

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.



John 8:32 and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

**February  
17  
2019**

# LOVING YOUR ENEMY

Jim Stauffer

*“You have heard that it was said, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” (Matthew 5:43–48)*

In this text, a portion of the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord issues a real challenge to His disciples. Remember, this is the speech where he made clear He was not pleased with the current understanding and practice of righteousness. In **verse 20** he says, *“For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:20)*

Now He sets forth the principle that is most difficult for all to accept and practice. Loving our enemies. Notice the separate aspects of this charge.

**It is so you may be sons of your Father:**

He does not tell us what it will do for our enemy. Now we all know that often love given is returned, so it is very possible when we love our enemy we will actually make a friend in the long run. While that is great, Jesus says the benefit He seeks for His disciples here is for them to be like their Father in heaven. John says, *“See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.” (1 John 3:1)* While we are honored to be His children and benefit greatly from that by way of His promises, John tells us it will often separate us from the world. Jesus reminds us as sons of our Father, that He, our Father, blesses both the evil and the good with sun and rain to enable them to live. If we are to be His sons, we must cease being self

serving and look to others.

**This kind of love separates you from the world:**

The Lord says it is only natural for all men to shower love and affection on those who feel the same way about us. The challenge is when we learn to practice the kind of love God has shown to all men in sending His Son to die for our sins (**1 John 4:8,9**). Jesus says those who are considered by society to be heartless and cruel even show love and affection to their friends and family. As an example of this class of people He refers to the tax collectors and Gentiles. Jesus, Himself was criticized for associating with such folks. He made clear His purpose with them was to heal their spiritual sickness (**Mat. 9:10-13**). Our enemies are in the same need of the saving blood of Jesus the Christ as are we.

**Finally, He says it will perfect us as is our Father:**

The word perfect here means complete or mature as it is used in **Heb. 5:14** *“But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.”* Here it speaks of the maturity that comes to the child of God through his study and understanding of God’s word. If we are to be children of God, we will resemble Him in the lives we live. Much like we tend to follow in the footsteps of our earthly parents and learn how to live from them, Jesus says we are to learn this attribute of our heavenly Father. We must learn to love those who hate us. This means returning good for evil. *“Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men.” (Romans 12:17)* *“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” (Romans 12:21)* It means elevating ourselves above the fray from time to time to bring discussions to a more noble level. We must avoid exchanging tit for tat and instead communicate the love God has for all men. This may lead them to God, but more importantly it will help us stand with God as His children.

Don’t you believe the world needs some salt and light as the Lord also discussed in this chapter in **verses 13-16?**

## Where The Battle Is

### **David Banning**

While my boys were in high school, there were a few occasions when I had to go home in the middle of the day. The road from the church building to my house took me right past their school. I would glance over and wonder...what's happening with my kids? Are they struggling through an algebra test? Could Satan be tempting them to copy from someone else's paper? Are they eating lunch with friends right now? Are they struggling with the decision to get up and walk away from an inappropriate conversation? Are they being taught evolution in their science class? Are they wrestling with the decision to defend their faith? Sometimes parents wonder where the battle is for their kids.

Recently I was talking to a group of teenagers about heaven. As we wrapped up our study, I gave each one a card and asked them to answer this question: What is the one thing that might cause you to miss heaven? I want to share some of their answers ... so we will know where the battle is.

#### **I struggle with lust.**

Jesus taught that, if a man lusts for a woman, he has committed adultery with her in his heart (**Matthew 5:28**). Whoever wrote this answer on the card certainly understood this danger. And yet, they also acknowledged that this is a struggle. We live in a sexually charged world. Opportunities to look with lust are everywhere. The Internet offers easy access to an endless supply of corrupt images. Young men can't even walk through the school without seeing things they should not see. It's where the battle is.

If we want our kids to go to heaven, we need to help them push back against this assault by Satan. This will require having some uncomfortable conversations with them. Some parents are reluctant to discuss sexual purity with their children. They fear they will rob them of their innocence. But in our culture, silence is not an option.

