

## JACK ROOSEVELT ROBINSON and ROSA PARKS

### Topic: NON-VIOLENT LIFESTYLE AND PROTEST

Prepared by Ted W. Fuson and Deborah Upton as the second of seven topical studies in the Summer of 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic for Bon Air Baptist Church

This is the third of seven studies based on Scripture and Eric Metaxas' 7 Men and 7 Women and the Secret of Their Greatness, Nelson Books, 2013, 2015, & 2016.

#### Some Scriptures on this topic:

*Matthew 5:38-42—You have heard it said, 'Eye for Eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other cheek also. And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.*

*Proverbs 15:1—A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.*

*Matthew 6:14-15—For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.*

*Romans 13:1-2—Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is not authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. (See the remaining context in verses 3-7, too long to print here.)*

#### The topic is **NON-VIOLENT LIFESTYLE AND PROTEST.**

Every page in the stories of Parks and Robinson makes us wonder if we could have lived as did they. No pages are specifically referenced in this lesson.

This topic often brings up significant disagreement among Christians. Some focus on obeying the law. Others focus on changing the law. Still others disobey the law in quiet non-violent protest. Rosa Parks disagreed with the law regarding seating for African-Americans and whites. Jackie Robinson turned the other cheek to

horrible vocal and cultural abuse to African-Americans playing in the Baseball Major Leagues. They both were brave and committed to a Christian lifestyle.

Rosa Parks participated in the bus boycott and in several protest marches. Jackie Robinson turned the other cheek to avoid stirring up anger.

Martin Luther King, Jr. and others urged Rosa Parks to continue her leadership by giving speeches and calling attention to racial prejudice in the land of the free and the home of the brave. King and Parks were highly committed to Christ.

Branch Rickey asked Jackie Robinson to turn the other cheek as he faced racial prejudice on the ballfield, among the fans, and in society. Rickey and Robinson were both committed Christians and believed they were doing God's work.

Great legal progress has been made in establishing the culture that "all men are created equal and are endowed and endowed with their creator with certain inalienable rights...." Yet, we all can recognize the cultural barriers between races and economics in our society. Is it any wonder that free people freely protest?

Hopefully, you have read the biographies. These questions come out of that information.

Here are some discussion questions:

1. What role did Parks' childhood and family influence play in Rosa Parks' adult life and activities for racial equality? How could she withstand societal pressure to just go along with white prejudice? What role did Robinson's childhood and influence play in Jackie Robinson's life and activity leading him to be the first black player in major league baseball? How did he overcome his early tendency to react swiftly?
2. Describe how the Bible and prayer influenced both of these leaders.
3. How do the Bible and prayer affect the Bon Air Baptist Church Jesus Family, corporately or individually?
4. Why did these two leaders become great? How did Parks' faith lead her to oppose racial inequality when many laws prohibited freedom for her race? Why did Robinson's faith keep him turning the other cheek? What made them great?

5. What do you believe should be done in the current disagreements regarding the Civil War Monuments in Richmond? Most of them were erected many years or generations after the Civil War. General Lee reportedly opposed monuments and ceremonies to the memory of southern generals or leaders. Is that relevant? How and why?
6. How does Romans 13:1-2 affect your participation in our government and culture? Explain what Romans 13 means when compared to Parks and Robinson.
7. Why or why not have you ever participated in a non-violent protest?
8. When did you become aware that racial issues were not fully resolved with the Civil War, the integration of schools, or the Civil Rights Act? What is needed as much or more than legislation?