

## Community Group Discussion Questions

“From Hate to Harmony: How to Resist Retaliation” Matthew 5:33-37 Sept 28, 2019

### Getting Started

Living in peace and harmony happens when we see people through the lens of the gospel. None of us likes to be stepped on, insulted, or treated disrespectfully. When these things occur, we often want to lash out in anger and get our revenge. Today, in the Kingdom series, we’re going to learn more about the Jesus way of handling these situations.

When was the last time you really lost your temper and what caused it to happen?

### Going Deeper:

#### I. Adjust Our Perspective

*“So, we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.” 2 Corinthians 4:18*

*“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways, declares the Lord.” Isaiah 55:8*

Most of us have been conditioned due to the parenting and adult examples we saw growing up. We learned how to cope in this world. We learned how to get what we wanted and how to stay out of trouble. We also learned how to get mad and how to retaliate when someone hurt us. Whether it was someone who took your toy as a child, or someone who took your parking space at the grocery store, we experience anger and want revenge.

Where do you think that anger and desire for revenge comes from?

Using the two bible passages above, what is God trying to teach you about how to respond in a different way?

## II. Align Our Priorities

*“Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”* **Matthew 6:33**

In any altercation, we can choose to see the offense against ourselves (How dare they treat me that way! Don't they know who I am?), or we can realize that God can use all things for good.

If someone is offending me, how does my recognition of the Kingdom of God come into play as I consider my response?

Is it more important that I win, or that the offender sees a Jesus response from me?

What are some examples of how this might play out the next time you are offended?

## III. Acknowledge God's Presence

*“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”* **John 15:5**

The moment we are hurt or offended, our flesh wants to immediately spring into action. See Galatians 5:16-21 for a descriptive list of what this might look like. If you're normal, you've probably allowed yourself to express quite a few of these evil characteristics. However, there is a better way, the Jesus way. See Galatians 5:22-24. What a difference it makes when we humble ourselves and let the Holy Spirit take control of our emotions, thoughts, mouth, and actions! The Holy Spirit doesn't just limit the damage we can do in our flesh. The Holy Spirit, by taking control of us, can actually accomplish much good in us, even in a terrible situation. Jesus says it can help us bear much spiritual fruit.

Think back to a recent altercation you had with someone.

How might things have turned out differently if you had submitted to the Holy Spirit?

How will you catch yourself the next time you are tempted to let your flesh take control?

**TAKE AWAY:**

When your faith is your filter, you fight against the fleshly desire to retaliate!

*“Be the change you want to see in the world” – Gandhi*

**PRAYER:**