Take them to the text and teach what God says. Go to Genesis and teach that the desire we feel for each other comes from God (**Genesis 1:27**). Use the Song of Solomon to demonstrate the beauty of sexual intimacy in marriage and emphasize the importance of patience until that time (**Song of Solomon 2:7**). Show them the Bible warnings about keeping ourselves pure; not just refraining from fornication (**Hebrews 13:4**), but also keeping our thoughts and actions pure (**Galatians 5:19**). Use Bible stories to illustrate the terrible things that can happen when we don't listen to God (**2 Samuel 11-12**). The Bible has a lot to say about sexual purity. When kids hit adolescence, they need to have this information. For many of them, this is where the battle is.

#### **My friends are a bad influence on me.**

Of all the answers given by this group of teens, this one appeared far more frequently than any other. For many kids, the battle is with their friends. It is an odd answer. Friends should help us, not hurt us. But remember that there are basically two kinds of people – those who draw me closer to God and those who will pull me away. God warns us about this danger (**Proverbs 1:8-10; 1 Corinthians 15:33**). Sometimes the people our kids choose as friends are not friends at all. They are harming them in the worst possible way. If we want our kids to go to heaven, then we must help connect with the right crowd. There are few things a parent does that are more important than this. So, how do we help them without coming off as a controlling dictator trying to run their lives?

Start early. From the time they begin associating with other kids, start talking about good and bad influences.

Get to know the crowd. Let their friends come over and play on the swing set or pile up in the living room and watch a movie. Feed them. Make your house the place to be. But as you do this, watch and listen. Get to know these kids.

Steer them toward healthy relationships. Encourage them to spend time with good influences. Adjust your schedule and change your plans to make it happen. At the same time, make it inconvenient for them to spend time with bad influences.

Be a parent. There may come a time when you must intervene and end a friendship that is damaging your kid. We must do this calmly and clearly express our concerns. But whether our kids understand or not, we must act. We cannot sit back, behave as though we were powerless and allow an evil influence to drag our kids away from the Lord. They may be angry with us, but they will get over it.

This is where the battle is. Our kids see the dangers. We need to see them too.

**~via Get Them Talking; Beaumont, Texas.**

**∞Taken from The Market Street Messenger**

## CONDUCT OF SERVANTS

*“Let as many bondservants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and His doctrine may not be blasphemed. And those who have believing masters, let them not despise them because they are brethren, but rather serve them because those who are benefited are believers and beloved. Teach and exhort these things” (1 Timothy 6:1-2).*

Estimates say that there were 60 million slaves in 1<sup>st</sup> c. Greek and Roman society. Why such a number?



Prisoners of war were made slaves; some slaves were home born (when the parents were slaves, the new baby by default became a slave). Sometimes a person indentured himself in order to pay off a debt. Greek philosophy (Aristotle) thought of slaves as property; they had no legal rights; they were subject in all things to their masters. Over time this changed. Some slaves, those on the upper edges of the social scale, worked in government administration. Others, at the lower fringes of society, were forced to work in mines, in the fields, in households. Often, children in the home were cared for by these people; the servants schooled the children. If the servant was skilled in some craft, he could be paid a wage. Some were able to save enough money to buy their freedom. Sometimes a master would pay money to a pagan deity as an act of worship; this would manumit (set free) the servant (see *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, Everett Ferguson, 2<sup>nd</sup>, ed., 56-58).

It is clear that some Christians were slaves; they helped populate local churches throughout the Empire. That is what Paul writes about to Timothy. These Christians were given the responsibility to act in a way that would always honor God even in stressful and trying circumstances. This involved their relationship to and conduct toward their masters; they were “*under the yoke.*” That yoke could be hard, disagreeable, and chaffing. Some masters could be “*forward masters*” (1 Peter 2:18); they were harsh and cruel. Remember that Paul is talking about relationships—relationships that Christians bear to the church and to the world. These bondservants were to honor the Lord, even in what we view as harsh circumstances. The masters who were believers were commanded to act in ways commensurate with the love of God. Paul’s statements in Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon seek the regulation of conduct for believing masters and believing servants. Don’t overlook the fact that the regulation of husbands and wives were a part of these instructions from Paul; the larger issue, though, is about relationships. Whatever category these early Christians were in, they were told to act in ways that would honor their true Master, Jesus Christ. Then and now, all who are in Christ are equal before Him (**Galatians 3:28**).

