

What Do Ye More Than Others?

by Dean Stump

The sermon challenges listeners to consider what they do more than others, and to live a life of loving enemies, non-resistance, and benevolence.

Duration: 1:22:52

Scripture: Matthew 5:17-19, Matthew 5:38-42, Matthew 5:44

Topics: "Loving Enemies"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the passage from Matthew 5:38-48. He emphasizes the importance of not resisting evil and instead showing mercy and forgiveness. The preacher highlights Jesus' reasoning behind this command, explaining that it reflects God's nature of showing mercy to both the good and the evil. He challenges the listeners to examine their own actions and ask themselves if they are doing more than others in terms of showing grace and going the extra mile. The preacher acknowledges the difficulty of fully living out this command but encourages the audience to rely on the Holy Spirit for the strength to do so.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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These messages are offered to all without charge by the free will offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. To each one of you in Jesus' name this morning, thank you for setting this day aside and coming out here, joining myself, and as Erica says, thank you for obeying the Lord.

God bless you, Erica, for being an inspiration to us in many of these things. I'd like to kneel down for prayer. Father, we lift up our voices to you this morning in the house of prayer.

O God, cause prayer to flow from each and every heart here this morning. Lord, teach us to pray. As we heard this morning, the first message there, Lord, you were our example.

You were our forerunner in prayer. And you prayed. You spent time with your Heavenly Father.

O God, teach us to pray. Father, we lift up our hearts to you this morning. We ask that you open up your Word.

Help us to see and know your will. Lord, I pray that through the foolishness of preaching, men could be saved. Men could be inspired, encouraged, built up in the faith, hearts set ablaze for your glory.

Lord, give us ears to hear. And give me a sound mind, Father, to present your unsearchable riches. We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen. Thank you, Brother Phillip, for sharing with us, with your family this morning. I appreciated that.

And thank you, Michael, for sharing the Word with us this morning. Thank you for sharing the, as you said, familiar but unsearchable riches. I was talking with someone on the phone yesterday and he said, guess what, I get to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ tomorrow.

And that was good for my heart. Praise God for His precious Word. He does reveal Himself through His Word.

And we are thankful for that. Let's turn to Matthew chapter 5 for a Scripture reading this morning. Matthew chapter 5 and verse 38 through the end of the chapter.

Ye have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you that ye resist not evil. But whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

And if any man will sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away.

Ye have heard that it hath been said, thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, love your enemies. Bless them that curse you.

Do good to them that hate you. And pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you. That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.

For he maketh his Son to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. The title is, What do ye more than others? What do ye more than others? I am not sure what all the reason is for the silence on this subject, but I was very surprised to, as I started studying on these verses, and I have a few sources there at home that I go to, and usually in what, this amount of verses, there would be books of material to read on it, from different commentators and things.

But I was surprised to see that not much was said. And so I went to the Amplified Bible, which I use occasionally, and I wanted to see what they had to say in verse 44. But I say unto you, and I was hoping

for some challenging, inspiring, heart provoking amplification to it I guess.

And the King James says, But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you. And the Amplified says, But I say unto you, love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you. It didn't even include everything that the King James has in there.

I was surprisingly disappointed. And needless to say, I have much less respect for the Amplified Bible today. But I thought maybe I was going the wrong direction and struggled some.

Then I was reminded of the words over here that Jesus laid down for us. It sort of seems like He used this as the qualification for His sermon. He says over here in verse 17 and 18, Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets.

I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever, in verse 19, therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven.

But whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. So I took courage from that and decided that if Jesus thought it was important to teach these words, and if He thought it was important to qualify it with these words, then I'm going to take courage and I'm going to teach on it this morning. Now, I will qualify here in the beginning a bit that I know there is some balance to the message that I probably won't be giving and you all are welcome to do that in the testimony time.

