**June 30, 2019 Eye for an Eye Matthew 5:38-42**

This week as I was preparing for today’s message, I heard references over and over again about how certain groups had the right to do this or that. I found this to be in stark contrast to what is contained in our Scripture text for this week. In the United States, we have been given certain unalienable rights with which I agree, should be guarded and protected.

However, many Americans, which includes you and me, have gone way beyond those certain rights and have claimed rights that do not belong to us at all. Here is an example… have you ever heard anyone say, “I have the right to be angry?” Or “I have the right to be mad over this or that?” Now all too often we have groups who think they have the right not to be offended?

Well where did those rights come from? Is it not true that within the sinful human heart there is always a desire to protect what is perceived to be theirs whether it is material or otherwise? James 4:1-3 points this out to us. Remember that in this sermon Jesus is dealing with the heart of man and He is doing it again in this passage.

Do you remember the three themes that we should keep in mind as we study the Book of Matthew?

* Jesus is the King of the Kingdom of Heaven
* Jesus is the rejected King of the Jewish nation
* Jesus is coming again to rule and reign in righteousness

So here in this passage the King is clearing out any misconception of the passages which contain the phrase… “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth”

1. You have heard it said… an eye for an eye
	1. Is this statement found in the O.T.?
		1. Yes, it is… it is found in three different passages
			1. Exodus 21:23-27
			2. Leviticus 24:19-22
			3. Deuteronomy 19:15-21
				1. Note the scenario which is described for us in Deuteronomy 19:17
			4. This is a civil matter to be decided in a court of law
				1. And that law is to be just
		2. The question we have to ask ourselves it whether or not the Bible in general holds that law is a necessary thing for a civilized society?
			1. I Timothy 1:8-11
			2. So, let us understand that the statement found in Matthew 5:38 is to be applied in civil law.
			3. I wish our courts of today would understand that the courtroom is not
				1. A place to address societal ills
				2. A place for resisting political differences
				3. A place for pity
				4. Rather it is a place to issue righteous judgments

Why am I telling you all this? It is because law is good when it does things is it designed for. What are those things?

1. Law is designed to be just
	1. Revelation 20:11-15… everyone great or small will stand in this judgment
2. Law is intended to mete out just punishments
	1. Compare

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations’ General Assembly, Dec. 10, 1948. Making no reference to rights being endowed by a Creator, the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognized by consent basic human rights, such as:

* Freedom of opinion and expression
* Freedom to change religions
* Right to education
* No slavery
* No forced marriages
* No torture
* No inhumane punishment

The U.N.’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights was rejected by the leaders of 57 Islamic countries, who formed their own group called the OIC – Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

The OIC passed in 1990 the “Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam” affirming Shariah law as supreme, with:

* the death penalty for those leaving Islam
* punishing women who are victims of rape
* allowing men to be polygamous
* permitting wife beating
* censoring speech insulting Islam

During Islam’s 1,400 years of expansion, wherever Muslims conquered, the subdued non-Muslim populations were relegated to live under Shariah law as second-class citizens called “dhimmi.” The public proclaiming of the Christian Gospel was forbidden as it is considered insulting Islam. The claim that Israel has a right to exist is considered insulting Islam.

3. Law is intended to be a protector of the weak against the strong

II. What is Jesus trying to teach us today?

* 1. Two things
		1. First of all, the passage “eye for an eye” applies only in civil court
			1. It was never intended to be a personal issue
			2. I don’t get mad… I get even… usually more that even
		2. Secondly, Matthew 5:39-42
			1. Addresses the condition of the Christian heart
			2. I Peter 2:21-24
				1. Does that mean we should just give up and let people take from us whatever they want and not say a word?
				2. No… it’s just if and when that happens to you

Remember Romans 12:17-21

We are not going to be able to finish this passage today, so we will continue it later on. But for now, let us rest in the assurance that we are loved with an everlasting love and that nothing will ever be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.