



Weekly Devotion

“How Jesus wants us to handle hater”

What did Jesus mean when He told His followers to “turn the other cheek”?

Did He mean when someone tries to harm us physically, that we should not fight back? That we should just sit there and take a beating?

The short answer is: No. As I’ve mentioned here before, God expects us to rationally defend ourselves when someone initiates harm against us.

So what is Jesus talking about then when He said, “turn the other cheek”? We can find the answer by taking a look at the Lord’s message in full as it’s presented in Luke 6.

“Love your enemies,” Jesus said, “do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. To the one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also... And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them...Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful” (Luke 6:27-36).

I think many will be surprised to learn that Jesus’ message here is quite useful to our daily mental health—and that message is simply this: Ignore the haters.

You know who “haters” are. Haters are those people who love to tear people down and argue about every little thing.

When Jesus said “turn the other cheek” He’s telling His followers to not give the haters a second through. Don’t let them rile you up and

draw you into their miserable lives. Don’t entertain the haters and let the resentment and bitterness they provoke to build up in your soul and poison your spirit.

When it comes to haters who just want to argue and be mean, Jesus’ message here is clear: Keep your mouth in check and ignore them.

Don’t go around shooting your mouth off like one of those hateful idiots. Don’t go tit-for-tat with every person who hurls a curse in your direction. Don’t get into a verbal slap-fight with every pompous jerk who’s just trying to push your buttons by striking you on the cheek with petty, non-violent words.

Jesus’ command to “turn the other cheek” isn’t a command for His followers to stand there and let thugs beat the snot out of them. He’s not talking about a vicious beatdown that could lead to serious injury or death.

He’s talking about petty arguments. The kind of back-and-forth quarrels you see in the real world and on social media nearly every day.

When some fool tries to lure you into some meaningless altercation, Jesus said the best thing to do is ignore them and walk away. Let them run their mouths; but whatever you do, don’t lower yourself to their level of childishness.

Don’t respond to haters with hate. Instead, follow Paul’s instruction in Romans 12: “Repay

no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all” (Romans 12:17-18).

Your integrity and your own mental health is more valuable than verbally one-upping some loudmouthed punk. That means sometimes—when it comes to things that just don’t matter, things that simply are not worth arguing about—walking away is the best thing to do in order to keep your integrity (and your sanity) intact.

Don’t exhaust all your energy arguing with haters. Don’t waste your valuable time trying to respond to every personal slight that you receive.

Instead, let all that petty white noise roll off your back. And make it your goal to treat other people the same way you want them to treat you.

That means you respect others just as you would want them to respect you. Show mercy rather than going for the kill. Because if we want to receive God’s mercy—and believe me, we do—then we must follow Jesus’ instruction and likewise extend mercy to other people.

Even to those haters who we feel don’t deserve it.

Bro. Colin Trisler

Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Pastor

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