And I also realize that some of what is said here I probably do not live in my own life, in my own practical life. I'm sure that I fall short and yet it's my desire to teach on it and not explain it away, to let it say what it says and I desire not to say more than what it says, but I want to let it there. I want it to speak to my heart and I desire the grace to live it out, to have it be reality in my everyday life.

Jesus said, What do ye, more than others, note that we're now on the other side of the cross? We have experienced a grace, an abundance, like brother Michael was talking about here this morning. We, who are in Christ Jesus, have experienced a life that is beyond, that is above, that is abundant, that is more than conquerors. It's a serious question that we ask ourselves this morning, which we should frequently put to ourselves.

What do we, more than others? What excelling thing do we do? We know more than others. We talk more of the things of God than others. We profess and have promised more than others.

God has done more for us and therefore, justly expects from us more than others. So, we ask the question this morning, What do ye, more than others? You have heard that it has been said, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. We call that justice.

We call that the balancing of the scale. Right? We understand what that's about. Justice.

And the people that Jesus was talking to knew that very well. They read it in the law. I'll read one of the Scriptures there to you in Leviticus chapter 24.

Verse 17 says, And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death. Balancing of the scale. And he that killeth a beast shall make it good.

Beast for beast. There again, the balancing of the scale. You put the neighbor's beast down, your beast goes down.

And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbor as he hath done, so shall it be done to him. Justice. The balancing of the scale.

Breach for breach. Eye for eye. Tooth for tooth.

As he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him again. Justice. Fair, right? It's only fair.

And he that killeth a beast, he shall restore it. And he that killeth a man, he shall be put to death. They understood that real well.

They had had the law for a long time. They had synagogues. The law was read in the synagogues.

And they had heard that from children on up. As a matter of fact, probably many of them knew it by memory. They understood the law of justice real well.

The balancing of the scale. But, Jesus must be stunning them. He must be shocking them here as He raises the standard.

As we actually are going through the Sermon on the Mount in our family devotions, I'm teaching the children that Jesus is raising the standard to a heart level. He's not taking it away. He's raising it.

And I'm sure they understood real well till He was done teaching here that, yes, it's sure not taken away. And that is something that I can't attain to. That has been lifted so high, I can't even attain to that.

And certainly, it should be, I'm sure it should be overwhelming to the soul who doesn't know Christ. Who doesn't have the abundant life flowing in Him and through Him and out of Him. If someone gives Him a smile, He can give a smile.

If someone gives Him a day's labor, He can give a day's labor. But, to not resist evil, that's not fair. By the way, what is it? What is Jesus teaching here? What is Jesus lifting up here? What is the doctrine that He's teaching? What new thing is sounding in their ears that they don't know under the law? Grace? Loving your enemies? Non-resistance? Mercy? Nathan? Loving others more than yourself? Yes.

Mercy and forgiveness is what resounded in my ears as I studied this, as I read this, as I memorized it. Mercy and forgiveness. It's what Jesus walked out.

It's what He lived out all the days He was here upon the earth. Mercy and forgiveness. The thing that really struck me and inspired my heart to go this direction, in verse 45, after Jesus gives this apparently, and even so much that it seems like most of Christianity down through the ages has missed it.

Jesus gives a reason for it. In other words, He further qualifies this one. Through the whole chapter, He keeps doing this.

This is what the law says, but I say unto you. And then He left it there. But on this one, He says, And here is the reason.

I know this is so hard for you to understand it, but let me give you a peek into God's heart. Let me show you that all of nature around you points to mercy and forgiveness, of non-resistance, of grace, of loving your enemies. He says, That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for He maketh His Son to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

And I saw that in a way I never saw it before. All of a sudden I realized, Yes! You know, the only time in recorded history that God ever shut the sun off from His enemies was when He was delivering the children of Israel out of Egypt. One of the plagues was darkness.

While He left the sun to shine on His people, He didn't let it shine on the Egyptians there. Aside from that, God has always shown His loving kindness to everyone, heathen and saint alike. The sun rises on them, on the sinner, the same as it does the saint.

The rain waters their gardens, the same as it does the saint. And, and if you'll just picture how merciful that is for God to do that. Here is this atheist who shakes his fist in God's face and doesn't acknowledge God's goodness in giving him life, in giving him the sunshine.

And in a moment, God could strike him dead. In a moment, God could just say, well, the sun's not going to shine on you today. If you're not going to acknowledge Me in the rising of the sun, if you're not going to see Me in giving the rain, and just see it as something that evolved, I won't give it to you.

Wouldn't that be just? And you know, we seem to have the idea that, well, in the Old Testament, God was just. In the New Testament, God is merciful. Well, obviously, from the time of creation, He has been showing His mercy to us, hasn't He? He has been letting the scales of justice tip way down, all the time from creation.

Surely, what a persuading point Jesus makes here and helps us all to realize that, yeah, you know, as hard as what you said, Jesus, as hard as what that sounds, as difficult as this may be, and as much as I can't reason this thing through in my human mind, that I'm supposed to turn my cheek to the person that hits me and that I'm supposed to do good to them that hate me, well, yeah, I wasn't always what I was supposed to be or should have been and God just keeps shining His sun on me. He keeps sending the rain my way. Yeah, God has been merciful to me.

In the natural, we can see it, can't we? Anyway, what do ye more than others? What a question. What a thought-provoking question to ask ourselves. And, yea, an important question.

I hope to convince you this morning that that's an important question for you to probe your mind and heart with. What am I doing more than others? Where have I gone the second mile? Well, let's look at these verses a bit. Jesus said that ye resist not evil.

You have heard it hath been said, but I say unto you, don't resist evil. Don't put up a fight. Don't resist.

But whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. Jesus says we're not to resist evil. And here is the one way that we're not to resist evil.

He gives three points here. He gives three ways that we're to not resist evil. The one is when we are confronted with an enemy, we don't fight back.

When he shouts at us, we don't shout back. When he shoots our dog, we don't shoot his dog. Whosoever, no one is left out here.

Do you have enemies this morning? Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. Maybe you still have enemies this morning because you haven't turned the other cheek yet. Jesus says some amazing words here.

We're not to resist evil. And it's only fair to resist evil. It's only our right to resist evil.

This is a hard saying. We're not to resist evil. We're not to revenge those who would do us evil to a blow on the cheek, to the loss of a coat, and to the constraining of service.

Three things Jesus lifts up here. I'm not sure if I know how to make right application to each one of them. Smiting on the cheek certainly would fall into the category of arguments and disagreements of times when there is heated debates between two people.

Jesus said, don't do it. I think He says here, don't argue back. Don't try to win the argument.

Let it lay. Let him win. If any man will sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

So the issue is taken to law. And maybe it's taken to law because you didn't turn the other cheek. And the judge says, yes, you owe it to him.

Sir, you owe it to him. Jesus said, go further than that. Give him more than what the judge says you owe him.

And in verse 41 here, whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. It's my understanding that under the Roman rule here, there was certain men of rank that could compel you to go to carry their burden for one mile. I guess that was the law.

Now, they didn't like to do it. They didn't do it with joy usually. And yet, they had to because it was the law.

If they were compelled, they had to do it. They had to serve that one mile. Jesus said, don't just go one mile, go two miles.

Can you imagine how that sounded in their ears? No wonder when he was done teaching his sermon that they were astonished at his doctrine. that's a good question. Also, part of this, it seems to flow right in this vein of resisting not evil, is verse 42.

Give to him that asketh thee. So, not only are we not resisting, but we are living a life of benevolence, of kindness towards and a giving up of what we have. We're living a charitable life towards others.

Give to him that asketh thee. And from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away. Now, that has been stumbled over many times.

Even in my short life. And difficult to live up to at times. But, it's my desire again here to lift it up before you.

And let it say what it says. And maybe I can't preach a real strong message on it. A real convincing message.

But, let's let Jesus say what He said. And let's ask Him for the grace in our time of need. Let's ask Him for grace if we come up against a hard circumstance.

