

Patient Endurance of Wrong

by Octavius Winslow

The sermon emphasizes the importance of patient endurance and leaving room for God's wrath, while also encouraging believers to take their case to a human court of justice for the sake of truth and justice.

Scripture: Psalm 31:19, John 18:23, Romans 12:19

Topics: "Forgiveness", "Trust in God's Justice"

Description

Octavius Winslow emphasizes the importance of patient endurance in the face of wrongs and injustices, urging believers not to seek revenge but to trust in God's justice. He acknowledges that offenses will come from both the wicked and fellow believers, and highlights that even Jesus faced unjust treatment. Winslow encourages Christians to take their grievances to God first, relying on Christ as their Advocate, rather than resorting to personal vengeance. He reassures believers that God will ultimately vindicate them and compensate for their wrongs, providing peace amidst trials. The sermon calls for a spirit of forgiveness and trust in God's timing and justice.

Transcript

Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. Romans 12:19

Offences will come, both from the wicked and from other believers. We live in an ungodly world, and are members of an imperfect Church. We must not, therefore, expect freedom from wrongs and injuries, from woundings and opposition, from which none have ever been exempt, not excepting our Lord himself, who, in addition to the wrongs He personally endured, was "wounded for our offences."

But how are we, as believers in Jesus, to acquit ourselves under a sense of injury and injustice? Are we to take the law in our hands? Are we to revenge ourselves? Are we to vault into the judgment-seat? God forbid! The law of Christian duty touching this matter is clearly laid down. "Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath."

But does this precept of patient endurance and non-resistance imply that wrong is to go unpunished, injustice unrequited, injury unrepaired, malignity unrebuked, and falsehood unrefuted? By no means! An individual, by becoming a Christian, does not cease to be a citizen. In coming under the law of Christ, he is not the outlaw of man. His spiritual duties and privileges do not abrogate his civil rights and obligations. Our Lord was a striking and instructive example of this. He claimed justice at the hands of his accusers.

"Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil--but if well, why do you smite Me?" (John. 18:23.) And Paul asserted his rights and privileges as a Roman citizen.

Therefore, not prompted by malice or a feeling of revenge, not acting from personal resentment, or a desire to inflict an injury, but moved by a concern for the public virtue and peace, in order to maintain truth and justice, and at the same time to vindicate our personal character from slander and falsehood, it is strictly within the province of the Christian to take his case into a court of human justice; for to this end--"the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of those who do well"--the magistrate holds the sword by God's ordinance.

But what is the high ground the believer in Jesus should take under every species of injury, injustice, and wrong? It is first, if not exclusively, to go into God's court of justice, to commit his case to Christ, his Advocate, who has undertaken to plead the cause of his soul. Let us look at this for a moment.

Beloved, are you suffering injury? Has a foe assailed you? a friend wounded you? a relation wronged you? Avenge not yourself, but rather "leave room for God's wrath;" that is, make room for it to pass by and escape; and that no feelings might possess your mind but those of pity, charity, and forgiveness, go into God's court of justice before you go into man's. Take your cause first to Jesus. Oh, what a powerful Advocate and wonderful Counselor is Christ! He will avenge you of your adversary, and will compensate your wrong. He will refute the foul slander, silence the lying tongue, and bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your judgment as the noonday. For thus has the Lord spoken.

But, oh, the blessedness of reposing trustfully, calmly on the bosom of Jesus amid the unkind criticisms, bitter calumnies, unjust accusations, and the cruel envyings and jealousies of man! Sheltered there, who or what can harm us? "Oh, how great is Your goodness, what You have laid up for those who fear You, which You have wrought for those who trust in You before the sons of men! You shall hide them in the secret of Your presence from the pride of man--You shall keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues. Blessed be the Lord for He has showed me His marvelous kindness in a strong city."

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