***Tough Stuff from Jesus*** (4) 4-11-21

*Bottom Line: Representing Jesus may cause us to make some difficult choices about resisting evil.*

**Introduction:**

A. A big hit for Kenny Rogers in 1979 was ***Coward of the County***! Later became a TV movie. Ballad story…

1. Tommy was a pacifist in a small town – called “Yellow”

2. His father’s death in prison – deathbed plea

3. “turn the other cheek” is not a sign of weakness!

4. Theme: “You don’t have to fight to be a man” - promise

5. Becky loves & accepts him – Gatlin brothers assault her

6. Goes to barroom – meets them – confronted, turns but then locks the doors and whips all three,

7. Hears father say, “don’t fight to be a man” but he says, “Sometimes you gotta fight when you’re a man”!

B. Tough conflict of emotions & spiritual convictions!

1. Many convicted to be non-combatant – some to prison!

2. Others serve in war as medics – Desmond Doss, pacifist medic, a C O Medal of Honor winner from Okinawa told in ***Hacksaw Ridge*** – hated, then saved 75 wounded soldiers.

C. Tough stuff from Jesus in Matthew 5:38-42

1. Can we ignore it? Did he really mean it?

2. Are Christians pacifist doormats happy to be abused?

D. Each of us needs to deal with this personally & honestly.

1. You don’t have to agree with me, just agree w/ Jesus.

2. I want to share some principles to remember from this.

**1. Courage is found in unshakable convictions, not just in our willingness to do battle!**

A. David against Goliath was about trust in God! His actions in the cave with Saul were about his convictions!

B. Jesus in the garden teaches us that the occasion determines the action. Kingdom business? Angels?

C. Courage of convictions must guide our actions!

**2. Turning the other cheek was never meant to foster pacifism!** Any more than “Thou shalt not kill” did!

A. Too many contradictions: armed apostles, loyal soldiers

B. 1 Tim.5:8, provide for your own = security!

C. Jesus is talking about heart conditions – remember vs.21-23 about murder? Reconciliation in vs.23-24!

**3. Turning the other cheek is about choosing to represent God!** Even when it hurts and costs!

A. We must remember the context: Seekers, salt & light, godly righteousness not Pharisees! Responding to Rome!

B. Mt.5, Eye for an eye = revenge & grudge, payback!

1. “Resist” = take to court

2. “Slap” = backhand insult! Take it rather than go to court!

3. MSG – “None of this Tit for Tat stuff!”

C. When you represent God you do what promotes him!

D. These are all tests of faith! Romans & others testing you!

\* Will anger rule? Will need for justice rule? Or will God?

**Conclusion:**

A. As parents we have to be a lot of different things.

B. Jesus could be a lion or a lamb, depending on God’s will.

C. What did the prophets say the Messiah would be? A lamb led to the slaughter!

D. We need to hear God tell us which we must be!

**Bible Study for Sunday, April 11, 2021**

**Tough Stuff From Jesus (4)**

1. Is “Thou shalt not kill” a call for God’s people to be pacifists? Why or why not?

2. Since Israel was commanded to destroy those people living in The Promise Land, is that a contradiction?

3. How have you thought about Jesus’ call to give extra, walk farther, and turn the other cheek? Have you ignored it or rejected it?

4. Why didn’t Jesus allow his apostles to fight for him when he was arrested in the garden? What does that tell us?

5. Why is it true that sometimes it takes more courage to choose to not retaliate then to attacked?

6. What are some things in the gospel story that show us that we don’t always “turn the other cheek”?

7. How does Jesus’ comment about murder in Matthew 5:21-24 help us understand why we might need to turn the other cheek? Or does it?

8. Why does the context have such a strong influence on understanding his point about turning the other cheek? Or does it?

9. How does it change things to recognize that we represent God?

10. Why is the spirit of retaliation not what God wants?

11. How might the cloak, the second mile, and turning the other cheek be tests of faith? Or are they tests of our hearts?