And it's difficult to go that second mile. Jesus said, the Hebrew writer here says, Let us therefore, in that time, come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. You hear the argument, well, if I lived like that, I'd be reduced to rags.

If I lived like this, I wouldn't exist. Well, maybe God wants to show Himself strong in your life. Maybe He wants to come through in your life in a marvelous way.

And let you experience some more of that abundance that Michael talked about this morning. Maybe He wants to bring you to a place of you seeing your absolute nothingness. And being able to fall on your knees and say, Lord, have mercy.

Help. I am in need. Maybe He's waiting for more of that while you're resisting evil.

You also have heard that it has been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, love your enemies. Don't resist them, love them.

Bless them that curse you. Do good to them that hate you. And pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.

Now, because you are an American by birth, there are people in this world that hate you. We, we were made very much aware of that on 9-11 of 2001. That the Americans are a hated people.

Well, what has been your response to that hate? What has been the attitude of your heart towards the people that have done that? I remember so clearly the day that that happened. And I was out on a job site. And the plumbers were there.

And so this made lots of talk. Everyone was tuned to their radios and hearing what was going on and the one fellow's response was if he had anything to do with it, he'd just drop the atomic bomb. He'd just blow them all up.

Jesus said, do good to them that hate you. Love your enemies. Bless them that curse you.

Pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you. You know, it was troubling to me when I would drive down the road and see a picture of Osama Bin Laden in a place of contempt. He would be put in a place of contempt.

He would be put in the firing squad and different places around where he was very much defamed. And that really hurt my heart because I was praying for him and I was reading this verse and Jesus said, love your enemy. Bless them that curse you.

Do good to them that hate you. And pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you. Jesus says more about that.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake. For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.

Rejoice and be exceedingly glad for great is your reward in heaven. For so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. Well, what do ye more than others? Jesus said, if you love them which love you, what reward have ye? If you salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? The sinners do this.

The tax collectors even do that. The scum of the earth, Jesus said. He used the lowest, the lowest picture of mankind that they knew in that day.

The publican. Now, Jesus is making a stark difference here in verse 46. If you love them which love you, what reward have you? In comparison to verse 12 of Matthew 5 here, He says, those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, great is your reward in heaven.

To, if you only love those that love you, what reward have ye? He's giving it in, in a question that says, you have your reward. You love them that love you, you have your reward. You have the reward of their love.

That's your reward. But He says, Jesus is saying, if you want an eternal reward, if you want a reward that's going to live forever, you need to do more than others. He says, you need to do more than others.

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. Now, I looked up the word perfect in the Strong's, and it says, complete in various applications of labor, growth, mental, and moral character. Complete in various applications of labor, growth, mental, and moral character.

Completeness of full age. A man. So, in, in the sense of my physical body, I am perfect.

In the sense that I am complete. I'm done growing. I've become to a, a maturity in my physical body.

It's, it's not going to do any more maturing than it has already done. It's only going to age, I guess, and, you know, go the other way from here. But, in the, in the spiritual, Jesus is saying, we're to strive, and it's like, again, He's understanding.

He knows our hearts, and He knows how difficult this is to receive. And He says, He ends it by saying, Be therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect. Luke's account says, Be therefore merciful, even as your Father which is in Heaven is merciful.

Which goes along with this very well. Jesus is lifting up the attitude, the character of mercy, of forgiveness. Paul says, I haven't yet attained, but I am going after it.

Let's read it in Philippians chapter 3. I'll start in verse 12. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before.

I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore as many as be perfect be thus minded. And if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

So, perfect here may not mean what you think of as perfection, but it's a term of maturity. It's a term of coming to a full age and having the attitude, according to how the Apostle Paul describes it there, this being perfect as our Father in Heaven is perfect. It's having that attitude of pressing toward that for which I have been apprehended of in Christ Jesus.

It's having the attitude of I may not be attaining to all this, but I'm not going to explain it away. I'm not going to water it down. I'm going to strive for it.

