

# Beyond Fair

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Matthew 5:33-48

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**1** Many times, a child will say, “*It’s not fair!*” But Jesus goes *Beyond Fair* and says that we are to not only *be fair* but go ***Beyond Fair***—that we should always do what is *right, honest, and in harmony* with Scripture.

## People of Truth

**2** NKJV Matthew 5:33-35 “*Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.’*”

**3** “*But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God’s throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King.*”

**4** Jesus says just *thinking* about murder or adultery is the same as actually *committing* them.

**5** He then explains about our speech, our reactions, our enemies, and about the true character of God.

**6** This is not about behavior *modification* but about heart *transformation*; it’s not about better *manners* but about having the righteousness of Christ.

**7** We should say *Yes* and mean it; or *No* and mean it—do not add anything to make it true.

**8** People back then had complicated ideas of fair—swearing by *Heaven* was different than swearing by *Jerusalem*; swearing by the *temple* was binding and swearing by the *gold* of the temple was *more* binding.

**9** NKJV Matthew 5:36-37 “*Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. “But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.”*”

**10** We should just be *honest* and *truthful* whenever we speak—and not add oaths because Heaven is God’s *throne*; the earth His *footstool*; and Jerusalem is His *city*.

**11** When we have God in our *heart* there is no need to add words to make something believable.

**12** A follower of Jesus does not need verbal embellishments, but should live with such integrity that our *Yes* or *No* means just that.

**13** Many people exaggerate to make something believable or not sound quite so bad—but if Jesus is in our heart and guiding our speech, the truth is what we will say. Our **words** will be true when our **heart** is surrendered to God!

## Refusing Revenge

**14** Matthew 5:38-39 “*You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’*”

**15** “*But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.*”

**16** 40 “*If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also.* 41 “*And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.*”

**17** 42 “*Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.*”

**18** Old Testament law limited retaliation—keeping justice fair. If you hurt someone, they could hurt you.

**19** Jesus goes ***beyond fair***—If someone slaps you—do not react with insults; If someone sues you in court—do not refuse what they demand; If someone compels you to transport them or asks for money—be generous with your car and your cash.

**20** We must not allow such things to harden our heart. The world seeks *revenge*; the believer gives *grace*.

**21** Revenge actually enslaves the *offended* to the *offender*. Someone once said: *Retaliation keeps you orbiting the one who offended you; but a godly response with the Spirit’s help frees us from that orbit.*

## Loving the Unlovable

**22** Matthew 5:43 “*You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’*”

**23** 44 “*But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,*

**24** 45 *that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.*”

**25** To love one’s *neighbor* was the law and to *hate your enemy* was added—it seemed *natural* to do that.

**26** Jesus says to go ***beyond*** what seems natural—go ***beyond fair*** and love enemies or pray for persecutors.

**27** This means taking action—it is wanting *good* for them not *evil*. It is refusing to define the person by the harm they have done to us.

**28** This is a vital point because **45** “*You will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven.*”

**29** God allows the morning sun to rise on the good and the bad; He sends rain on the just and unjust. God even allows good to those who ignore Him.

**30** When *we* love our enemies, we are acting like Jesus. Anyone can love those who love them—a *new birth* is not needed.

**31** **Matthew 5:46-48** “*For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?*”

**32** **47** *And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so?”*

**33** A believer in Jesus loves others, not because that person *deserves* it, but because Jesus loved *us* when *we* didn’t deserve it.

**34** Jesus then tells us to *go beyond* saying we love an enemy and to *actually love* them actively? It *is* a different matter.

**35** If a friend betrays our trust; a co-worker says derogatory things behind our back; or someone slanders our reputation—it gets personal—but Jesus knows it’s not easy to love enemies—it *is* just responding as He would.

**36** It is difficult to *pray* for someone and *hate* them at the same time.

**37** Praying for someone *reshapes* our heart—it *frees* us from being a slave to resentment and bitterness. Pray *first* and forgive *second*—then we have done the right thing.

**38** **NKJV Matthew 5:48** “*Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.*”

**39** This can seem impossible, but perfect means *perfect faith* in the *perfect One*—Jesus. The Greek is *teleios* meaning spiritual maturity and unconditional love. It is extending kindness and love no matter how the other person feels about you.

**40** Extending forgiveness to enemies is going *Beyond Fair* and reflecting God’s love.

**41** It is not trying to be *better than* someone else, but to be *more like* the Master.

**42** It is easy to shade the truth; love selectively; and excuse grudges—but we *are called* to a higher standard—extending *grace* since we are *saved by grace*.

**43** **AV Ezekiel 36:26** “*A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.*”

**44** The One who gave the good sermon is the One who gives the new heart.

**45** Jesus set that example **1 Peter 2:23**—when reviled He did not retaliate; when suffering He gave no threats, “*but left His wrongs in the hands of the righteous Judge*” **WEY**—and when suffering intensely He forgave enemies, “*Father, forgive them*” **Luke 23:34**.

**46** Jesus showed He actually *loved* those who were doing *evil* to Him. Jesus is our *righteousness* and when we trust Him in faith to forgive people—His attitude is shown in our response. Our forgiving becomes a *mirror to reflect* God’s grace.

**47** *Beyond Fair* means our *Yes* at church—means our *Yes* at home; *Beyond Fair* means when insulted online we forgive in our heart; *Beyond Fair* means we pray for those who may *never* pray for us;

**48** *Beyond Fair* means our forgiving people and praying for enemies is not understood by the world—but it *is* possible as the Spirit within changes us from *Dark to Different*.

**49** As we live out the Sermon on the Mount by the empowerment of the Spirit, we become a living example that a future kingdom is approaching—coming closer every day.

**50** *Mercy* becomes our witness and *love* for enemies proves the Gospel is true.

**51** Jesus is *preparing us* and *changing us* to reflect the glory of His Father until He returns.

**52** This *transformation* takes place when our surrender to God’s will is a daily mindset. It is our continuing education.

**53** We do not wake up *perfectly loving* enemies—but can wake up *fully surrendered* to God who empowers us to love and forgive.

**54** Our prayer: Lord, make my *words be true*; Make my *spirit willing*; Make my heart *love all*; Help me *reflect* the grace you have given me.

**55** Truth needs *no oaths*; *Mercy absorbs insults*; and *Love extends to enemies*—it is the Father’s character perfected in us through our *faith* in Him.

**56** All is possible through the Spirit of Christ taking up residence in our heart and enabling us to go *Beyond Fair* as we follow our Lord and Master!

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