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Daily Devotional - Friday, August 17, 2018 - Turning the Other Cheek

AUGUST 17TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Matthew 5:38-42

The Bible passage that says to turn the other cheek may confuse us. Are we to stand still while someone beats us up physically or emotionally? That's not the message Jesus was delivering. When He gave the Sermon on the Mount, He was expanding outward obedience to the Law to include attitudes and motives.

The familiar expression “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth” comes from Exodus 21:23-25, an Old Testament law describing appropriate penalties for injury. Some interpreted this as allowing retaliation by civil government. But Jesus was showing a better option—the way of love.

Pride will certainly trigger a desire for revenge if a coworker takes credit for our work or a family member repeatedly says unkind words. Yet we are not to “repay evil with evil or insult with insult” but should instead give a blessing (1 Peter 3:9 NIV).

In daily practice, the form a righteous response takes depends on the situation. We may need to ignore the other person's actions, walk away from the abuse, or confront our enemy. Instead of trying to get even, we should seek to understand that person and the reason for any animosity

toward us.

God has lessons for us to learn in these difficult situations. When we endure unjust treatment, we are following in Christ's footsteps. No one was more unjustly treated than the sinless Son of God. Yet He "did not revile in return" and "uttered no threats" but kept entrusting Himself to His Father, knowing that He judges righteously (1 Peter 2:20-23). Surely God can also handle our grievances if we'll respond as Christ did.

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