

**BIBLE STUDY**  
**February 17, 2020**

**THE SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

**Leviticus 19: 1-2, 17-18**

**Matthew 5: 38-48**

**1 Corinthians 3: 16-23**

**1. Leviticus 19: 1-2, 17-18**

- Rules of conduct that elaborate on the Ten Commandments. The rules emphasize the necessity of respect for parents, careful attention to worship, charity, and right relationships with others, truth telling and justice.
- Vv. 1-2: Israel is to be holy, i.e. set apart, different from the other nations. They show this difference by obeying the laws of the Lord. By obeying God's commandments they become like him.
- Vv. 17: They should love, not hate, family and relatives. Correct your neighbor so that you do not sin. By not correcting your neighbor you would sin because you have not saved him from his/her sin. You left him/her in their ignorance. Reprove them openly so that there are witnesses. The person you correct cannot misrepresent what you told him/her.
- Vv. 18: Do not take revenge or hold a grudge. Jesus will elaborate and intensify this command in the Sermon on the Mount. Love your neighbor as yourself. This is what Jesus will call the greatest commandment. Love is God is shown through love of neighbor. Love your neighbor as yourself. Self-love is the criterion for neighbor-love.

**2. Matthew 5: 38-48**

- Jesus intensifies the command to not seek revenge by urging non retaliation.
- "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" was intended to make the punishment proportionate to the offense.
- Disciples are to break the circle of revenge by offering a totally different response. This reminds us of the non-violent resistance of Gandhi and MLK. The disciples are to respond to brutality and force by abounding goodness. This unexpected response is "disarming" to the offender.
- Overwhelm the one who asks with unexpected generosity.
- Jesus extends the law of love of neighbor even to enemies. If we do that then we shall be like God who sends the rain on the just and unjust. God loves everyone, even those who disregard and offend him.
- Jesus is calling for a heroic form of Christianity. Do not be content with the minimum but strive for the maximum. He makes a common sense argument. If we love those who love us, what is so noteworthy of that? Even tax collectors do the same. If we greet brothers and sisters, what is unusual about that? Sinners do the same. Jesus is calling for a higher

standard for his disciples. Aim to be like God. Be perfect as God is perfect. Perfection may elude us, but it is our goal.

- If Christians acted in this way, what a difference it would make in the world! It is calling for a new world order. It is what is meant by the coming of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is how the world would be if God were in control and we obeyed his commandments.

### 3. 1 Corinthians 3: 16-23

- The Corinthians attributed self-importance to the leader that they were baptized or taught by. Some claimed to be better Christians because they followed Apollos. Others thought they were better because they were taught by Paul. Paul scolds them because they are judging by human standards. God is the one who gives growth. Jesus is the foundation. The Christian leaders or pastors only plant the seed that God has given and build on the foundation of Jesus. This kind of bickering and factionalism will destroy the Church. Anyone who damages the church by using purely human means is like a builder who uses inferior materials. The end result will reveal the quality of their work. The work of preaching the Gospel is precious because it is dealing with people who are temples of the Holy Spirit.
- Christians must see everything through the wisdom of God which is very different than human wisdom. Human wisdom is based on superficial and passing things. God's wisdom is eternal. God's wisdom is revealed in the cross of Jesus. God takes the weak and makes them strong. God takes whom the world considers fools and makes them wise. It is better to be weak and a fool in the eyes of the world so that God can make you strong and wise according to his wisdom.
- So we have nothing to boast about. Everything belongs to God. You >>>Christ>>>God. From bottom to top=service. From top to bottom=ownership, authority.
- It does not matter if a person were baptized by Paul or Apollos or Peter (Cephas) because we all belong to Christ who belongs to God.