

***AN EYE FOR AN EYE AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH!***

**BROTHERS AND SISTERS,,, TODAY,,, WE'RE COVERING ONE OF THE MOST COUNTER-CULTURE PASSAGES,,, IN ALL THE BIBLE!**

**IT'S THE TEACHING THAT SEPERATES CHRISTIANITY FROM EVERYTHING ELSE.**

**IN MATHEW 5: 38-48,,, JESUS HAS THE GRACE AND LOVE,,, TO COMMAND US,,, TO LET GO,,, *OF OUR NEED FOR REVENGE AND TO LOVE OUR ENEMIES.***

**SO,,, WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THAT?**

**WHAT IF SOMEONE BACKHANDS YOU? DO YOU JUST LET IT GO? WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO? THE LAW SAYS: "*AN EYE FOR AN EYE,,, A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH.*" AND THE LAW,,, ENTITLES YOU TO HIT HIM BACK!**

**IN THE OLD TESTAMENT,,, IT WAS *AN EYE FOR AN EYE AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH!* THIS LAW WAS GIVEN SO THE JUDGES OF OLD,,, COULD LIMIT AND PREVENT GREATER HARM IN RETURN.**

**REVENGE HAPPENS WHEN WE FEEL THAT JUSTICE HASN'T BEEN SERVED,,, SO GOD,,, IN HIS WISDOM,,, SAID,,, THAT *AN EYE FOR AN EYE AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH*,,, THAT PEOPLE WERE KEPT WITHIN LIMITS.**

**WHEN JESUS POINTED OUT THIS WELL KNOWN LAW,,, HE WAS QUOTING DIRECTLY,,, *FROM (3) OLD TESTAMENT PASSAGES;***

***EXODUS 21:24- LEVITICUS 24:20 & DEUTERONOMY 19:21.***

**IT WAS IN THOSE (3),,, THAT THE PRINCIPAL OF EXACT JUSTICE WAS STATED. THE JUSTICE REQUIRED IN THIS LAW,,, STATES,,, THAT THE PUNISHMENT MUST FIT THE CRIME PRECISELY!**

***IN EXODUS,,, IT SPEAKS OF *LIFE FOR LIFE,,, EYE FOR EYE,,, TOOTH FOR TOOTH,,, HAND FOR HAND,,, FOOT FOR FOOT,,, BURN FOR BURN,,, WOUND FOR WOUND,,, BRUISE FOR BRUISE.*" AND IN LEVITICUS,,, IT SPEAKS OF "*FRACTURE FOR FRACTURE.*"***

**JUSTICE! HERE'S A SHORT STORY ABOUT JUSTICE!  
AN APPLE FARMER FOLLOWED THIS PRINCIPLE OF  
JUSTICE. HE HAD BEEN ANNOYED FOR A LONG  
TIME,, BY PEOPLE PARKING THEIR CARS ON THE  
BACK SIDE OF HIS ORCHARD,, CLIMBING OVER HIS  
FENCE AND THEN,, WITHOUT PERMISSION,, EATING  
HIS APPLES. ONE DAY,, AS HE WALKED UP TO THEM,,  
ONE OF THEM SAID: "*WE HOPE THAT YOU DON'T  
MIND,, THAT WE ATE A FEW OF YOUR APPLES.*"**

**"NO,, NOT AT ALL,, SAID THE FARMER,, "AND I HOPE  
THAT YOU DON'T MIND,, THAT I TOOK SOME OF THE  
AIR OUT OF YOUR TIRES."**

**IT'S THE GOLDEN RULE; "*DO UNTO OTHERS AS YOU  
WOULD HAVE THEM DO UNTO YOU.*" AND YOU'VE ALL  
HEARD THE SAYING; *I DON'T GET MAD,, I GET EVEN.***

**RETTALIATION HAS BEEN THE WAY OF HUMAN  
NATURE,, SINCE THE BEGINNING OF TIME. THIS IS  
HOW GANGS WORK! YOU COME ON OUR TURF,, WE  
COME ON YOURS! YOU MESS WITH OUR WOMEN,,  
WE'RE GONNA MESS WITH YOURS! YOU SHOOT ONE  
OF US,, WE HAVE TO SHOOT ONE OF YOURS!**

**I'M SURE THAT MOST OF US HAVE DRIVEN ENOUGH  
THAT WE'VE SEEN A DRIVER,, *GET CUT OFF*,, BY  
ANOTHER.**

**MANY TIMES,, RIGHT AFTER GIVING THAT SPECIAL  
SALUTE,, THE CUT OFF DRIVER,, RETALLIATES BY  
"*GETTING EVEN*".**

**PEOPLE JUST LOVE THE IDEA OF *AN EYE FOR AN EYE  
AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH.* THEY OFTEN THINK  
THAT THIS IS JUSTICE.**