I'm going to set my face towards it. I'm going to cry out to God for grace to resist, to not resist my enemy today. So, to make application to it, if we could, where we live today, what do ye more than others? We don't have the law coming after us and putting us in prison.

We don't have the law taking our lives like many have in the past and many are today in other countries. How does this apply to you and I today? How are you applying it in your life? What do ye more than others? We don't need to wait and we don't need to pray for persecution to live these verses out. As a matter of fact, if you're not living them out now in your day-to-day life, you may find it very difficult when the day does arise and you are asked to sacrifice to some other God.

Or you are asked to deny the Lord Jesus Christ as the way, the truth, the life. As no one able to come to God except through Jesus Christ. We may not be far from that day, but my brothers and sisters, there is a strong ecumenical movement going on even in our land today.

And it may not be long till you are very frowned upon if you quote John 14, verse 6, is it? I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me. Well, maybe you look at those verses and you say, well, they don't really apply to me now because I'm not being persecuted.

But the doctrine of non-resistance, as this is known of today, is very much applied to our lives today. And will very much show in our lives if we believe and live this Scripture. Husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, brother to brother in the church, sister to sister, brother to sister.

Relationships. It's all about relationships with one another. How are you doing now? What are you doing more than others in your relationships? How are you doing in resisting evil in your relationships? What about those arguments you just had? What about the neighbor that you were just feeling ill towards? What about the times that you spoke evil of the person who you didn't think did you fair? How are you doing in turning your cheek? How are you doing in going the second mile? How are you doing in blessing them that curse you? Doing good to them that hate you? The Mennonite people of which I consider myself one in doctrine have to a large degree lost the principle of non-resistance in their lives.

One of my wife's relatives recently was I don't know if he accomplished it but he was planning to sue and of course the rules in the church don't allow that because of the doctrine of non-resistance that's on their books. But he found the way around the books. He found the way around the law.

And I guess that's where we go wrong in writing down the laws and ordinances and we forget that it's a heart matter. Jesus raised it to a heart matter. He made it a heart issue.

It doesn't matter if you can get around what the church standard says brothers and sisters. Jesus still said if someone does you wrong just take it. Receive it.

Receive it in Jesus name. And don't put a shell around yourself and say it's not going to happen again. That will never happen again.

The attitude that says, yeah he got away with it, but it's not going to happen again. That's a violation of this scripture brothers. The attitude that says he's not going to get the best of me.

How does it go for you brothers that are businessmen? Are you able to turn the cheek? Are you able to go the second mile? Ask yourself the question this morning. What do ye more than others? Maybe it was a bad business deal. Maybe that inspector is asking something unreasonable.

But what do ye more than others? Can those that you rub shoulders with your neighbors, your business contacts, your unsaved relatives, can they say of a surety you're possessed of something beyond human reasoning? That you're living a life that goes beyond the call of duty to the point that it may bring you ridicule even. Maybe justice would have called for a lawsuit in a situation and because you're willing to take it and say no, I forgive him. God bless that person.

God visit that person with his salvation. Maybe you'll have people getting upset at you for taking that response. I've seen that happen already.

Where others looking on get upset. They're upset at you for not declaring justice on that person. That wasn't just.

You need to bring the law in there and you need to bring that person to justice. What's been the attitude of your heart brothers and sisters? Many times as a person becomes prosperous they start seeing through the eyes more of human reasoning and their trust in God lessens and trust in the principles of God lessens and we start taking on the mindset of it's only right. That's what's coming to me.

I can't do business that way or I wouldn't stay in business. Well, like I said, I'm not doing all the balance that could be done in this message and I trust you hear my heart in it, but Jesus said what do ye Oh, what a heart searching question. What do ye more than others? And there's a hymn that I'd like to read here in closing that says it so well in song.

