

Resist Not Evil

By Mallory Patrick

“But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.”

— Matthew 5:39

To turn the other cheek after having been wronged is one of the most difficult things for us to do. Nevertheless, they are Jesus’ own words to His followers and a description of the very nature of the life of Christ. To not resist evil presents a conundrum to the carnal mind, for it is natural to a person to want to correct the evil done against him by his neighbor. How much more so is it for the believer who loves God, for when such a one sees the Lord’s name misrepresented or degraded in any way, he will immediately rush to the defense of his Lord. And how much more quickly will the believer jump to his own defense if his ministry is criticized or challenged in the smallest degree. Yet the words of our Lord stand firm: “resist not evil”. It does not say, “Resist not evil if it is only a little bit of evil and won’t do any harm.” It does not say, “resist not evil when an unbeliever mistreats you because he does not know any better.” There is no qualifying statement to soften or dilute Jesus’ words.

Why would Jesus be so unyielding on this point when it is one that is so hard for us to keep? Is it because Jesus is legalistic or uncaring? No, God is love, and Jesus was Love Incarnate. Jesus insists that those who are now His resist not evil because He – the Lamb of God – dwells in us. To not resist evil is impossible for frail humanity, but for one in whom Christ is living, it is a way of life. To not resist evil is evidence of the believer having embraced the cross, for only such a one can permit Christ to live within them in this way.

We will now turn to the Scriptures and let them define for us what it means to “resist not evil”. In so doing, we will further come to understand not only the nature of our Lord, but how this nature lives in us and affects others.

The Knowledge of Good and Evil

“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”

—Genesis 2:16-17

We must begin with the introduction of evil in the Garden of Eden. Evil is first spoken of in relation to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. On this tree was the fruit of the knowledge of evil – and of good. The knowledge of good and evil were found on the same tree. Eating the fruit of that tree was the first sin and caused the Fall of man. Adam and Eve were not told to resist the evil on that particular tree even though that fruit was present in the garden. They were told to avoid the whole tree – both good and evil.

We take from this that the Lord did not intend for us to gain a certain type of knowledge concerning evil (or of good, for that matter). This is pertinent to our study, for the evil we resist, we have gained knowledge of by eating of the tree of which our ancestors ate. The reason we resist evil is because we are trying to do good. Yet both are fruit from the same tree, having the same root. So then, our view from the outset is wrong. We have begun wrong when we move in the realm of the knowledge of good and evil; therefore we are guaranteed a wrong outcome. Resisting evil can never be blessed by the Lord because its source is in the tree that separates man from God. Because Christ is one with His Father, separation is the most serious breach that can occur. This is why He uttered the words, “Resist not evil”. They were not an arbitrary commands from a hard and uncaring God. They were words spoken of from the very nature of Christ, a nature which now dwells in us by virtue of our being in Christ.

Entering Into Rest

“For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.”

— Hebrews 4:10

Hebrews 4:1-11 speaks of entering into God’s rest. The relationship of rest that is our with God in Christ is in direct contrast to relating by the knowledge of good and evil. In the raised and seated Christ, the work is complete; there is nothing left for us to do but manifest it. Not resisting evil is an outworking of having entered into His rest. If we cease from our own works, then we will no longer resist evil because we only do what we see the Father doing (cf. Jn. 5:19). There is rest in not resisting evil because we are no longer striving. We are no longer striving against the circumstances, against others, and against God.

There is more to entering into God’s rest than not resisting evil, but we will most certainly not resist evil after having entered into it because we will no longer be partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. When we cease from our own works, we enter into God’s rest. Our works are both evil and good, so we cease striving against evil when we enter into God’s rest.

The I AM Does Not Resist Evil

“And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.”

— Exodus 3:12

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

— Galatians 2:20

Life is a state of being. So many believers think of Life exclusively in reference to what they are doing, what they are manifesting in an active way – ministry, sharing the Word, and other such apparent fruit. This is a wrong view. If Life is being, then resisting evil cannot possibly come out of Life! But so many times the believer who is aware of his risen relationship with Christ believes that it is God’s wish to address a problem, fix it, set it straight. But this is no more than the arm of the flesh doing good. There is no life there, only good resisting evil, the striving of the flesh, two manifest forms of one source.

