

Inner Transformation

Lesson 9



BLESSED ARE THOSE
PERSECUTED - JUSTICE



"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.



Definition of Persecution - In Matthew 5: 10, the root phrase in the Greek, "who have been persecuted" is *dediōgmenoi* which literally means "to put to flight or to pursue". The word "persecute" means to pursue with hostile intent; thus, to be persecuted is to be ridiculed, denounced, ill-treated, threatened with death, or to have injury inflicted upon you. In the New Testament it is used to signify the inflicting of pain and suffering upon people who hold differing beliefs.



- ❖ Noble sentiments are often not fully expressed in today's world, as people fear misinterpretation or misjudgment given prevailing societal values.
- ❖ A noble sentiment might be perceived as a sign of weakness instead of strength. It might even be looked upon with derision, accompanied by a joking frown; sometimes it may even be interpreted as a mental or personality disturbance.

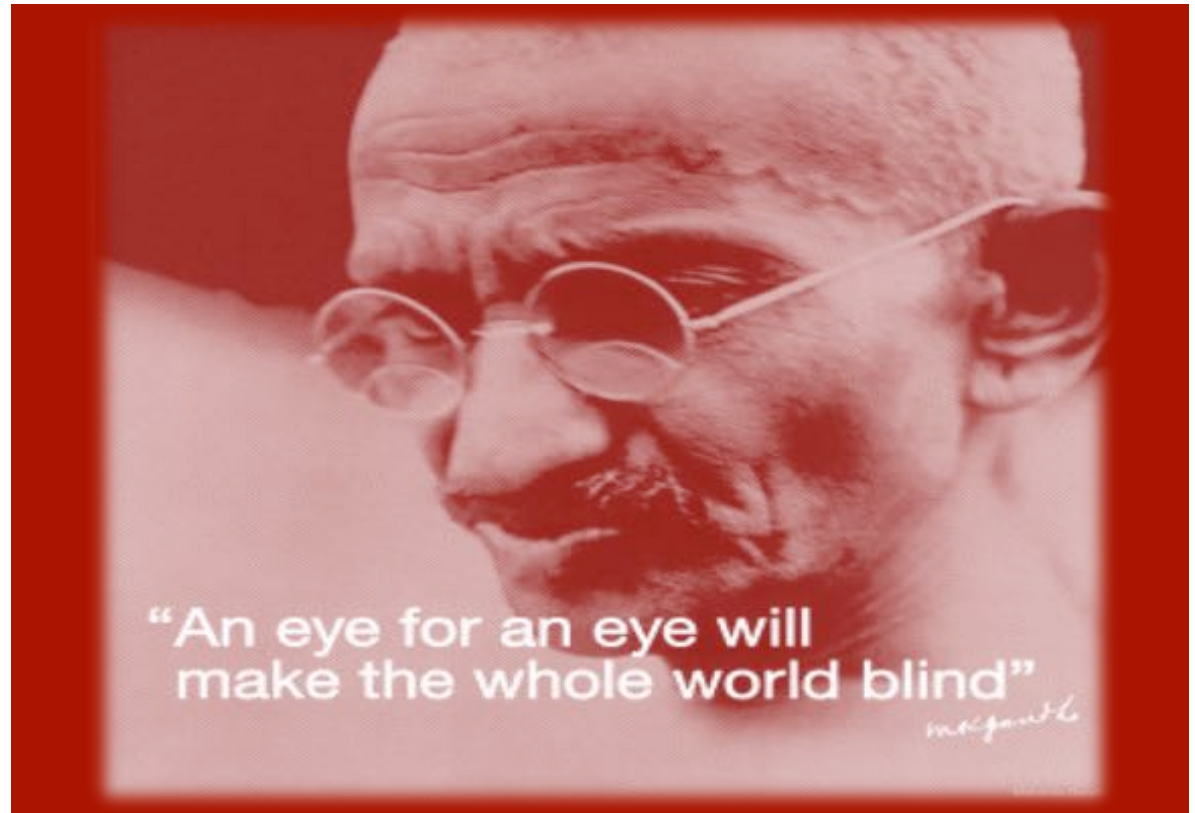


- This is the reason why those who try to lead a noble and righteous life have always faced hard criticism and persecution.
- If they follow beliefs that teach them to live a moral life, people will mock them, and even persecute them.
- There will be times that people will get mad at them for no reason at all.
- They will hate them because of their love and respect for God.
- Followers of the truth very seldom please people on Earth.
- However, it is imperative to have the courage to break away from those prevailing societal values that promote malice, pessimism and aggressiveness among fellow human beings.

I disapprove of
what you say, but
I will defend to
the death your
right to say it.



Voltaire



“An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.” I am telling you not to resist the evil that others might want to do to you; but if someone strikes your right cheek, offer him the other also. Jesus (Mt. 5:38-42)



- ❖ Oftentimes we may feel like answering back the offenses we endure with vengeance, but vengeance is a sure indication of the backwardness of those who indulge in it. Thence, we should eradicate this sentiment from our hearts.