Jesus my Savior let me be more perfectly conformed to thee implant each grace each sin dethrone and form thy temper and form my temper like thine own my foe when hungry let me feed share in his grief supply his need the hearty frown may I not fear but with a lowly meekness bear let the envenomed heart and tongue the hand out stretch to do me wrong excite no feelings in my breast no resistance to evil let the envenomed heart and tongue the hand out stretch to do me wrong excite no feelings in my breast but such as Jesus once expressed to others let me always give what I from others would receive good deeds for evil ones return nor when provoked with anger burn this will proclaim how bright and fair the precepts of the gospel are and God himself the God of love his own resemblance will approve." And there is a strange silence on him too, isn't there? Thank you for obeying the Lord this morning, Brother Dean, and preaching those things. Well, I think I'd like to open up here and let some of you comment. If you have a testimony, if your sisters have something you'd like to share that's on your heart that God's been doing in your life, or you brothers have something to add to the message, just raise your hand and we'll get a mic to you.

Yes, we'll bring you a mic so everyone can be edified. Back here. Thomas.

Someone else has something to share? Raise your hand. Over here, Ben. Hey, Thomas.

Amen. I just want to say amen and that I'm very glad that for this message, I'm glad that God is bigger and better and holier than we are and calls us to be something more than we already are. I am very convicted by this message and want to confess that I have been neglectful in honoring this command many times in day-to-day living.

And oftentimes the way I look at it is this is a thing or that's a thing that I'll attain to one day or it's a principle, I spiritualize it. I think part of the reason why there's so much silence on the subject is because it hits so close to home. It's so practical and daily and real that you can't spiritualize it too easy without actually having something to back it up and put your actions where your theology is.

And I don't know if very many of us, I don't mean here, just I mean very many of us in this society have the biography to back up that theology. So I just wanted to confess that and also say that I've noticed when I've looked at this, it's even more than that I guess. The two miles he says for you to go actually adds up to four if you're going to leave somewhere and go back to where you are.

So the standard just keeps getting raised the more you look at it. It takes God's spirit to do this. We can't do it on our own.

And the final thing I wanted to say about this is that seeing myself fall short of this is not just falling short of a command. It means that the Lord is not my Lord in every area and that is the reality that's hit me today. If he was my Lord in every area, this would be as dear to me as so many other things he said.

So I pray that the Lord would change my heart in this matter. Thank you brother. Brother Ben.

Brother Dean, I appreciate the message as well. I did see something that struck me and it was almost that I would consider this doctrine of non-resistance to almost be a doctrine of righteousness in that as we just read in Romans and Mike read this morning and I'm going to repeat it for if by one man's offense death reigned by one much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by Jesus Christ. In other words, we should be so in Christ, in the righteousness of Christ that we although Christ said resist not evil we are in a sense if we're operating in the flesh we could be resisting evil in our own strength and not in the righteousness of Christ.

And it would be my prayer that I would be able to operate so in the righteousness of Christ as a gift from him by his grace that I would be so Christ minded that resistance to evil or my flesh would not rise up in me to the extent that I would be acting in the flesh and that I would only be acting in the righteousness of Christ. And so it just struck me. We are resisting evil in ourselves in a sense if we're operating in ourself.

But if we're operating in the righteousness of Christ, I strive to be there myself and that's where I need to be. Thank you. Brother Nolan? I was so blessed and challenged this morning.

I am glad when they said to me, let's go into the house of the Lord. I was just thrilled with the first message there about just abounding in the love of Jesus. I'm not saying that's where I'm at, but it's just an encouragement to me to press toward that and go toward that.

There was two verses early on when God was calling my heart to Him and I was seeking to draw near to Him. He gives us that promise. We draw near to Him, He will draw near to us.

There's two verses I'd like to read here in Luke 6, 22 and 23. It says, Blessed are ye when men shall hate you and when they shall separate you from their company and shall reproach you and cast out your name as evil for Jesus' sake. Because you love Jesus and many of you have family that, or many of us I should say, many of us that are sitting here have family and church groups or whatever that have cast out our name as evil.