Again, Ephesians chapter one speaks of this very being. In this chapter, we are “made” that we might “be”: *“To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved... That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ”* (Eph. 1:6, 12). This passages says nothing of our achievements, how we please the Father, or what we are to do. It does, however, speak of the Father’s will in relation to our being. It is His will that we might be. If we are being, we cannot possibly be pushing back, reacting to, or correcting the darkness. In fact, in verses 3-11, God is doing all of the willing and all of the work, and we are just being.

If God is I Am, and I am not, to strive against evil makes me be. But if I have truly been removed by the Cross, how can I manifest anything other than the being of I AM? To manifest anything else is to live contrary to the nature of Christ.

The I AM and the Lamb of God

As we have begun to see, the Lord being the I AM is tied up in Him also being the Lamb of God. Both names describe the aspect of His being that does not resist evil and not ruling by force.

The I AM speaks of eternal fullness. He simply is; He does not change. All that He is, He is. The I AM speaks of value out from the quality of being rather than finding value in doing. God’s value is intrinsic to His nature, which just IS. In all of this, we can see that the I AM does not react to evil because His being is not centered in what He does – He is simply fullness. He was the I AM before there was evil, and He will be I AM long after evil is gone. He is not I AM in relation to evil or because of the lack inherent in the human race. He does not stretch out His arm to fix the problems that are in such striking contrast to Himself. Instead, He gathers us into Himself by Christ so that we are “being” with Him. We can be in fullness with Him, know that we are in fullness, not be moved by evil, and not need to fix it.

The Lamb reveals a different aspect of who the Lord is, though it overlaps into not resisting evil. The Lamb speaks of sacrifice for sin, and laying down His life, the Just for the unjust. The Lamb gives Himself for others. But even this is not a reaction to sin. He is not called the Lamb of God because He wanted to fix the sin problem. He was the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world. He is a Lamb laid down, whether there is any evil or not. His death on the cross was simply a manifestation of His nature.

The Lamb rules by serving and does not control His subjects. Even when His subjects stray from living by the nature of Christ within them, the Lamb does not force them back into the correct way of doing things. He rules by laying down His life.

The Mind of Christ

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

— Philipians 2:5-8

All of this greatly clarifies Philipians 2:5-8, which begins, “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus...” The passage goes on to describe Jesus’ descent all the way to the lowest form of death. Let this mind be in us, that we think it not a thing to be grasped after to be equal with God, so that we can relinquish our position as the situation demands. Or, to put it more accurately, to simply be who He is as circumstances became lower.

The mind that is to be in us is one of being, not one of resisting the evil that comes our way. It is not a mind that only lowers itself, though that it true. Even more so, it is a mind that permits itself to be lowered, or become obedient unto death. This mind of resisting not evil is so consumed with being one – not with doing “one things” – that it does not seek to change the circumstances that are lowering it.

We cannot do this mind. We must permit it to be, for it is a state of being. We must submit to it, let it be, let it have its way. Why? First of all because it will not take the preeminence for itself, for its nature is not doing but being. Second of all, because we must be conformed to that nature that submits to that mind. It is a mind of being, so we must permit it, as it will not force itself upon us.

Bringing this back to becoming obedient unto death, this is a mind that permits unjust elements to rule over it. It obeys those elements that would have mastery over it through no fault of its own. This mind never seeks the mastery for itself as these other evil elements do because it does not need to rule. Union with the Father and being in the union is enough.

Resisting Evil Results in Death

“For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”

— Genesis 2:17

“And when they came to Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the LORD was kindled

against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God.”

— II Samuel 6:6-7

Let us now look at some examples from Scripture that illustrate the point that resisting evil, something that is so natural to earthly humanity, is the result of being out of relationship with the Lord. Since our joining in Christ is the source of eternal life, being out of joint with our union in Christ results in death working in us.

We will begin with David bringing the Ark of the Covenant up to Jerusalem. When David was bringing the Ark up to Jerusalem the first time, he had not searched the Word of God and therefore transported it in the wrong way (cf. Num. 4:5-15). When the oxen pulling the cart stumbled, it would seem to be the right thing to do for any child of Israel to save the Ark of God from destruction. Could there be a nobler task than to protect the dwelling place of God? Apparently so. God did not want His dwelling place saved by the strength of man, the arm of the flesh, by the good on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

It was wrong to have put the Ark on the cart to begin with. Had David not done that, the evil of the Ark falling off the cart would not have happened at all. The Lord could have kept this whole situation from occurring by sending a prophet to warn David to change his mode of transport. Or God could have sent a prophet to tell David to search the Scriptures for direction concerning the Ark, but He did not do that. The Lord permitted the evil events to unfold.

