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1. Introduction – recap and overview of the Sermon on the Mount
2. *You have heard it said ...* Jesus raises the bar
3. Today's Passage – Matthew 5:38-48
4. *Be perfect ...* can we clear the bar?

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1. Introduction

recap and overview
of the Sermon on the Mount

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¹ Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. **His disciples** came to him, ² and he began to teach them. (Matthew 5)

²⁸ When Jesus had finished saying these things, **the crowds** were amazed at his teaching, ²⁹ because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law. (Matthew 7)

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2. You have heard it said ...

Jesus raises the bar

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3. Today's Passage

Matthew 5:38-48

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³⁸ 'You have heard that it was said, "Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth."^[a] ³⁹ But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. ⁴⁰ And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. ⁴¹ If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. ⁴² Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

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⁴³ ‘You have heard that it was said, “Love your neighbour^[b] and hate your enemy.” ⁴⁴ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. ⁴⁶ If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? ⁴⁸ Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

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Today's passage

Part One – 5:38-42

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³⁸ ‘You have heard that it was said, “**Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.**”^[a] ³⁹ But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. ⁴⁰ And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. ⁴¹ If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. ⁴² Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

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Exodus 21:23-25: ²³ But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life, ²⁴ **eye for eye, tooth for tooth**, hand for hand, foot for foot, ²⁵ burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise.

Leviticus 24:19-22: ¹⁹ Anyone who injures their neighbour is to be injured in the same manner: ²⁰ fracture for fracture, **eye for eye, tooth for tooth**. The one who has inflicted the injury must suffer the same injury. ²¹ Whoever kills an animal must make restitution, but whoever kills a human being is to be put to death. ²² You are to have the same law for the foreigner and the native-born. I am the LORD your God.”

Deuteronomy 19:19-21: You must purge the evil from among you. ²⁰ The rest of the people will hear of this and be afraid, and never again will such an evil thing be done among you. ²¹ Show no pity: life for life, **eye for eye, tooth for tooth**, hand for hand, foot for foot.

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³⁸ ‘You have heard that it was said, “Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.”^[a] ³⁹ But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone **slaps you** on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. ⁴⁰ And if anyone wants to **sue you** and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. ⁴¹ If anyone **forces you** to go one mile, go with them two miles. ⁴² Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

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Today's passage
Part Two – 5:43-48

14

⁴³ ‘You have heard that it was said, “Love your neighbour^[b] **and hate your enemy.**” ⁴⁴ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. ⁴⁶ If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? ⁴⁸ Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

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Leviticus 19:18: “Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but **love your neighbour as yourself.** I am the LORD.

16

¹⁹ Anyone who injures their neighbour is to be injured in the same manner: ²⁰ fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth. The one who has inflicted the injury must suffer the same injury. ²¹ Whoever kills an animal must make restitution, but whoever kills a human being is to be put to death. ²² **You are to have the same law for the foreigner and the native-born.** I am the LORD your God.”

Leviticus 24

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4. Be perfect ...
can we clear the bar?

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For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:20

19

Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Matthew 5:48

20

‘Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them.’

Matthew 5:17

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²¹ But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²² This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. ²⁵ God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood – to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished ²⁶ – he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

Romans 3

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Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, ² because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. ³ For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Romans 8

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²⁶ I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

Ezekiel 36:26-27

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How can you bless a neighbour and how can you bless an enemy?

Is there someone who is against you or with whom there is a break-down in relationship? Pray for that person, and ask the Holy Spirit to show you a way you can bless them – then do it.