

Short & Sweet: The Other Cheek by Mary Kane



Nourishment and Refreshment
for your soul.

29 To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either." Luke 6:29

I admit, I have struggled with this verse; it goes against what comes natural to my flesh. If someone insults me, I want to insult in return ... an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. When I was growing up, I quickly learned what happened to people who did not "defend themselves"; they were beaten, battered, and bullied.

Through the years, I have heard many different people speak and preach on this verse, but I think most missed the point. Luke 6:29 is not about defending or not defending oneself, it's about deferring to a higher calling. It's **turning the cheek** for the sake of the Gospel.

Over the weekend, I watched a great movie, "42." (Yes, the movie contains strong language. Don't judge me.) The story line revolves around a man who is asked to give up his right to retaliate; his right to justly defend himself against grave

injustice ... against cruel and ugly treatment ... against racism and hatred. He is asked by his boss to "**turn the other cheek.**" Why? Because of a greater cause. Something bigger than personal dignity and respect, the destiny of all mankind.

As believers, Jesus asks us to do the same thing; **turn the other cheek** for the sake of mankind. Turning the other cheek does not mean living a life in the shadows, afraid of our own shadow. (Clearly there is a time to fight.) We are to live in the light, to live courageously, despite the opposition and to maybe even take a few beatings for the sake of the cross. What is more important, vindicating ourselves, or the cause of the Christ? Can we allow someone to take advantage of us and offer forgiveness for the sake of the Gospel?

What takes more effort, to let your temper flare or to rein it in for a greater cause? Turning the other cheek does not indicate weakness. It requires great strength and self control. There are two kinds of people – those who choose to fight, and those who choose the greater fight: the fight for the Gospel.

Turn the other cheek.

Action Points:

1. When are you tempted not to **turn the other cheek**?
2. When should you stand and fight?
3. In your present challenge, is God calling you to stand or to **turn the other cheek**?

Life is sweet.

Mary Kane