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

AUGUST 17TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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

## 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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## Daily Devotional - Thursday, August 16, 2018 - Blessing Our Enemies

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**Luke 6:27-28**

As stories of the persecuted church reach us, we learn about Christians who respond to imprisonment, beatings, and harassment with unimaginable grace and dignity. These saints have learned to obey Christ's command to "love your enemies" (Luke 6:27), even in the harshest of circumstances.

We may never face physical persecution for our faith, but we will run across people who hate and mistreat us. The most natural response is to dislike them in return, but harboring ill will and bitterness chokes our witness and poisons our souls. Instead, Jesus instructs us to love our adversaries and treat them well.

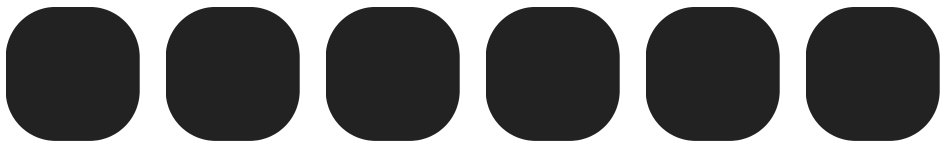
The Greek word for this kind of love is *agape*—this is not a feeling based on the other person's likability or favor toward us but, rather, an action of the will that does what is best for the other person. It's the type of love God has and, therefore, is not something we can muster within ourselves. But as the Holy Spirit produces His fruit in us, agape love will flow through us, even to our enemies.

When someone wrongs or hurts us, it's an opportunity to be a witness for Christ. Rather than harboring animosity or seeking revenge, we are told to pray for our adversary. Instead of begging the Father to defeat our enemy, we can ask Him for the strength to express genuine Christlike love in the face of opposition. That's the kind of prayer God is delighted to answer. And when we are privileged to meet the need of one who despises us, we might just see an amazing change in his life.

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## Daily Devotional - Wednesday, August 15, 2018 - Walk in the Light

AUGUST 15TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Wednesday, August 15, 2018 - Walk in the Light

**Ephesians 5:6-16**

WEDNESDAY

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Yesterday we saw that when we walk in holiness, we change direction from our old life and leave an imprint wherever we go. Now let's consider one more aspect of this new journey: walking in the light. (See 1 John 1:5-7.)

In 2 Corinthians 6:14, Paul challenges us to consider this question: "What partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?" He's saying that just as Christ and Satan can't have fellowship with each other, neither can good and evil. In other words, sin should become a foreign thing to everyone who knows Christ as Savior. His Holy Spirit helps us become sensitive to the presence of sin.

The Bible says that before we come to Christ, we are not only *in* darkness, but we *are* darkness. The ungodly are darkened in their understanding, ignorant of the truth, callused in their heart, and hardened in their spirit; they have turned themselves over to sin. All of this changes when a person places faith in the Lord. The believer experiences forgiveness and redemption, and what's more, something else wonderful happens: Darkness is replaced with God's light and righteousness.

Everyone who chooses to follow God is given a new nature (2 Corinthians 5:17), but patterns of the old self linger. You may think that because you sometimes struggle with sins, godliness is an unattainable goal. However, it is not your own strength that makes you holy, but the Holy One in your heart. When you make Christ the center of your life and daily make the decision to walk in His light, He enables you to live holy in this dark and unholy world.

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## Daily Devotional - Tuesday, August 14, 2018 - The Christian's Walk

AUGUST 14TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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## Ephesians 4:1-2

After placing trust in Jesus, a person should begin to walk in a new direction. Believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and therefore have real purpose; it isn't fitting for Christians to live aimlessly. The apostle Paul presents a dramatic contrast between who we once were and who we're to be after coming to faith. (See Eph. 4:15-24.) Formerly, we might not have felt too bad about sin, but now that we are one with Jesus Christ, our mind is being renewed and our behavior should become increasingly God-pleasing.

As God's children, we're also to walk weighty—that is, leaving an imprint and an influence wherever we go. When we understand who we are in Christ and commit to walking in holiness, we begin to reflect the Lord Jesus to others. The joy we have in Him becomes an expression of His presence in our life and evidence of our relationship with Him.

So think of all the people you cross paths with each day. You might be reflecting Jesus to some who have been blind to the truth of God. In addition, your oneness with the Lord and your unity with other believers make you an asset and an encouragement to the body of Christ, too. You have no idea how many lives might be touched by yours.

I'm certainly one who believes in the value of sermons, but God's people must do more than simply sit and listen. Our life must change so that everybody who meets us will meet Christ in us. Our old life—how we lived before meeting the Lord—was self-centered; our new life is Christ-centered. Is that becoming more evident in you?

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## Daily Devotional - Monday, August 13, 2018 - The Throne of Grace

AUGUST 13TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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**Romans 10:4-13**

MONDAY

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On a popular television show, the final contestant has an opportunity to win the grand prize, which is hidden behind one of three doors. The contestant, pulled from the audience, calls out the door number and discovers whether he or she has won the prize. Many leave disappointed.

Our God doesn't work that way. He doesn't hide the gift of salvation behind one of many doors and make us guess where to find it. He clearly tells us which door to open and gives us the faith to open it, promising that all who believe in Christ will not be disappointed (Rom. 10:11).

What a wonderful God we have! Our past sins don't keep us from receiving His grace, because all that matters is believing in Jesus Christ to save us. Then the door of grace opens, bringing the free gift of forgiveness, salvation, and new life. Hymn writer Charitie Bancroft described grace this way:

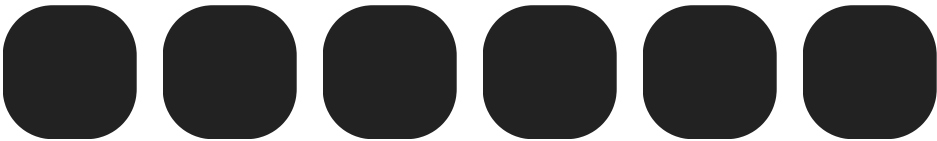
*Because the sinless Savior died,  
My sinful soul is counted free.  
For God the just is satisfied,  
To look on Him and pardon me.*

Confidently we may now approach God, knowing that we are accepted. When we draw near to Him, we come to a throne of grace where “we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:16). Forgiveness will be granted, and our prayers will be heard. And most wonderful of all, our relationship with God will deepen. Why would we ever neglect such a gracious opportunity?

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