And when I saw this next verse there's actually two commands here. I think I'll take them as commands. It says, Rejoice ye in that day and leap for joy.

Behold, your reward is great in heaven for in like manner did they did their prophets their fathers unto the prophets. In other words, it's happened before. Don't be dismayed.

Jesus is with you. And if you love Jesus, it's going to constrain you. Anyone else? CJ? Yeah, I want to thank Brother Lynn for the message.

I just want to speak out of my personal testimony that I believe that my life of faith actually started when I started obeying these commandments. Because I think that's where we are tested when evil comes our way that we trust the Lord, that He's the one who controls the evil, and He's the one who doesn't allow even one hair to fall off our head without His permission. He's the one who is in first place gives us all the gifts whether it's a house, whether it's a job, whether it's an amount of money.

And He's the one who is able to keep as long as He wants us to be stewards of that possession. So in that way I feel that whether it's a job, whether wherever it is, we can keep it only as long as God wants us to have. And our faith is tested when evil comes, and it seems like that I think part of our prayer is always the Lord protect us from all evil and from the evil one.

Jesus prayed for that. And I think that's where our power is. That's where we come to the Lord and ask Him what to do.

So I can say that changed my life when I started obeying these commandments. Yeah, I appreciate the use of your words there. That's come to my mind a few times, Dean.

If you aren't a man of faith, you'll have a difficult time obeying these commandments. Because you have to believe in what you don't see. You have to have a faith and a trust that God is in control of these things.

Things are not out of control. When this man is striking me in the face, these things are not out of control. I'm just going to do what the Lord says and He'll make it come out right.

It takes a lot of faith to do those things. A lot of faith. Anyone else have something they'd like to share? Brother Dave over here.

I'd like to thank Brother Dean for the message this morning. It is a big part of the difference in the Anabaptist churches and the Protestant churches and the other churches around us. If you study history for the first couple hundred years, Christians did not take part in the military.

It wasn't until, they didn't do it to any large degree until Constantine. Constantine married the church and the state and the Protestants, when the Protestant Reformation took place, they went back to Constantine, the writings of Constantine. They didn't go back to the early church.

The Anabaptists went back to the early church. And that was a big difference. The Protestants say they believe in a flat Bible.

And if you say you believe in a flat Bible, the New Testament is going to rise above. The Old Testament is going to rise above the New Testament because you can't be non-resistant if you believe in a flat Bible like that. I heard a message one time that a guy preached, a Protestant that I was kind of debating with gave me a tape on the Sermon on the Mount.

And I never heard anyone explain so clearly and so explicitly why Jesus didn't mean the things that he said. Yeah, well that would be my testimony too. It was when it was when I read Matthew 5, 6, and 7 and began to obey by faith that I was set apart and became an Anabaptist or dubbed an Anabaptist or had my... the man that I worked with said to me one day, he says, what are you, Amish? I didn't even know what an Amish was.

He did, obviously. All I was doing was reading my Bible and obeying it. Yes, my testimony I guess would be similar.

I remember living back in Florida over ten years ago when we were there. I was involved in a large... several large corporations and business dealings and etc., etc. And in one of them, a very large company had done some things very, very wrong and had gone back on their contractual obligations and promises to some very great financial hurt to myself and several other men that I was in business with at that time.

They all decided to go to the law and you know, the case was very clear because the contract was written out and it was all there and they had clearly violated those things and I was at that place in my Christian life. This is probably... actually I've been here ten and a half years. This is twelve years ago now.

I'm losing track of time. We were just going to a Baptist church down there. We were finding our way.

We were studying the word. I just remember going to them and telling them, I'm sorry. And I was the principal witness because I was the key person in the deal.

And going to them and saying, I'm sorry, I can't join you and neither will I testify for you in court. I can't do it. And when I did that, even though I did it with a lot of fear and trepidation, my testimony is though immediately afterwards there was great release and great joy.