**THE ONLY PROBLEM WITH THAT,, IS THAT SOONER  
OR LATER,, THE ENTIRE WORLD WOULD BE BLIND  
AND TOOTHLESS!**

**BUT JESUS SAYS; "*DON'T RETALLIATE. INSTEAD,,  
TURN THE OTHER CHEEK,, BECAUSE I'M NOT TALKING  
ABOUT GETTING EVEN,, I'M TALKING ABOUT LOVE.*"**

**THE PROBLEM IS; THAT WE DON'T SEE,,, IN THIS STATEMENT,,, WHAT JESUS WANTS US TO SEE.**

**WE SEE SOMEBODY GETTING HIT,,, BUT WE DON'T SEE MORE,,, BECAUSE WE'RE THINKING ABOUT IT,,, IN EARTHLY HUMAN TERMS.**

**IN CHRIST'S TIME AND CULTURE,,,A BACKHANDED SLAP WAS THE GREATEST INSULT POSSIBLE. IT WAS VERY HUMILITING,,, SO,,, IF YOU TURNED THE OTHER CHEEK,,, YOU WERE IN EFFECT SAYING;**

***“YOU'RE NOT GOING TO HUMILITATE ME!”***

**THEN JESUS GOES ON TO SAY;**

***“AND IF ANYONE WANTS TO SUE YOU,,, AND TAKE YOUR COAT,,, GIVE YOUR CLOAK AS WELL.”***

**THE COAT HE WAS TALKING ABOUT,,, REFERS TO THE SACK LIKE INNER GARMENT THAT WAS WORN BY MEN. IT COULD BE LONG OR SHORT SLEEVED,,, DEPENDING ON THE SEASON,,, AND IT REACHED FROM THE SHOULDERS TO THE KNEE,,, SOMEWHAT LIKE WHAT WE CALL “LONG JOHNS”. EVEN THE POOREST MAN IN THOSE DAYS,,, OWNED MORE THAN ONE SINGLE TUNIC.**

**NOW THE CLOAK,,, WAS THEIR OUTER GARMENT. IT COST MUCH MORE THAN THE COAT AND ONLY WEALTHY MEN OWNED MORE THAN ONE. IT WAS LIKE A LONG PONCHO. IT SERVED AS BOTH A TENT AND BEDROLL AND MEN WOULD ACTUALLY SLEEP UNDER IT WHILE TRAVELING.**

**THE CLOAK WAS SUCH AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE JEWS WARDROBE,,, THAT THE LAW ACTUALLY PROTECTED IT!**

***EXODUS 22: 26- 27 TELLS US: “IF YOU TAKE YOUR NEIGHBORS CLOAK AS PAWN,,, YOU SHALL RESTORE IT BEFORE THE SUN GOES DOWN; FOR IT MAY BE YOUR NEIGHBORS ONLY CLOTHING TO USE AS COVER; IN WHAT ELSE SHALL THAT PERSON SLEEP?”***

**BASICALLY,,, WHAT'S BEING SAID IS,,, DON'T GIVE HIM YOUR CLOTHES,,, GIVE HIM YOUR UNDIES TOO!**

THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN QUITE EMBARRASING,, BECAUSE NAKEDNESS IS TABOO IN JEWISH SOCIETY.

JESUS THEN CONTINUED,, “**AND IF ANYONE FORCES YOU TO GO ONE MILE,, GO ALSO THE SECOND MILE.**”

IN CHRIST’S DAY,, ROMAN SOLDIERS HAD THE LEGAL RIGHT,, TO CHOOSE ANYONE TO CARRY THEIR BAGS FOR ONE MILE,, JUST AS THEY MADE SIMON THE CYRENE CARRY JESUS CROSS.

SO,, EVERY JEW IN THE COUNTRY,, MARKED OFF A MILE,, EACH WAY,, ON THE ROAD FROM HIS HOUSE AND THEY DROVE A PEG INTO THE GROUND,, TO MARK THAT DISTANCE,, SO THEY KNEW EXACTLY HOW FAR THEY HAD TO GO,, WHEN FORCED INTO LABOR!

NOW,, IT’S TOUGH FOR US TO EVEN IMAGINE WHAT CHRIST IS TALKING ABOUT,, BECAUSE WE CAN’T IMAGINE BEING FORCED TO DO ANYTHING IN OUR INDEPENDENT CULTURE!

SO,, WHAT IS JESUS TRYING TO COMMUNICATE TO US IN THESE PARABLE LIKE SAYINGS?