Why? Why would God permit His only habitation in the earth to be put in jeopardy? His methods are different from ours. He does not deal with evil by resisting it. He does not deal with evil by reaction, prevention, manipulation, strategy, or brute force. He deals with evil by death.

The evil that occurs all around us is only the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He does not deal with the fruit. He brings the whole thing – root and branch – down into death.

Uzzah died because he touched the Ark of God, and his only motive was to do the right thing. Resisting evil brought him to his death – and it will bring us to ours because moving in the flesh is death (cf. Rom. 8:6). But God is Life, and He does not move like that. God is a Lamb, and He does not rule by power. He does not resist evil.

This seems so backward to the human mind! From our point of view, the only way to establish rule and preserve life is to fight back anything that poses a threat to those things. But God, who is King of all and has eternal life, is not moved to preserve Himself at all.

If the Ark had tumbled to the ground and shattered into a dozen pieces, God could have brought forth life out of that death. This is His way. Uzzah did not move with the

Lord but against Him when he employed the arm of the flesh to do what he thought to be God's work.

When we resist evil, we strive against God, and we take ourselves out of union and moving with the Lord in the cycle of death and resurrection. The instant we are of another mind and will than the Lord, death begins to work in us. The only way to live eternally is to live by the life of Christ, who permits Himself to be destroyed, only to be raised up again.

Tearing Down the Kingdom

“And it came to pass after this, that Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him. And Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city art thou? And he said, Thy servant is of one of the tribes of Israel. And Absalom said unto him, See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee. Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice! And it was so, that when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him. And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.”

— II Samuel 15:1-6

Absalom's complaint against his father was that David was not doing enough to right the wrongs in the kingdom. So he set about to fix the problem. This led him to usurp the throne of David. This act ended up bringing division, strife, and death to Israel.

David permitted Absalom to take the kingdom because he had learned to not resist evil both while living in the wilderness and when he was bringing up the Ark to Jerusalem on a cart. This is why David left the kingdom without resistance.

Absalom probably started out with a sincere concern for the problems in the kingdom. Most likely, he did not understand why David did not act or even seem to notice. A desire to do good and fix the evil made the way for Absalom's lust for power to take over. He could not recognize the godly quality of not resisting evil in his father because he had not seen the Lord for himself.

What was the result of Absalom's attempt at righting the wrongs of his father's realm? Civil war, murder, and eventually Absalom's own death. Nothing that came out of his actions furthered the kingdom in any way, and only served to injure Israel's interests in the long wrong. What a tragic end for someone who only wanted to fix what was wrong, and yet, this will be the end for every attempt at resisting evil.

This way of being is a mystery to the doer of good. When someone is conformed to the Lamb in this way, it looks like that person does not care about the grievances that

have occurred in Israel. A believer who does not understand this may react by trying to right the wrongs of the kingdom, thinking that to do so is to move my Christ and to show true love and compassion, and doing Israel a service. But such a one is not. He is actually tearing the kingdom down.

Resisting Brings Pain

We tend to fight the lowering circumstances and the hurt that those circumstances bring as we try to get on top of them. But to struggle against evil causes us to become further entangled in those very things we are trying to be free from, and the pain begins to jade us.

There is an alternative to this path, however. We can choose not to fight the evil things that come our way but embrace those circumstances and the pain. We can let those things become the death of us, knowing that this is where I will find the resurrection reality of the life of Christ. Instead of needing positive experiences to favorably reinforce who we are, we can just know who we are by Christ. I can be confident that we are sons of our Father. We can just be sons without doing anything to prove it. We can simply be sons in our respective evil circumstances, knowing who our Father is, and let death surround us, while we embrace that death, as Jesus did when He was upon His cross.

Fixing What Is Wrong Brings Death

II Chronicles 35:20-27 recounts Josiah's death. He was definitely a godly king. He was exactly what Judah needed that the time, but we can learn a lesson from the way that this good king died.

Pharoah-neco was needing passage through Israel in his way to war with King Nebuchadnezzar, and Josiah did not like it. So he confronted Neco in Megiddo and was killed in the skirmish.

It was probably wrong for Pharoah to go through the land of Israel without first obtaining permission. And it was understandable that Israel would be offended at unclean Gentiles traveling through their land.