When we by faith trust God, there's actually a grace that comes into our hearts and a joy and a release or at least that's my testimony of peace. In other words, these things seem difficult at the moment. The other side of it is a release and a joy and a freedom that you can't attain or obtain, I don't believe, any other way than by simply by faith, believing God and walking out.

Though it makes no sense. Though at the time it sometimes actually seems wrong to do it. It might even hurt other people sometimes.

So I can just give that testimony that when we obey God by faith in these areas and trust Him, there is a release and a peace and a joy that is not of this world. And you never know you never know who's watching your life to see if you are any different than publicans. There's a testimony that comes by that too to make you a light in the world.

There's a verse of scripture that says to I can't remember if it's in Peter or Hebrews. It says, but if you suffer, how does it say? The words I remember are sanctify the Lord Jesus in your heart. Does anybody know where that verse is? It's talking, it's in the context of suffering.

What is it? Hebrews or is it 1st Peter? Does that suffer for doing what is wrong? Sanctify the Lord Jesus in your heart. Be ready to give a testimony to all them that ask the hope. 1st Peter 3? 1st Peter 3. 14.

Okay, and who is he that will harm you if you be followers of that which is good? But if ye suffer for righteousness sake, happy are ye and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled, but sanctify the

Lord God in your hearts and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear. And when you're in a situation, let's just take yours Rick. I mean, what are they asking in their hearts? People wonder how can you... What for hope do you have that you can let go all that money and just as if it's nothing and you can lose your partnerships and sacrifice your friends and everything? What kind of hope do you have? But that's what Peter says.

He says if you suffer for doing what is right, now the thing to do is I'm going to sanctify the Lord God in my heart and be ready when the question comes, why can you do that? And that's when churches get built and people get born again because they say you are different than the publicans. Something I also wanted to say here too, that being the last verse there, 48, it says be therefore perfect even as your father. Jesus didn't say my father.

He said your father. And he ties that whole thing together with our son and daughtership there. He says you have a Father in Heaven and He is perfect, isn't He? Now, I've been amazed as I study doctrine and things like that, how long suffering God is, you know.

How long has Heaven endured the scourge of the devil's fall? How long has the devil been allowed to continue his tyrant against God? And yet, God is long-suffering. Justice will come in the end and the balance is going to tip. It will level out one day, right? But the long-suffering and the mercy of God is merciful and merciful and merciful.

And I have to say that God's way is perfect when I see the way He does it. You know, the way Jesus answers. The way He... It so much exceeds the fleshly you know, get even, level things out attitude of man.

And the call of Jesus Christ here is for us to take our Father as an example and be perfect just like that. I really appreciate that. There is a real issue.

My neighbor across the street from me just went for a visit somewhere and his son is 2 years old, 2 year old boy stepped off one step from one room into another, fell and broke his femur at the hip. Right below the hip. Went into the doctor to get it fixed there.

He was away from home. I think Maryland somewhere. And the doctor said this did not happen from a step off of one step.

This is child abuse. And he called in the Child Protection Agency. And now that boy is in the hospital.

They wouldn't let the mother and the father take him home until it was given into the custody of a of the grandparents. He is in the custody of his grandparents right now. But you know, I have to admit, my initial response is that's not right.

What can we do? We've got to give some phone calls. We've got to do some petitioning. Let's apply some pressure.

But you know, this teaching drives against that. And so much in our minds, we think this is what needs to be done when our Father has a bigger plan. And if we just obey what He's teaching us, He has something much more magnificent to prove in the matter.

I've seen it many times. And I know some of you fathers who have big children, older children, have you ever had the experience where you wanted to deal with a situation in a certain way and you had a child that willfully overstepped you and forced your hand and did something instead and your plan just kind of got thwarted because of it. Anybody experience that? Maybe a teenager or something just took matters into their own hands when you wanted to just wait a little bit and you had a more gracious way to deal with the situation.

Well, I think maybe God experiences the same thing. Be perfect. Just like your Heavenly Father is perfect.

Anyone else have something to share before we close the meeting?

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