



Undeserved Suffering Involving Other People

A neighbor is one with whom you have contact whereas an enemy is one with whom you usually do not have contact although they indeed hate you. A neighbor is face to face contact. An enemy always goes through a middleman because direct confrontation is difficult. Matt. 5:38

“You have heard that it was said, 'AN EYE FOR AN EYE, AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH.'” (Matthew 5:38, NASB)

The eye for eye concept is courtroom justice, judicial procedure. The believer with believer is to bypass this and reconcile their differences outside the courtroom. This is the doctrine of the wise man. 1 Cor. 6:1-11; Matt. 5:39-40.

“I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not among you one wise man who will be able to decide between his brethren, but brother goes to law with brother, and that before unbelievers? Actually, then, it is already a defeat for you, that you have lawsuits with one another. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be defrauded? On the contrary, you yourselves wrong and defraud. You do this even to your brethren.” (1 Corinthians 6:5-8, NASB)

“But I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. “If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also.” (Matthew 5:39-40, NASB)

The turning of the other cheek is not pacifism, but brotherhood. It means to not retaliate against another believer. Do not threaten another believer with vengeance. Do not be upset by lawsuits (threatened or real) as they only involve property or reputation. You are to maintain a good mental attitude under these circumstances and again demonstrate unconditional love toward them from the *epignosis* Bible doctrine in your soul. They cannot take the Bible doctrine from your soul. Rom. 8:28.

“And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.” (Romans 8:28, NASB)

Serve your country with double enthusiasm and with a good mental attitude. In Matthew 5:41, the term “forces” is ἀγγαρεύω (aggareuō) and means to be drafted to serve in the military, to be pressed into public service.

“Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two.” (Matthew 5:41, NASB)

Give to the hopeless with a good mental attitude knowing they won’t be able to repay. Loan without interest to the man who can repay. Matt. 5:42.

“Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you.” (Matthew 5:42, NASB)

The key to dealing with a neighbor or an enemy is a relaxed mental attitude. Look for their benefit, not their downfall. Matt. 5:43.

“You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR and hate your enemy.'” (Matthew 5:43, NASB)

So someone hates you. So what! They only hurt themselves. You take people more seriously than you take God, if you let them affect you. You are to demonstrate unconditional mental attitude *agapao* love



toward your enemies because of the Bible doctrine in your soul. This is what our Lord Jesus Christ demonstrated toward His enemies, the Pharisees.

Enemies are to be dealt with in three ways. For verbal insults, don't get out of fellowship and commit a verbal sin in return. Don't get out of fellowship, perform divine good. Have a meeting with them with no exhibit of mental attitude sins. In Matthew 5:44, the believer is commanded to "love" their enemies or ἀγαπάω (agapaō) in the Greek and is an unconditional mental attitude love.

"But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you," (Matthew 5:44, NASB)

For overt sins such as violence, ostracism, or harassment, the believer is also commanded to "pray" for those who persecute you or προσεύχομαι (proseuchomai) in the Greek. This is the dynamics of the grace life in action! Nothing should upset you. Period! Be flexible. Be gracious. Realize that people have a right to gripe, behind your back, to your face, etc. Matt. 5:45.

"so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous." (Matthew 5:45, NASB)

The sun comes up on your critics and your lovers. Love exhibited toward those who love you is no big thing, but unconditional love exhibited toward your enemies is possible only for the maturing believer! Maturity is the proper mental attitude toward your enemies. Matt. 5:46-47.

"For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?" (Matthew 5:46-47, NASB)