ways
 - Perhaps Jesus’ most famous speech broadens this commandment, though in a subtle way
 - In the Beatitudes, Jesus said

[Matt. 5:21](#) "You have heard that the ancients were told, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.'

[Matt. 5:22](#) "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell.

- The NT Law of Christ prohibits unlawful killing just as the OT Law did, but Jesus takes that law considerably further
 - He says that the intent of the sixth commandment was to require respect and love for all persons
 - So that even if we refrain from killing someone, yet if we still hate them in our hearts, our physical restraint buys us nothing
 - We are still convicted just by our thoughts and desires
 - The Law of Christ demands that we take control of even our attitudes toward other people
 - Even a careless word spoken against someone is a harm that violates this commandment
 - Then a few verses later, we read

[Matt. 5:38](#) "You have heard that it was said, 'AN EYE FOR AN EYE, AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH.'

[Matt. 5:39](#) "But I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.

[Matt. 5:40](#) "If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also.

[Matt. 5:41](#) "Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two.

[Matt. 5:42](#) "Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you.

[Matt. 5:43](#) "You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR and hate your enemy.'

[Matt. 5:44](#) "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

[Matt. 5:45](#) so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

[Matt. 5:46](#) "For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?"

- While the OT Law prohibited murder, in other places it permitted certain types of nonlethal retribution for crimes committed against persons
 - The purpose of this forms of justice under the Law was NOT to encourage retribution but to limit the degree of retribution
 - For example, a man was blinded by the negligence of another, he had the right (but not the requirement) to demand that the offender lose his eye as well
 - The intent of this rule was to ensure that any punishment fit the crime
 - Our 8th amendment to the Constitution is built upon a similar principle
 - But the Law didn't require that the injured person take every opportunity for retribution
 - The victim could forgo taking retribution, which the Law of Christ says is the way to imitate the Father
 - Jesus says forgiveness and mercy are the more perfect way that mirrors our Father in Heaven
 - The NT Law demands that we be perfect like the Father by showing mercy and forgiveness for personal attacks rather to seeking retribution
 - This doesn't mean we may not participate in the criminal justice system or defend our lives in self-defense
 - Notice in v.44 Jesus is speaking about those who persecute us
 - The point is that when we are singled out for our faith, we should expect mistreatment but shouldn't hold it against the person
 - Just as Jesus said nothing against those who persecuted Him
- So the Christian is commanded in to guard ourselves in personal relationships from showing malice or disrespect
 - Instead, we show forgiveness and mercy, even in situations where we might have right to retribution

- Nevertheless we may act within the framework of government to take human life lawfully
- And we retain a right to self-defense or to defend others from harm
- But as with the OT Law, we always have the option to forgo the opportunity for retribution
 - When persecuted for our faith, we may even decline to defend our own lives
 - Martyrdom can be an appropriate response to persecution, as many disciples have chosen over the years
 - Yet self-preservation is also reasonable, just as Paul chose to flee from Jewish persecution on more than one occasion
- Next week we finish the first ten laws and move on to the other laws