



Christian Questions

TALK RADIO WITH A PURPOSE

You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:13

Dear Christopher,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You quoted the old adage that "all evil needs to thrive is for good people to do nothing." You wanted to know how Jesus' statement to not resist an evil person applied.

Jesus said, "You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for an eye, and tooth for a tooth.' But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. [Do not retaliate.] If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. [This is a figurative expression, meaning willingness to accept insult or even assault rather than to do injury to another.] And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. [Try to settle with the person out of court even if it may not be in our best interest.] If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. [Do not show a narrow spirit in enacting the law's requirements.] Give the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you. [Do not turn away those in need.] You have heard it said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven." [Follow Jesus' example when he walked the earth.] (Matthew 5:38-45)

Jesus, we believe, is telling us not to exact vengeance on another fellow imperfect sinful human for transgressions done to us. Instead, He is showing the importance of the law of love, rather than the absolute Old Testament law of justice that resulted in a hardness of heart. Not exacting vengeance does not mean that we do nothing when evil is perpetuated against us. Matthew 5:38-45 describes an inner selfless love and understanding of a fellow sinner and illustrates figuratively what the Christian's heart attitude should be in regard to those who persecute or do evil against him personally.

The Apostle Paul in Romans 12:19-21 sums up what the Christian's attitude and actions should be. "Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord. On the contrary: 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.' . . . Do not be overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good."

You wanted to know if Jesus' statement to not resist an evil act by a person would actually cause evil to thrive. We believe Jesus' statement is not directed to a moment of crisis where





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action is needed to protect or defend one's self or another's and, therefore, thwart evil. The statement, instead, is in reference to each of us personally. When we are assaulted or persecuted, what should our attitude be? We should "hate what is evil and cling to what is good" (Romans 12:9) and not repay anyone evil for evil (Romans 12:17).

It is our firm belief that Jesus never taught us to let evil thrive. Rather his teachings were to help us in our battles against evil—not to fight evil with evil, but to fight it with righteousness and mercy as we take a stand for what is good in the sight of God, even if that stand may mean our own personal demise.

We hope we have clarified your concerns. Be sure to sign up for CQ Rewind at www.christianquestions.net. The service is free without obligation and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions and topics.

Sincerely,

Christian Questions Radio