IN THE CRUCIFIXION STORY,, THESE (3) THINGS ARE IDENTICAL TO WHAT JESUS IS TALKING ABOUT.

- 1) THE SOLDIERS SLAPPED JESUS’ FACE!
- 2) THEY STRIPPED HIM OF HIS CLOTHES!
- 3) MADE HIM CARRY A CROSS

**EVEN AFTER ALL OF THIS,, JESUS RESPONDED:**

**FATHER FORGIVE THEM! JESUS DIDN’T RETALLIATE!**

NO “**EYE FOR AN EYE**”,, NO,, “**TOOTH FOR A TOOTH**”

BUT JESUS ISN’T DONE YET. NO,, HE CONTINUES ON AND INTERPRETS THE LAW OF LOVE. **IT’S TRUE,, THE LAW SAYS: YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR;**

BUT THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES,, ADDED;

“**HATE YOUR ENEMY**” TO THE LAW IN THE HEBREW

TEXT. THAT’S WHY JESUS SAID; **YOU HAVE HEARD**

**THAT IT WAS SAID,,** BECAUSE IT WASN’T THERE ORIGINALLY!

***BROTHERS AND SISTERS,, THIS IS THE ONLY PLACE IN ALL THE BIBLE,, THAT YOU'LL FIND THIS PHRASE!***

**GOD MEANT; YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR,, IN THE SENSE THAT ALL PEOPLE ARE OUR NEIGHBORS,, EVEN OUR ENEMIES.**

***JESUS SAYS; THAT WE WILL HAVE ENEMIES,, AND THE WAY TO RESPOND TO THEM,, IS WITH LOVE,, TRUSTING IN GOD TO TAKE CARE OF OUR ENEMIES,, BY TURNING THEM INTO FRIENDS.***

**IN DOING THIS,, WE'RE IMITATING GOD,, WHO SHOWS LOVE TOWARDS HIS ENEMIES BY *MAKING THE SUN RISE ON THE BAD AND THE GOOD*,, AND *SENDING RAIN ON BOTH THE JUST AND THE UNJUST.***

**JESUS HAS GIVEN US A SERIES OF CHALLENGES.**

***“TURN THE OTHER CHEEK,, TAKE OFF YOUR CLOTHES AND GO WITHOUT,, FOR THE SAKE OF THE OTHERS. GO THE EXTRA MILE,, AND LOVE YOUR ENEMIES.***

***THESE ARE ALL TOUGH CHALLENGES.***

**FINALLY,, JESUS PRESENTS THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE,,**

***“BE PERFECT,, THEREFORE,, AS YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER IS PERFECT.”***

**IF WE COULD ONLY LIVE,, THE WAY THAT JESUS HAS TOLD US TO,, IN THIS TEXT,, WE TRULY WOULD BE PERFECT!**

**BUT WHAT DOES PERFECT MEAN HERE? IN THE GREEK,, THE WORD MEANS; WHOLE,, MATURE,, TO HAVE INTEGRITY. IN OTHER WORDS,, TO ALLOW THE HOLY SPIRIT TO CHANGE OUR LIVES INTO THE CHARACTER OF JESUS AND TO GROW SPIRITUALLY MATURE. TO BECOME A WHOLE PERSON WITH INTEGRITY,, SO WE COULD LOVE IN ACTION AND DEED. TO HAVE OUR MINDS RENEWED IN CHRIST. TO BE MORE HEAVENLY REMINDED,, AND NOT FULL OF UNFORGIVENESS,, ENVY,, OR,, PRIDE,, BUT OF HUMILITY,, AS A WHOLE PERSON IN CHRIST JESUS.**

**BUT THERE'S ONLY ONE MAN,, WHO HAS EVER  
LIVED LIKE THIS,, AND THAT IS; JESUS CHRIST.**

**JESUS NOT ONLY TOLD US HOW TO LIVE,, BUT HE  
PRACTICED WHAT HE PREACHED,, HE SHOWED US  
WHAT TO DO,, AND HOW TO DO IT!**

**IF WE FOLLOW JESUS' EXAMPLE,, *BY THE GRACE AND  
POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT*,, OF TURNING THE  
OTHER CHEEK,, WITHOUT OFFENSE,, GOING THE  
SECOND MILE,, IF NEED BE,, THEN,, WE TOO CAN  
SHOW THE SAME LOVE THAT JESUS DOES.**

**WHEN WE DO THIS,, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,, I  
BELIEVE,, THAT WE TOO,, CAN HAVE THE SAME LIFE  
LIVING EFFECT ON PEOPLE.**

**IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER,, AND OF THE SON,, AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

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*1,458 Wds, 6 Pgs*