All of this being true, it is not for the Lord's people to determine their course of action by right and wrong. Josiah, in resisting Neco, was trying to right a wrong, and the result for him was death. When you eat of that tree, you do surely die.

What is the way of life? Not resisting evil. If something unclean "runs through your land", perhaps it would be better to remain in Christ, where we need not act or strive, rather than going out to meet the offending party in earth-combat. That unclean thing may have been sent by God on a mission that takes him within your boundaries, and you may be resisting God Himself when you resist that evil. What is more, the believer who uses such means in Israel cannot be sustained by the life of God.

Please understand that I am not talking about losing one's salvation. I am referring to the believer failing to draw from Christ as our life. And since any life other than Christ is no life at all, we can only manifest death.

Adding Life, Not Resisting Evil

How are we to respond as believers when we found ourselves in situations that are so bad that it seems as though all hope for goodness is gone? Elisha gives us one such example that will help us in our search for understanding how the nature of Christ functions in this situation.

“And Elisha came again to Gilgal: and there was a dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him: and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets. And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred them into the pot of pottage: for they knew them not. So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof. But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot.”

— II Kings 4:38-41

In this instance, the poisonous gourds had cooked into the stew. The poison could not be separated from the rest of the food because they had thoroughly mingled and become one. Elisha did not try to get the death out of the pot. Instead, he put life into the pot, which neutralized the poisonous elements.

In this situation, the only way to resist evil would be to throw out the contents of the pot. According to the knowledge of good and evil, the stew was good for nothing, and entirely lost to its purpose of feeding the hungry. According to God's view, however, to add something wholesome to the pot – the life of Christ – would redeem the entire pot.

Adding life to a death-filled situation is not a reaction to the evil. Reacting to evil is in the same category as resisting evil, for both are dealing with evil by the flesh. Because putting meal into the pot does not address or correct evil, such an action could be interpreted by the carnal mind as condoning the evil in the pot. After all, shouldn't the entire pot come under judgment of worthlessness and a sentence of destruction? Why should anything be done on behalf of that pot? Since evil has been mingled in the pot, it deserves to come to an end. Anything other than bringing that pot to a complete end would be to condone the attempted poisoning of the people of God.

Nevertheless, Elisha does not rebuke, resist, or remove the pot. Instead, he puts Life into it. What an offense and a conundrum to the carnal mind that is dominated by the knowledge of good and evil! That God not only could bring life out of a situation that appears to be unredeemable, but that He would want to is something that fallen humanity

cannot grasp! That He would want to make new the unredeemable, the undeserving, the useless, that which harms others, to be a sustaining and a life-giving force in a time of famine is an idea that would never even enter our minds.

If some well-meaning believer had thrown the whole pot out, he may have prevented death for God's people temporarily, but during a famine, who knows how long it would have been until their next meal? But God is greater than the knowledge of good and evil.

We see, then, that not resisting evil does not mean being passive. We can still actively release the life of Christ into any situation without having to address evil at all.

Look at these two verses in light of adding Life instead of resisting evil:
“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us...”

— Romans 8:3-4

Condemning something because it is wrong does not achieve anything. But putting meal in the pot – or to put it another way, putting the Son in the flesh – brings Life into the realm of our poisonous nature. We put meal in the pot every time we let Christ live in us in an evil situation.

“If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. “

— Galatians 3:21

Condemning someone to death, even when deserved, does not bring about God's desire. Resisting evil never brings forth Life. And isn't that the issue? For God, the point is Life, only Life. In that view, resisting evil is only silly. How different from the carnal viewpoint, which says that to put Life into death is to condone death!

The identification of evil never brings about God's intentions. God does not react to evil, or throw it out, or remove it. He simply Is Who He Is, and as such, He simply fills with Himself that which is lacking in Life.

Life never tries to fix the problem, whatever it may be. As a carrier of Christ, the believer is responsible for adding Life into a poisonous situation in much the same way as Elisha added meal to the pot.

Standing – Not Wrestling

“Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”

— Ephesians 6:11, 13

“The Lord will use any tool to accomplish His purpose, but He does not go against the will of Satan. He uses him, but He does not abuse him. Satan thinks that he is taking advantage of the Lord, so God lets him do what he wishes, putting restriction on him, but all the while using him for His purpose.”

