

## The Cheek Of Forgiveness?

*Betrayal is a bitter pill to swallow and the aftertaste lingers for a long time; duplicity, disloyalty, and deceit are some of its trademarks. The cut can be so deep it has within it the capacity to infect and contaminate our whole being.*

*The real sting in the tail of this insidious trait is that it seems to often come at the hands of those closest to us. Whether business associates, family members or close friends and partners, the road to betrayal seems to have easy access. It can also have many travelling companions, not least money, covetousness and greed.*



*Revenge is the path most trodden to alleviate the human soul of despair, but there is a most inevitable outcome as John Milton wrote in his 'Paradise Lost' -*

***'Revenge, though at first sweet,  
Bitter ere long back on itself recoils'***

*As we consider the implications of Easter, the Passion of Christ compels us to look again at the answers to life's destructive forces. The term 'Judas' has become the name tag of this dark human trait; the gospel of Luke chapter 22 tells the whole narrative.*

'..And Judas discussed how he might betray Jesus.. they were delighted and agreed to give him money. He (Judas) consented and watched for an opportunity... ' (Luke 22:4-6 NIV)

Jesus Christ, the embodiment of forgiveness, demonstrates the antidote to revenge; He offers the cheek of forgiveness to the kiss of betrayal  
'..and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, but Jesus asked him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" (Luke 22:47-48)

The beauty of forgiveness is that it releases within us not only the 'feel good factor', but complete liberty from the sting of an otherwise deadly wound.

But whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also . (Matthew 5:39 KJV)

What a stark contrast from another leadership perspective that considered revenge a viable option...

**" We had no use for the policy of the Gospels: if someone slaps you, just turn the other cheek. We had shown that anyone who slapped us on our cheek would get his head kicked off."**

**—Nikita Khrushchev, Soviet statesman, wrote in 1971**

This 'gospel policy' is not a lack of justice, it is a call not to take personal revenge in order to get it. Justice is at the heart of God and He is the best at meting out the consequences of evil

The antidote to betrayal is forgiveness, kindness and generosity...it must be within the human capacity to accomplish this... the power of resisting revenge is immeasurable, but it's effects are extremely effective for all to see. This Easter time allow the love of Christ to overwhelm and overpower the sting of betrayal or injustice and be the conqueror you were born to be. Offer the cheek of forgiveness to the kiss of betrayal. Emancipation!!

Affectionately

Judith

PERSONAL