

## AS THE CHEEK TURNS

Romans 12:14-21

January 15, 2023

Matthew 5:38-39

### The Three “F”s of cheek turning:

#### 1. **Forbearing** (vv. 17-18)

- ☞ “Evil” is usually a matter of degree
- ☞ “Evil” is often in the eye of the beholder
- ☞ “Evil” is always more “evil” when intentional
- ☞ Doing “what is right” RARELY means giving someone what we think they deserve.
- ☞ It takes two to fight. (James 3:17 – 4:2 & 4:6)

**He that demands mercy, & shows none, ruins the bridge over which he himself is to pass.** THOMAS ADAMS

*Forbearance*: Romans 12:18

*Forbearance* – patience, especially in not responding to provocation; the fact of deliberately not doing or saying something when you could do or say it (Encarta Dictionary)

#### 2. **Forgiving** (vv. 19-21)

The world’s way: He/she ASKED for it!!!

Do unto others what they do unto you...

Do unto others what they deserve...

Do unto others before they do unto you...

“Vengeance is sweet.”

*Justice*, all too often, tends to be something we want for others, while being thankful that we are given mercy.

**The Golden Rule:** As you wish that others would do to you, do so to them. (Luke 6:31 <sup>ESV</sup>; Matthew 7:12)

NLT: Do to others as you would like them to do to you.

#### What are our alternatives when we are wronged?

- ☞ **We can get even** – “I don’t get mad. I get even.”
- ☞ **We can bury it** – bitterness  
Bitterness is like taking slow poison and waiting for someone else to die.
- ☞ **We can forgive**  
It is cheaper to pardon than to resent. Forgiveness saves the expense of anger, the cost of hatred.  
Hannah More

#### Biblical Principles:

- ☞ **We must NOT get even.** (v. 19)
- ☞ **We must overcome evil with good** (v. 21)
- ☞ **Our calling, as children of God, is to repay those who wrong us by blessing them.** (vv. 14, 20)
- ☞ **We are called to forgive just as we are forgiven by God.** (Mat. 6:12, 14-15)

**There is no limit to how many times we are to forgive those who sin against us.** (Matthew 18:21-35)

You must choose to forgive whoever has wronged you. Forgiveness is not an emotion, it is a decision of the will.  
Erwin W. Lutzer

#### 3. **Forgetting** (vv. 14-16)

I can forgive, but I cannot forget,” is only another way of saying, “I will not forgive.” Henry Ward Beecher

Forgiveness is not that stripe which says, “I will forgive, but not forget.” It is not to bury the hatchet with the handle sticking out of the ground, so you can grasp it the minute you want it. Dwight L. Moody

One great obstacle that causes many to stumble is non-forgiveness. The hatchet might seem to be buried, but people continue to grab hold of the handle when they want to use it against another.

**What does this look like?** ...bringing up past offenses...

**Why do we do that?** Leverage...

Jesus said if a brother repents, forgive him—that is, bury the hatchet and its handle.

“Forgiveness is not something you feel, it is something you do. It is letting go of the rope of retribution.” Corrie ten Boom

#### Some final practical suggestions:

- † Put into words how you were wronged. Then ask God to help you cancel that debt.
- † Do good things for the person (How can you bless them?) Look for opportunities to bless them.
- † Say good things to them. Find some good that you can honestly acknowledge.
- † Say good things ABOUT them.
- † Pray for Good things for them, that God would bless them.
- † Refuse to say negative things about them. (or to listen to negative things about them)

#### Summary / Review:

God calls each of us to exercise *forbearance* with each other in our rough edges. He calls us to be quick to *forgive* and to refuse to get even. He calls us to *forget*, or to refuse to remember the offenses of others.

**A Truth to Remember:** Christ has forgiven us each FAR more than He asks us to forgive anyone else. He tells us that He has Forgotten all of our sins (Isaiah 43:25).

**A Challenge to Consider:** Do you tend to bring up the past as leverage to make your point? Are you willing to let the past go and trust God for the future, determining, as far as it depends upon you, to be at peace with everyone?

**One thing I heard this morning was...**