- ❖ When someone is aggressive and rude with us, making statements about our character and faith, our first reaction may be that of engaging in confrontation, getting defensive, and answering the accusations.
- ❖ But if we stop for a minute we may come to the realization that oftentimes people engage in these personal assaults because somehow they are feeling incredibly hurt and express their pain by attacking us.
- ❖ We will learn that being patient with them, allowing them to vent, and thus being sympathetic to their pain is another way of practicing charity.



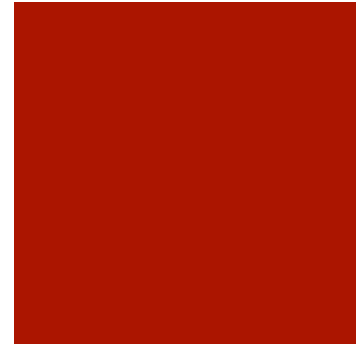
“It saddens me when someone is offensive to me, but I would, with certainty, feel worse if I had been the offender. It is terrible to be hurtful to anyone.”

Endearing Gems from Francisco Xavier

Written by Jussara Korngold and Marie Levinson, published by SAB, Inc.

When someone provokes you into irritability, have a glass of water, drink a little and conserve the rest in your mouth. Don't swallow it or dispose of it. While the temptation of answering persists, keep the water bathing the tongue.... This is The Water of Peace."

An advice from the Spirit Maria João de Deus to her son Francisco Cândido Xavier



The Writings of Benjamin Franklin: **A Parable Against Persecution**



- *1. And it came to pass after these Things, that Abraham sat in the Door of his Tent, about the going down of the Sun.*
- *2. And behold a Man, bowed with Age, came from the Way of the Wilderness, leaning on a Staff.*
- *3. And Abraham arose and met him, and said unto him, Turn in, I pray thee, and wash thy Feet, and tarry all Night, and thou shalt arise early on the Morrow, and go on thy Way.*
- *4. And the Man said, Nay, for I will abide under this Tree.*
- *5. But Abraham pressed him greatly; so he turned, and they went into the Tent; and Abraham baked unleavened Bread, and they did eat.*
- *6. And when Abraham saw that the Man blessed not God, he said unto him, Wherefore dost thou not worship the most high God, Creator of Heaven and Earth?*
- *7. And the Man answered and said, I do not worship the God thou speakest of; neither do I call upon his Name; for I have made to myself a God, which abideth always in mine House, and provideth me with all Things.*
- *8. And Abraham's Zeal was kindled against the Man; and he arose, and fell upon him, and drove him forth with Blows into the Wilderness.*

