

“Following the Call” by Charles E. Moore

II. Kingdom Commands – Overcoming Evil Ch. 22

Last week we discussed **Matthew 5:38** – Jesus said: “You have heard that it was said, “Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.” But I tell you, do not resist an evil person.” What is Jesus telling us to do here? Why is this an important reaction in the body of Christ?

Matthew 5:39-42 – Jesus said: “If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.”

What do you think Jesus is telling us here? Why would we act in this way?

Tunic - A tunic is a versatile, loose-fitting garment for the torso that typically extends from the shoulders to somewhere between the hips and mid-thigh. Ranging from sleeveless to long-sleeved, it is often worn as a top over leggings or trousers. Historically, it was a staple, simple, T-shaped garment worn by both men and women in ancient Greece and Rome. What does the tunic symbolize?

Cloak - A cloak is a long, loose, sleeveless outer garment that drapes over the shoulders, fastening at the neck to provide warmth and protection from the elements. Often featuring a hood, it covers the entire body and has historically symbolized status, authority, or mystery. Unlike capes, which are usually shorter, cloaks are full-length, heavier garments. What does the cloak symbolize?



E. Stanley Jones (1884-1973) was an American Methodist writer and missionary to India. He is remembered for his interreligious lectures to the educated classes in India. His seminal work, *The Christ of the Indian Road*, sold more than a million copies worldwide after its publication in 1925.

“Turn to him the other also.” It is this audacious offensive of love that forces the man to go further and thus to break down. He tries to break your head, and you, as a Christian, try to break his heart.” In turning the other cheek you wrest the offensive from him and assume moral charge of the situation.”

How does this action differ from what we are taught in this world?

When Jesus tells us to turn to our offender the other cheek, he is telling us to change the situation. When do we see this played out in Jesus’ life? What are some examples of Jesus turning the other cheek?

As Jesus is God and we are made in the image of God, what are some examples in history of God and man turning the other cheek?

Can you think of times in your life where God turned the other cheek to you?

“If a man compels you to go with him one mile you are his slave; but if you voluntarily go with him two, then you rise from your slavery, confer a bounty on him and thus become his master.”

What is **Jones** saying here about things for others? How are we to react to requests for help and aid? Why?

“If he sues you at law and takes away your coat, you are his servant, but if you confer on him your cloak also, you assume the mastery by your own moral daring.”

Why would giving more than you are required be the best action to take in this case? What, as a Christian, is our ultimate goal?

“...this is an active resistance on the plane of unquenchable good will...”. What is Jones saying here?

“Jesus after talking about turning the other cheek and going the second mile, immediately adds that we are to love our enemies and do good to them that despitefully use us. He links the passive resistance of evil and the active love of the enemy who does the evil and makes them one.”

By linking our response to loving the enemy, what is Jesus doing to our enemy? What is he doing to us?

“One may allow himself to be smitten on the other cheek, but in his heart of hearts he may be saying, “Yes, but I hate you and will get even with you if I can.”

Have you ever had this thought after you have done the right thing to someone who has wronged you?

Do you still feel this way towards them, “forgiven but not forgotten”? What does this mentality do to us?

“That kills the active element that would work on the heart of the oppressor and renders the method sterile. Love gives the method Life.” Why does the lack of love in our actions make them fruitless?

“Even if he does not respond and the method fails, still you have grown tall in the process of stooping. You win in either case.”

What is **Jones** telling us about how we are to feel towards the purveyor of evil upon us? Are we to be concerned of the consequences or outcome of our Christian reaction of actions? Why?



Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) was a Lutheran theologian who was executed under Hitler. He was an anti-Nazi dissident who was a key founding member of the Confessing Church. His writings on Christianity’s role in the secular world have become widely influential. His 1937 book *The Cost of Discipleship* is described as a modern classic.

“He (Jesus) addresses his disciples as people who have left all to follow him, and the precept of nonviolence applies equally to private life and official duty. He is the Lord of all life, and demands undivided allegiance.”

What is **Bonhoeffer** saying here?

Bonhoeffer was a key figure in the resistance against Hitler, leading to his imprisonment and execution by the Gestapo in 1945 for treason. His life exemplified radical Christian commitment, from the theological study and opposition to Nazism to involvement in plots to overthrow the regime, making him a lasting symbol of faith and resistance.

If Bonhoeffer was a resistance fighter against the Nazi regime, how do his Christian principles apply to his actions?

“It is obvious that weakness and defenselessness only invite aggression. Is then the demand of Jesus nothing but an impracticable ideal?” Is this ideal only practicable in the Christian community or also in the evil world we live in today?

Jesus’ life was engulfed in the evil of the world. He knew and still knows how to deal with evil. “The cross is the only power in the world which proves that suffering love can avenge and vanquish evil.” What is **Bonhoeffer** saying here?



Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968) was an American Baptist preacher and civil rights leader until his assassination in 1968.

“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”
God and love.