

## **“Somebody’s got to stop the madness...”**

Matthew 5:1-16, 38-48

### **1. What has not worked and will never work**

- Violence
- Human institutional control
- Education alone

### **2. The only thing that will work**

- 5:13 – “YOU are the salt of the earth...YOU are the light of the world...”
- 5:3 – “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven...”
- 5:9 – “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God...”
  - Peace is not simply absence of war/conflict
  - Peace is not about indifference to injustice and sin.
  - Peace is a positive term – about deep harmony and reconciliation in relationships .
  - A “peacemaker” is NOT a “peacekeeper” but one who passionately seeks to bring God’s deep peace into every relationship...no matter what the cost.
  - Peacemakers are called “sons/daughters of God”.
- 5:38ff – “...do not to resist an evil person...love your enemies, bless those who curse you...”
  - Jesus teaches us here about our personal response to violence and disrespect against us.
  - 5:38-39 is about peacemakers giving up rights to respond to personal insult with violence.
  - 5:43-48 is about a peacemaker’s call to positively bless those who do violence to us.

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**“To love those who love you is human; to hate those who love you is demonic; but to love those who hate you is divine.” St. Augustine**

*“Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy.” St. Francis of Assisi*

“God intends to put the world to rights. There is a cry for justice that wells up from our hearts, not only when we are wronged but when we see others being wronged. It is a response to the longing, and the demand, of the living God that His world should be a place not of moral anarchy, where the bullies always win in the end, but of fair and straight dealings, of honesty, truthfulness, and uprightness.

***But to get from that longing and demand to anything that approaches God’s intended justice, we must go by a route very different from the one which the world normally expects and even demands. The majority language of the world in this respect is violence.*** When people with power see things happen of which they disapprove, they drop bombs and send in tanks [or yell, verbally abuse, punch or shoot]. When people without power see things happen of which they disapprove, they smash store windows, blow themselves up in crowded places, and fly planes into buildings [or passively aggressively plot the other’s demise]. The fact that both methods have proved remarkably unsuccessful at changing things doesn’t stop people from going on in the same way.”

**“Simply Christian”, N.T. Wright**