

courtesy of behavior, to those who have injured or insulted him, has learned one of Christ's hardest lessons.

29, 30. Most commentators regard these two verses as illustrative examples of the general directions concerning enemies just given by our Lord. **Smite them on the one cheek.** "Cheek" should be "jaw." By "smite," an act of violence is intended, not merely an act of contempt. For such an offense the Jewish courts imposed a fine from a shekel upward. **Offer also the other.** This is a "hard saying," and it will not do to dodge it. We should find out precisely what Jesus meant, and, without flinching, act accordingly. First, remember that this is not an additional command, but an illustration of how the command, "Love your enemies," will work. Secondly, forget not the repeated injunction, "Resist not evil" (Matt. 5, 39; 1 Cor. 6, 7; 1 Pet. 2, 19-23), which is not figurative, but literal, in its meaning. Lastly, watch Jesus himself, when he was smitten on the one cheek (John 18, 22, 23), and notice that "while most divinely true to the spirit of this passage, he did not, on that occasion, act on the letter of it." It would be wrong for one to quietly allow his wife or child or his own life to be endangered by a drunken ruffian or a murderous lunatic. Common sense teaches that, and, therefore, Jesus needed not to repeat it. But common sense does not teach what the Lord here emphasizes, that (3) "*The ills we suffer from our enemy's abuse are not to be named in comparison with the ills that come from unkindled malign emotions.*" The verse is, as Dr. Farrar has said, a striking paradox intended to impress forever on the memory and conscience of mankind the solemn duty of loving our enemies. **Cloak.** This outer mantle was of as great value to its wearer as any single modern article of apparel. It was used as a wrap both by day and night. **Coat.** The inner, necessary garment. Christ does not say, If a man robs you of your luxuries, welcome him to your necessities; but, when wronged, better suffer additional loss than resort to wrangling and quarrels. And Jesus shows no more indulgence for lawsuits than for istitucius. **Give.** This is the third illustration of the sublime law given in verse 27. We are to so love our enemies that neither atrocious assault nor violent robbery nor the overreaching and greed of social and business life can disturb our steady purpose to do them good. Thoughtful generosity is to be the habit of our lives. Sometimes the very spirit of this precept compels us to disobey its letter. Matt. 15, 26; 23, 23.

(4) *It is better to lose your coat than to lose your charity.*

31. Skeptics have made a great ado because something like this Golden Rule has been found outside the Gospel; but our Lord himself presented it as a condensation of "the law and the prophets." Matt. 7. 12. Dr. Van Doren beautifully says, "It is the primitive command of God written on the hearts of all nations." Confucius, Socrates, Aristotle, and Hillel each formulated a maxim similar to this; but theirs were negative,

and this is positive. Theirs said, Do not what you would not like done ; Jesus said, Do what you would like done. This rule, like every other, has been occasionally misinterpreted by evil hearts and ignorant minds. (5) *Like every other good precept, the Golden Rule is only safe to follow when our hearts have been purified and our good sense enlightened by God's Spirit.*

**392-394.** These verses, condensed, mean simply that a Christian is to be better than every body else. "If a Christian be a shoemaker," says Cecil, "he should be the best shoemaker in town." **If ye love them which love you.** The meaneest of men do that. **If ye do good to them which do good to you.** The trickiest politician will do that. **If ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive.** You only prove that you have the elements of a successful business man. In the law of "tit for tat" the sinner is as good as the Christian; but disciples must do better than worldlings. (6) *A man is a Christian for the very purpose of being a better man than his neighbors.* (7) *God enables his children to live more loftily and purely than others, because they may draw ultimately on divine power.*

**35, 36.** A summary of the preceding eight verses.  
 "The most sublime precept ever delivered to man."

**Do good, and lend.** At all times, in all moods, live for others. While his neighbors are planning to get more money and to rise in the social scale, the true follower of Christ is planning to enrich the poor and raise the fallen. **Hoping for nothing.** One who lives so lofty a life need hope for no earthly recompense. While he lives the world will call him a fool, though after his death it may revere him as a saint. But the phrase in Greek has another possible meaning. It may be read, "Never despairing;" "never giving up heart." **Your reward shall be great.** In heaven. **Children of the Highest.** Recognized by a sort of family likeness. **As your Father also is.** (8) **Children of God—those God whose name is LOVE—must live a life of unswerving beneficence and tender-heartedness.**

**37. Judge not.** Rom. 2: 1-3; 14: 10; 1 Cor. 4: 3-5, 13; Jas. 2: 13. We are not forbidden to make careful estimates of our neighbors' characters; the activities of life compel us continually to make such "judgments." But all our mental workings are to be saturated with divine love. The Christly spirit displayed in the meek reception of affronts and cruelties is to rule also in our social, domestic, and business life. **Forgive.** Do not condemn; pardon.

**38. Good measure.** Your quarts and bushels shall overrun—an inspiring promise, greatly intensified by the beautiful figure of the grain-measure. **Men.** The Revised Version has “they.” The Greek does not definitely refer to any agents, and we here catch a glimpse of a benign law that rules in both the “natural” and the “spiritual” world. It is more distinctly stated in the last sentence of this verse. **Bosom.** That is, the fold of the robe or girdle—used in the Orient instead of pockets—like the vail in Ruth 3. 15. See also Psa. 35, 13; Isa. 65. 7; Jer. 32. 18.

### CRITICAL NOTES.

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The opposition of the ruling party, overawed for a season by an unanswerable miracle, as recounted in the last lesson, soon reasserts itself in renewed attacks and fresh criticisms, of which Luke gives careful details. This opposition, so certain to prejudice the common people, cannot be silently ignored. Means must be devised for meeting it. Organization is the means resolved upon. Having spent a whole night in prayer,

Jesus formally selects and appoints twelve apostles, and he founds his church. The formation of the new body affords the natural and most favorable opportunity for the publication of its governing principles. Such a publication is accordingly made in the so-called Sermon on the Mount, a brief and logical sketch of which, as it was reported among the Christians of his time, is presented by Luke. Such a sketch as we find in Matthew