— Troubles and Trials
Randy Nusbaum

We are to stand against the wiles of the devil. But after doing all we can, we stand. We are to stay in connection with the Lord and not give in to the enemy. But we also do not wrestle with flesh and blood, nor are our weapons flesh and blood (cf. II Cor. 10:4). We are to simply to be in Christ. In so doing, we resist Satan, but we do not resist the evil things he does.

This is contrary to a human point of view, which thinks that God would run over Satan when He wanted to. The church has taught spiritual warfare as wrestling with the devil to do away with the evil things he does and to prevent more from happening. According to Scripture, this is not correct. We resist Satan in the spiritual sense, but we do not wrestle with the effects of his workings that manifest in the flesh.

Contrary to popular Christian thought, God permits the devil to do what he wants, within limits. God does not force the devil to do anything. The Lord uses the devil; He does not abuse him. The Lord does not violate Satan even though he is wrong all the time. God is a Lamb and never violates anyone. He does not chose to not resist the good and resist the evil. The Lamb on the throne rules the universe by His nature, which is to not resist evil, not matter how evil it is.

As a matter of fact, we are no longer even striving against the devil, which means we must rethink our idea of spiritual warfare. It is always assumed that wherever the devil is at work, the church should move in and take over. But if we have entered into God’s rest, we only move when He moves. Jesus lived this way, and He did not resist the devil at his hour and power of darkness (cf. Lk. 22:53), and it led to His death. The Father did not move to save Jesus, and so Jesus did not save Himself.

Hiding – Not Resisting

“For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”

— Colossians 3:3

Our life is hidden with Christ in God. For us to live by Christ does not necessitate others seeing it. One aspect to abiding in Christ is that we remain unseen, for we do not act or move apart from His life. This might cause others to overlook the Lord in you. They may not recognize the Lamb’s life being made manifest in you. Doing good is more often noticed. But if God is not addressing evil, then neither should you, for you are hidden. Like Jesus before Pilate, the priests, and Herod, we do not move when our Father does not.

We will now turn our attention to Jesus, the Lamb of God. In Him we can see the perfect dwelling in union that results in not resisting evil. During Jesus' time on earth, He dwelt in the Father and the Father dwelt in Him. This example of union puts living such a life within the reach of any believer, for we are all to dwell in Christ and permit Him to dwell in us. We will now examine the greatest evil recorded in Scripture: the crucifixion of Jesus.

By the time the mob had come for Jesus in Gethsemane, the miracles and teachings had completely stopped. Jesus, since He was living in union, could only do what He saw his Father doing; if the Father was not moving, Jesus could not speak or do anything else. The whole scenario looked all wrong. Here was the divine Son of God, apparently completely helpless in the hands of wicked men, powerless to stop them or do anything about the trap they had laid for Him.

This threw the disciples into confusion because they had been following who they thought was a powerful Messiah. They thought that the Son of God would set things straight in Israel. They had been following the most exciting, most powerful man that Israel had ever known, and a Messiah that failed to succeed at this task – indeed, who did not save Himself, was something that never once entered their heads – just like it never enters our heads that Jesus is not trying to make things right for us or for Himself. He permits Himself to be misused at the hands of men all the time.

Jesus walked in union so completely that He did not move outside of the Father moving even though it would result in His own death. This is how seriously Jesus took His union with the Father. Jesus does not break union, regardless of where it leads Him.

We tend to break union if it leads us into circumstances that bring our value or success into question, or if those circumstances obscure our good points, cause us to be misunderstood, or put us in a bad light. This is because we have not truly found our identity in union. Our identity is still in ourselves somehow and in our own goodness.

Jesus knew who He was because He lived in union to this great degree, and so He was not shaken by serious adverse circumstances. He knew who He was but not because God used Him in powerful ministry for more than three years. He knew who He was by His Father. He was so one with His Father that He did not need to be reassured by circumstances that cast Him in a favorable light. Even though the Father forsook Jesus upon the cross, He continued to express the Father's heart to the very end.

Not Resisting the Evil of the Cross

All of this ties into Jesus going to the cross during His time on earth. All through the horrible ordeal, Jesus was silent, not defending Himself in any way. He did not even work a miracle to deliver Himself from His own death or to vindicate Himself. Let us now look at some passages of Scripture that show us how Jesus walked in the face of unspeakable evil.

“And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? What is it which these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace.”

— Matthew 26:62, 63

Jesus held His peace in reference to the trumped up charges that had been made by those who had been bribed by the Pharisees to do so. Jesus did not even attempt to set the story straight or prove that the testimony against Him was lies. His nature is such that He does not even seek to correct unfair events that are certain to lead to His death. I do not know if a single human being could go through such a trial in this way. It is the essence of human nature to vindicate ourselves.