Interestingly, Paul takes the need for proper behavior to a higher level. Husbands in the 1<sup>st</sup> c. world could generally act as they wished. Philosophers did not walk around telling husbands to love their wives. However, the advent of Christ, elevated the lives, motives, and actions of all who call on Him—elevated above the norms of the world, elevated to a stricter standard, elevated to higher reasonability. And so, whoever we are, wherever we are, when we answer the call of the gospel, our lives are forever changed. Others may not change. Still, we must “*teach and exhort these things.*”

**Randy Harshbarger**

## What Do You Do to Serve God’s Other Children?

As I write this article El Dorado has just received a half inch of sleet overnight but this story actually begins on Lord’s Day morning at about 6:30 when, while TRYING to be a good husband by scooping the litter box I pulled a muscle in my lower back. Not being able to move I called Paul Schellhorn who filled in for me both services on Sunday (Thanks, Paul!). Today I was able to move somewhat better so I VERY CAREFULLY scooped the majority of the sleet and ice off our deck. It is also our garbage day and these men also were out in the weather - all day. I was out maybe five minutes and then came in to a warm house, exhausted because of my back. They went all day. The same is true for Westar, K-Gas and the Water Department.

Now I come to my point in this article. You may say that for each of these people that was their job, that’s what they’re supposed to do. And, Yes, you’d be right. But isn’t what they’re doing serving God by helping his other children, making their lives better? Doesn’t the guy who delivers the fuel to Quick-Trip and other stations make your life better? If you don’t think so then YOU make the walk to the city well with a bucket in each hand to get the day’s water supply! This is the reason behind Paul’s words in **Colossians 3:23-24**, “*Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.*” God is pleased when His children help one another!

**Cleveland R. Reddinger Jr.**

John Wesley was so concerned with building a righteous fellowship that he devised a series of questions for his followers to ask each other every week. Some found this rigorous system of inquiry too demanding and left. Today, the very idea of such a procedure would horrify many churchgoers. Yet some wisely follow just such a practice. Chuck Swindoll for example, has seven questions that he and a group of fellow pastors challenge each other with periodically:

1. Have you been with a woman anywhere this past week that might be seen as compromising?
2. Have any of your financial dealings lacked integrity?
3. Have you exposed yourself to any sexually explicit material?
4. Have you spent adequate time in Bible study and prayer?
5. Have you given priority time to your family?
6. Have you fulfilled the mandates of your calling?
7. Have you just lied to me?

**C. Colson, *The Body*.**

*Let us be reminded to pray for those we support who are preaching in other areas of this country and also of the world. Remember to pray for Kyle Bennett in Boston Ma., Matt Hodge in Marshfield, Mo. and Cleveland Reddinger in El Dorado, Ks. Overseas we need to remember, Wilfredo Pelino and Jonathan Sapitula in the Philippines as well as Moses Tivane and Francisco Vascob in Mozambique.*

## **HOURS OF WORSHIP**

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Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

***Visitors welcome***

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### **NEWS AND NOTES:**

PLEASE REMEMBER JAN PATRICK, STEVE AND SUZANNE WIMP, ALMA BAUMGARTNER, TRACY RICHARDSON AND LORENE PARKER.

**BIBLE CLASSES** SUNDAY MORNING:  
THE PSALMS - RON PECK - TEACHER

WEDNESDAY EVENING:  
HEAVEN AND HELL  
JIM STAUFFER - TEACHER

**SUNDAY SERMON:** OUT OF THE MOUTH  
OF BABES

**SPRING GOSPEL MEETING:**  
MAY 17-19  
ROGER SHOUSE



## ***What Must I Do To Be Saved?***

**Hear** the gospel - Romans 10:17

**Believe** in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

**Repent** of sins - Acts 17:30

**Confess** Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

**Be Baptized** for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

**Be Faithful** unto death - Revelation 2:10