

09/21/25 Message

Part of My Brother's Keeper
September 18, 2025

Message: Healing Not Hurting

Series: My Brother's Keeper

Introduction

We were never designed to live in a world like this. We were designed to live in the Garden of Eden. A perfect world without sin, without ugliness, without hate, without any negativity. But Adam and Eve wanted more, not realizing the more they were being isolated from was the evil of Satan and his demons. They got what they wanted, and the rest is history. We were born in the world our ancestors chose for them; the world our ancestors chose for us. Hindsight is 20/20, and if only we could go back and live in the perfection of Eden, to experience heaven... the world God created for us!

—Pastor Chad

Violence isn't new, it's been around a while since the creation of the world and it's very first inhabitants. It appears Cain's violence against Abel was the very first murder we read about in Scripture. It's not odd to turn on the news and see violence with wars, in communities, in homes, and even in words people use every single day to hurt someone else.

One thing has been true since the beginning of the world as we know it:

- HURT PEOPLE, HURT PEOPLE

This morning, I want us to talk about two issues surrounding violence. The first is how we respond to it and the other is how we avoid it. If we as a culture did a better job at avoiding violence, we'd never have to respond to it. But instead, we jump on the complain train

and we ride! I've learned a long time ago – where a traffic light has 3 colors, our actions are very similar. Green light, we enable. Red light, we disable. Or yellow light, we remain neutral. But here's what I learned... there is no neutrality. In life, and especially with polarizing issues that often result in hurting and violence, yellow is the same as green, both result in enabling! I think we find that in the population at large... three options, and 2 of the 3 are the same, 2 of the 3 enable negative behavior, negative actions... and that's why hurting, and violence are so prevalent in our world today.

—Pastor Chad

Romans 12:17-21 (NLT)

17 Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable.

18 Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.

19 Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, "I will take revenge; I will pay them back," says the Lord.

20 Instead, "If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads."

21 Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.

Responding to Hurt and Violence

- Resist the urge to RETALIATE (Romans 12:17)

It's okay to respond, but not retaliate. Here's the difference: You can respond in a way that is positive, but you can't retaliate in a positive way. Retaliation is inherently negative, it implies there has been harm and there will be counter-harm. It's taking a wound and making it a bit deeper, whether you intend to or not. It's okay to respond, but it's never okay to retaliate. Retaliation multiplies the hurt, multiplies the violence. Satan has conditioned us to fight back, lash out, and like a snake, strike. But it multiplies the hurt; it takes it to another level. I heard it put this way, it's not weakness

*when you don't retaliate, it's strength under control!
Always resist the urge to retaliate!*

—Pastor Chad

- Replace violence with PEACE (Romans 12:18)

I'm taking liberty here but have you ever heard of giving something your all... Give it your all, to live at peace with everyone. Here's a secret, peace surfaces when your heart is in the right place, and that only happens when Jesus is in your heart.

—Pastor Chad

In Matthew 5:9, Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

There's a distinction here I want to make. Notice Jesus didn't say blessed are the peacekeepers. Lots of people just want to keep the peace. You can be a peacekeeper by simply doing nothing, passively avoiding conflict. I've heard it described as creating an artificial calm that allows problems to fester; passively maintaining status quo. Peacemaking on the other hand is an active, bold pursuit of truth and restoration. It's entering conflict with courage and wisdom to achieve lasting results. There's a huge difference between being a peacemaker and a peacekeeper... we need peacemakers who use courage and wisdom together. Doing that means we approach situations with gentleness and respect, and our effort is to reconcile and restore, not divide and conquer.

—Pastor Chad

- Release revenge TO GOD (Romans 12:19)

ESV

Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." (from Deuteronomy 32:35)

In Romans 12, if you read the verses before this, it teaches us to bless those who persecute us, and to live in

harmony with one another, and to not be overcome by evil, but to overcome evil with good. Satan wants us to respond by inflicting personal harm or revenge, but God says, "Let me handle this!" Even better, "Trust me to handle this!"

—Pastor Chad

- Respond with overcoming LOVE (Romans 12:20-21)

NIV

21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

What does overcoming love look like?

It's a love that overcomes evil with good.

Violence feeds on violence but starves on goodness!

In Luke 6:27-28, Jesus tells us to love our enemies, bless those who curse us, and pray for those who mistreat us.

In Proverbs 15:1 it says a gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. It's contrasting good vs evil. Overcoming love conquers evil, it conquers hurt, it conquers violence.

Avoiding Violence

Think of all the things causing division and strife in the world around us. Much of it centers around one word... you ready for it... difference. We have no idea how to reconcile our differences, and instead, we respond with hurt and hate against those differences. You've heard me say this before but we can't actually be followers of Jesus when we're not actually following Jesus. We can't love people Jesus loves when we hate them because of our differences. It's love or hate, there's no in between.

—Pastor Chad

Jesus was faced with one of the greatest struggles he'd ever faced as a man. He was suffering on the cross. He'd been tried and convicted. He'd been spit on, made fun of, stripped naked, beaten, and hung on a cross. He had every reason to hate because of difference. Check out what Jesus did...

Luke 23:34

- Jesus prayed for forgiveness to those who hurt Him

Violence is the way of the world, but peace is the way of Jesus. When we choose peace, we show the world the heart of Jesus, and we point others to Him. Blessed are the peacemakers... that's a blessing that will change our hearts, our homes, our communities, and our world!