The Writings of Benjamin Franklin: **A Parable Against Persecution**



- 9. *And at Midnight God called unto Abraham, saying, Abraham, where is the Stranger?*
- 10. *And Abraham answered and said, Lord, he would not worship thee, neither would he call upon thy Name; therefore have I driven him out from before my Face into the Wilderness.*
- 11. *And God said, Have I born with him these hundred ninety and eight Years, and nourished him, and clothed him, notwithstanding his Rebellion against me, and couldst not thou, that art thyself a Sinner, bear with him one Night?*
- 12. *And Abraham said, Let not the Anger of my Lord wax hot against his Servant. Lo, I have sinned; forgive me, I pray Thee:*
- 13. *And Abraham arose and went forth into the Wilderness, and sought diligently for the Man, and found him, and returned with him to his Tent; and when he had entreated him kindly, he sent him away on the Morrow with Gifts.*
- 14. *And God spoke again unto Abraham, saying, For this thy Sin shall thy Seed be afflicted four Hundred Years in a strange Land:*
- 15. *But for thy Repentance will I deliver them; and they shall come forth with Power, and with Gladness of Heart, and with much Substance.*



Justice. Wrong none by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.

This precept is part of Benjamin Franklin's set of thirteen virtues and it invites us to refrain from being the cause of injuries to others.



• **873. Is the sentiment of justice to be found in nature itself or is it the result of acquired ideas?**

• “It is so natural that you revolt at the thought of an injustice. Moral progress undoubtedly develops this sentiment, but it does not create it – God has placed it in the human heart.”



• **874. If justice is a natural law, how may it be explained that people understand it so differently, and that what one individual considers just appears unjust to another?**

• “It is because passions usually mingle with judgment, altering that sentiment, as happens with the majority of the other natural sentiments, causing one to see things from an erroneous point of view



• **875. How may justice be defined?**

• “Justice consists in respecting the rights of others.”

• **875 a) — What determines these rights?**

- “They are determined by two things: human law and natural law. Since humans have established laws that are appropriate for their customs and character, such laws have established rights that can vary with progress. Obsolete rights, which seem monstrous to you now, appeared just and natural at that time. Therefore, the rights of humans do not always conform to justice. They only regulate certain social relations, while in private life there is an infinity of acts that are the exclusive jurisdiction of the court of conscience.”

• **876. Outside the rights consecrated by human law, what is the basis of justice founded on natural law?**

- “Christ has told you: ‘Do unto others whatsoever you would have them do unto you’. God has placed in the human heart the rule of all true justice through the desire that all have to see their rights respected. If you are uncertain of what you should do for your neighbor in any given circumstance, ask yourself what you would wish others to do to you in a similar situation. God could not give you a safer guide than your own conscience



879. What would be the character of those who practice justice in all its purity?

“That of true justice, after the example of Jesus, because they would practice both charity and love towards their neighbor, without which there is no real justice.”



He who has no reason to criticize me deserves no response; whoever does have it, is being truthful, and we are powerless to go against the truth.

This is what Emmanuel has been teaching me. For this reason, during my entire life I have tried to listen in silence to the truths and lies that have been said about me.

Francisco Cândido Xavier





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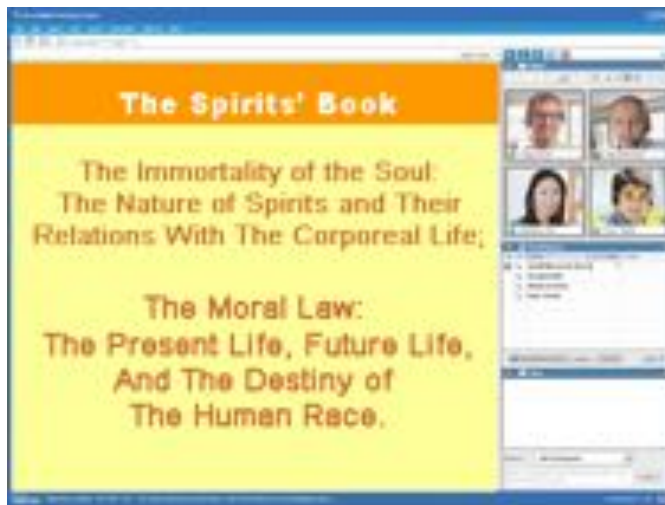
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