

St James News: Thought for the day – Wednesday 17th June 2020

Forgiveness - Rev John Ohen

We talk about forgiveness regularly and wish to forgive others as Christ expects of us, but it is one of the Christ-like traits that many of us find very difficult.

Matthew (5: 38 – 42). An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth is one of the oldest laws in the scriptures. Although, it may appear to us as a call for retaliation, it was meant to prevent and restrict the escalation of violence, so that punishment will fit the crime.

Jesus teaching instructs us to turn the other cheek and asks us to examine how we respond to injustice against us. He brings the spiritual focus to his teaching. It is exceedingly difficult to strike a balance between the need for retaliation and self-restraint i.e. turning the other cheek. Yet, we must take a stand and positive action against injustices in our world. It is only in this way that we can make our world a better place for all of us.

Jesus asks us to turn the other cheek. This may not be an easy task, but we need to realize our helplessness and seek God's grace on how best to deal with all situations of wrongdoing and injustices.

Jesus also has given us the greatest example, he was beaten, mocked, spat upon, condemned and crucified; yet, he pleaded for forgiveness for his tormentors. So, we should always strive to forgive others as God in Christ has forgiven us.

Luke 23: 34 says - "Father forgive them for they know not what they do".

Prayer. Lord Jesus, help me to be honest in all I do or say. Give me the grace to do what is right in your sight now and always. AMEN.

Hymn: Rock of Ages, cleft for me - you can listen to it [here](#)

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,

From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Save me from its guilt and power.

Not the labor of my hands
Can fulfill Thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All could never sin erase,
Thou must save, and save by grace.

Nothing in my hands I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for dress,
Helpless, look to Thee for grace:
Foul, I to the fountain fly,
Wash me, Savior, or I die.

While I draw this fleeting breath,
When mine eyes shall close in death,
When I soar to worlds unknown,
See Thee on Thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee