

# Sermon Notes

## Overcoming Evil: Cheeks or Tables

### September 9<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023

- **Recap: Overcoming Evil with Good**
  - **Romans 12:21** is our main theme.
    - Overcome evil by not conforming worldly patterns, but by thinking right. **Rom 12:1-2**
    - Overcoming evil together: in humility, with unity, and taking responsibility. **Rpm 12:3-8**
- **Overcoming Evil: Cheeks or Tables?**
  - There is a lot of “turn the other cheek” type stuff in Romans 12.
    - **Romans 12:14, Romans 12:17-21**
      - V14 is wonderful! Love that extra add on at the end. Clarifies a lot!
      - V17-21 show us some very important things:
        - 1) Justice is in God’s hands. He will repay...and He is quite good at it.
        - 2) Your job is to bless and show love.
        - 3) This can have a huge impact on the other person.
          - “Burning Coals” deal. Brings a change in perspective.
          - That is very different from escalating the conflict!
    - Paul is simply echoing Jesus’ teaching from the Sermon on the Mount. **Matthew 5:38-48**
- **However...**
  - Jesus sometimes did things that seem contrary to this teaching. **John 2:13-22**
    - But the main point is: Jesus was very strong...civil disobedience??
    - Then there is Matt 23! A public berating of religious leaders! **Matt 23:1-3, 15** for example.
  - So, is Jesus being a hypocrite? Is he preaching one thing but doing another??
    - No. Jesus is doing what is appropriate for the situation.
      - “Religion” can hinder people’s ability to evaluate what is appropriate because they focus on following rules rather than understanding what’s going on.
      - Jesus confronts this in **Matthew 9:14-17**.
        - Fast when it is time...not just because it is a rule.
      - My friend who wouldn’t fire bad employees as another example.
    - How do we know if we should turn the other cheek or turn over the money changers tables??
      - What does it take to stop the cycle of darkness?
        - Most of the time it will be to turn the other cheek.
          - Be the bigger person. Be the adult in the room. Don’t just react in anger.
          - This doesn’t mean you play the victim, but you let some stuff go while you are fully aware and in control of the situation.
            - You can vote, engage, serve, AND turn the other cheek.
        - Sometimes you have to step in and take your stand.
          - That time when the pedophile wanted to slip in years ago.
          - Most of the time you take your stand inside your own group, not vs outsiders.
- **The Problem: When we take the wrong tactic.**
  - Turning the other cheek when you should take a stand perpetuates the problem.
  - Kicking someone in the teeth when they need a hug is powerfully destructive.
  - Fun example: **Luke 9:51-56**. This was a turn the other cheek opportunity!
    - The offense of rejection made James and John angry, but their hearts weren’t right.
- Let’s pray for wisdom and character.
  - The pattern of this world is to misrepresent and complain about others while letting injustice and wrongdoing continue inside your own group. That’s not following Jesus.
  - Close with **James 1:19-20**.
- Get personal prayer by emailing [prayer@goodhope.ag](mailto:prayer@goodhope.ag).