“And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marveled greatly.”

— Matthew 27:12-14

Pilate was used to the accused pleading their causes before him and vehemently defending their innocence. You can imagine, then, how amazed he must have been that Jesus did not do whatever it took to justify Himself and declare His innocence.

What Pilate – and so many believers – could not understand is that Jesus was not trying to prove His innocence, an act which would by definition be motivated by self-preservation. Instead, Jesus was being who He was and continued to abide in the Father.

“And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him. Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing. And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him. And Herod with his men of war set him at naught, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate.”

— Luke 23:8-11

Jesus was not working miracles out from Himself or for Himself. He could only do what He saw the Father doing. He could have vindicated Himself to Herod and put His accusers to shame, but He did not. He did not take the opportunity to show who He was, to prove His innocence. He was one with His Father, and the Father did not want to show Herod a sign. So Jesus stayed in union with His Father, even though the outcome of this meeting was not in Jesus' favor.

“And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer.”

— John 19:9

Pilate wanted to do the right thing with Jesus, up to a point. He would have listened to what Jesus had to say, but Jesus was not trying to get released. He was not trying to

stem the flow of evil accusations that had swept Him up before Pilate's judgment seat. He was just being, just abiding.

“And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads... Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders... The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.”

— Matthew 27:39-44

We see no response from Jesus as He hangs upon the cross. He does not set the record straight for the mockers and onlookers. He does not react. He says nothing at all. Jesus does not move if He does not see the Father move, even when He is hanging on the cross!

It is interesting to note that the next words Jesus uttered were, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” He stayed in union with the Father until it was too late to save Himself, until even the Father forsook the union!

If Jesus took abiding in the Father so seriously, what priority should we place upon being one with Christ? The only way for Christ to be made manifest in the aspect we are discussing is for us to live, move, and have our being (cf. Acts 17:28) in Christ.

Obedience Unto Death Brings Resurrection

“And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.”

— Philippians 2:8-9

When Jesus did not defend Himself at His trial, it was because He only did what He saw the Father doing. Since the Father did nothing, said nothing, neither did Jesus. He so understood His union with the Father that he did not need to do anything to prove that He was one. His oneness was of being, not of doing.

Jesus was so established in oneness with the Father that He would not move outside of it. He was confident of it and unfazed by any lack of manifestation of oneness that could have benefited Him. Jesus was so convinced of His union, so locked into it, that He would not reach out to save Himself if it meant moving outside of union. So He was obedient to union, even unto death.

This means that being obedient unto death is remaining in union, even when the circumstances are the path leading to one's own destruction. This brings us back once more to resisting not evil.

If Jesus had tried to set everything right so that He would have been delivered from dying on a cross, he would have committed the same sin as Uzzah stretching forth his hand to steady the falling Ark. In so doing, Uzzah caused a miscarriage of resurrection. Had he let the Ark fall, God could have made all things new. Jesus, because of union, did

let the “Ark” fall! He let the only place He had for fellowship and glory in the whole earth – Israel – come apart at the seams, get off from its purpose, and finally utterly reject Him and sell Him out to Caesar.

The “Ark” was being carried improperly, and Jesus did not leave union to make it right. He let all of the fallout from the consequences of Israel’s error fall on Him. What came out from not resisting evil in this way was resurrection and a new creation. We cannot overstate the profundity of this reality. The death of Christ always brings forth resurrection. What looked the most wrong, what seemed to be out of God’s control, what seemed the most unfair, Jesus did not even attempt to correct. Had he done so, had He convinced the authorities of His innocence, He would not have died. Had Jesus not died, there would have been no resurrection, no redemption, no new creation, no abiding in Christ, and no Christ living in us. That would have been quite a loss, would it not?

But Christ does now live in us. He will never use his strength to resist what He judges to be evil. Instead, how He lived as He walked the earth is how He will live in us. He will not move in His own strength. He will not move apart from His Father, even if it costs Him His life.

We need to learn to stay in union and not resist evil who knows what all might come out that? One thing is for certain: Life will flood the Church if we do.

Jesus stayed in union, not resisting evil, even though there were chaos, confusion, evil, and misery whirling around Him. He did not stretch forth His hand to steady the Ark, and He died because of it. But Life came forth out of that death.