

“Overcoming Our Inner Desires” based on Leviticus 19:1-2, 9-18 and Matthew 5:38-48

Intense period of political change – both internationally, and now, nationally. We also need to look at change personally in how we relate to those around us!

- Jesus states what *others* say: “An eye for an eye ... “ This is the basis of our judicial system – a ‘tit for tat’ mentality that limits vengeance.
- Jesus goes beyond, from no vengeance to non-resistance
- Jesus again quotes what *others* say: “Love your neighbors and hate your enemies”
- But Jesus goes beyond in saying “Love your enemies and pray for them.” This calls for ‘agape’ love, sacrificial and forgiving. Hope for rehabilitation and correction.

It would seem that this is passive behavior, but it actually takes more discipline to carry out. Can’t do it on our own. We are called to ‘be holy as God is holy’ in Leviticus and “be perfect as God is perfect” in Matthew.

- God is the source of ‘love’ and forgives those(us) who have rebelled against God. Jesus also forgave those who crucified him
- We only can overcome our natural inclinations for revenge and hating our enemies by growing in our faith in a loving and caring God!

Our constant prayer needs to be for God to help us ‘be more loving people, the people God created us to be!’