

A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED UPON THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

GIVE THE SHIRT OFF YOUR BACK

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

You have probably heard someone say of a person, “he would give you the shirt off his back.” Such a statement describes a generous individual who will, at great personal sacrifice, do something good to another person. This is not typical human behavior.

Jesus spoke the parable of the Good Samaritan that illustrates the point of Luke 6:29. Samaritans and Jews did not get along. They were known to go far out of their way in order to avoid contact with one another. Yet, when the Samaritan saw the Jewish man beaten up by robbers, cast off into a ditch and in great need of help, he gave no thought to his own personal safety, administered first aid, then transported the wounded man to the nearest care facility and even paid for the cost of his care.

Luke 6:29 and the Good Samaritan parable describe Jesus’ ministry to the masses. When the ill, disabled, poor and hurting came to Him He could well have ignored them, especially since He knew that within a short time these same people would be shouting to Pilate Jesus should be crucified. He, however, the Bible says, “had compassion on them.” He ministered to the need of everyone who came to Him.

Jesus says to you in today’s devotional verse, as a Christian the fruits of your faith create a radical behavior including “giving the shirt off of your back,” “loving your enemies, blessing those who curse you,” etc. John wrote in 1 John 4:10-11, “this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”

Your Christian heart radically departs from the natural, sinful heart that thinks only of itself. Because God’s love fills your heart it overflows to touch the lives of those around you. Jesus says in verse 29, rather than give way to anger when someone hurts you, you should “turn the other cheek.” Rather than sin against

someone who sins against you, his sinful behavior gives you opportunity to smother him with God's love. "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God." (1 John 4:7)

Prayer: Lord, fill my heart with Your love to pour out upon those among who I live. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Love divine, all loves excelling, Joy of heav'n, to earth come down!
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling, All Thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, Thou art all compassion, Pure unbounded love Thou art;
Visit us with Thy salvation, Enter ev'ry trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit Into ev'ry troubled breast;
Let us all in Thee inherit; Let us find Thy promised rest.
Take away the love of sinning; Alpha and Omega be;
End of faith, as its beginning, Set our hearts at liberty.

Come, Almighty, to deliver; Let us all Thy life receive;
Suddenly return, and never, Nevermore Thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing, Serve Thee as Thy hosts above,
Pray and praise Thee without ceasing, Glory in Thy perfect love.

Finish then Thy new creation, Pure and spotless let us be;
Let us see Thy great salvation Perfectly restored in Thee.
Changed from glory into glory, Till in heav'n we take our place.
Till we cast our crowns before Thee, Lost in wonder, love, and praise!
(LSB 700)