



# WEEKLY SERMON

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**Pastor** David Miklas

**Message:** The Family of God - #6

**Phone:** 717-715-3317

**E-mail:** [pastormiklas@aol.com](mailto:pastormiklas@aol.com)

**Text:** Matthew 5:43-47

I Samuel 17:20-29 David was instructed by his father Jesse to take some food to his brothers who were fighting the Philistines. When David got to the battlefield, he heard the giant Goliath breathing out threats against God's people and challenging them to provide a champion from their ranks to come and do battle against him. David's brother Eliab came up and said in verse 28,

**And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle."**

It is here that David asked in verse 29, **"What have I now done? Is there not a cause?"**

**Sad is the one who has no cause for which he can live and die.**

**Sad is the one who has no vision to reach boys and girls and men and women with the gospel of Christ.**

**Sad is the one who has no goals in his life, family or ministry for which to work and pray.**

David said something such as this, **"What do you mean go back and take care of a few sheep? A lot of folks can take care of sheep. Only one guy with a slingshot can lick the big giant. Let me at him. There is a cause I have burning in my soul."** As a result this little shepherd boy did what all the mighty men of Israel couldn't do. He got caught up in a cause. He said let me at him, **"I'll slay that giant."**

When **DAVID** had a cause he conquered Goliath. When **David** lost his cause, he couldn't conquer his lust.

When **SAMSON** had a cause, he won many battles. When **Samson** lost his cause, he couldn't resist the temptation to show affection to Delilah.

When **SOLOMON** had a cause, he was the wisest man in the world. When **Solomon** lost his cause, he couldn't control his own evil passions for strange women.

When **SAUL** had a cause, he conquered the kingdom. When **Saul** lost his cause, he could not even conquer his own jealousy.

When a **CHURCH** has a cause it's a force with which to be reckoned. But when that cause is lost, a number of things change. So what causes a church to lose its cause?

A church begins to lose its cause when the **members rely on the personality of the Pastor**, rather than praying for the power of God to fall upon the pulpit and the pew.

A church begins to lose its cause **when the Pastor and members lose their motivation to win souls**. The newness is gone. The honeymoon wears off. Soon discouragement and disillusionment set in.

A church begins to lose its cause **when the Pastor and then the members lose their vision**. I must

work to keep my vision clear. If I lose my vision for people, the people will perish.

A church begins to lose its cause **when the older members settle down or quit**. In God's dear name, please get back up and live by your cause either until the upertaker or the undertaker.

**DOUBT sees the obstacles, FAITH sees the way!**  
**DOUBT sees the darkest night, FAITH sees the day!**  
**DOUBT dreads to take a step, FAITH soars on HIGH!**  
**DOUBT questions, "Who believes?" FAITH answers "I!"**

I challenge those of you who have a **BURDEN** and a **VISION** to go through 2023 different and determined to do something about them.

Here is another challenge as you go through 2023 – **"Make Faith Your starting Point of Obedience."** In Joshua 6:3 we read, **"You shall march around the city, all you men of war; you shall go all around the city once. This you shall do six days."**

God told Moses to part the Red Sea.

God told Gideon to defeat an army with 300 soldiers.

Jesus told Peter to walk on the water.

Jesus told His disciples to feed five thousand men along with women and children with some bread and fish.

Jesus told a blind man to go wash the mud off his eyes to regain his sight.

Jesus told a paralyzed man to stand up and walk home.

God has issued some impossible-sounding directions to people, but perhaps none so impossible as those issued to Joshua. God told Joshua to march around Jericho with the Ark of the Covenant once a day for six days. On the seventh day march around Jericho seven times. Blow the trumpets and shout, and the walls will come tumbling down.

Marching around the city must have sounded like madness to Joshua, but there is no indication he hesitated. He did exactly as God directed and God's words were fulfilled. On the seventh day, the walls fell down and Jericho was captured.

God may ask you to do something impossible sounding: forgive an enemy, give generously to an ungrateful person, or serve at an incredibly inconvenient time. Calling Him **"Lord"** carries the expectation of obedience.

In ***His*** Amazing Grace -  
***Pastor David Miklas***

# "How to Treat Our Enemies"

Let's face it! We live in an enemy infested world. Nationally and internationally, we are fighting the enemies of our freedoms. Spiritually, we are fighting the enemies of our soul. All believers in Christ face three great enemies, the WORLD, the FLESH (our old human nature) and the DEVIL. The fundamental church has its enemies on the outside in the form of liberalism, modernism, socialism, secularism and compromising neo-evangelism.

Also today the fundamental New Testament Church cannot escape the distasteful position of having **ENEMIES** from within. As we continue our study on **how to treat one another in the family of God**, let us examine from the Word of God "**How to Treat Our ENEMIES.**" Just how are you and I to **TREAT** those who oppose us, or who are unkind to us?

In the Sermon on the Mount found in Matthew 5:43-48, our Lord spells out for us how we are to respond to our enemies:

**"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. (44) But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; (45) That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. (46) For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? (47) And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? (48) Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."**

Over the years, strained relationships have developed in Bible believing churches. They have developed among pastors, deacons, individual members and between groups within the ministry.

Good people have become upset over sermons preached.

Good people have become upset over decisions made by pastors or by the leadership of the church.

Good people have misjudged the ATTITUDES, ACTIONS, REACTIONS, and even the DESIRES and DIRECTIONS of others.

Good people have become upset over situations caused knowingly or unknowingly by pastors, staff, or by individuals or ministry groups within the church.

Because of strained relationships that can and do develop within the church, I believe this message may help us gain a new perspective and therefore begin to resolve some long-held grievances or issues.

I have to be honest with you, over my 57 years in the ministry there have been some people who could be called my enemies.

Some became my enemies because they did not know me, yet they disliked me.

Some became my enemies because they heard about me through some GOSSIP.

Others became my enemies because they disliked my preaching and my convictions on doctrinal issues.

Others became my enemies because they did not understand my direction or vision for the ministry.

The ones over which I grieve the most are those I had the privilege to lead to Christ, to baptize and watch grow in the faith. Then through some bitterness or anger, or simply because they were caught in a web of someone else's attitude, they became an **ENEMY** of mine. Oh, how I long to see those who are estranged walk through the door of the church, so I can once again wrap my arms around them and love them as their pastor and preacher.

By nature, I am an easygoing person.

I do not like to fight over things. I do not like **confrontation** with people over issues. **I hurt** sometimes for days before, during and after a **confrontation** I had to encounter.

**I hurt** when others hurt physically, emotionally, or spiritually.

When I am their preacher, **I hurt** when someone whom I love in the Lord turns their back on me.

I hope you will not become my enemy. However, if you do, I will still be your friend. No, I do not enjoy having enemies. I know it is easier to thank God for my friends. Yet there is a treatment I must exercise toward my enemies. In this message let me share with you **Seven Principals** on "How we ought to **TREAT OUR ENEMIES** within the family of God."

**FIRST: We are to LOVE those that hate us.** Again in Matthew 5:43-44 we read, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies..." Our Lord certainly electrified the crowd standing around when He said, "Love your enemies." Here He conveyed an unheard-of concept to those who followed the Pharisees. They taught that it was the responsibility of a righteous man to love his neighbor.

In Leviticus 19:17-18 we read, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him. Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord."

But the law said nothing about their responsibility to those who were outside the commonwealth of Israel. It appears they taught that godliness required one to love those who are loveable and near and dear to you, but one is justified in hating everyone else.

Now our Lord says, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor and love thy enemy also."

God's love was not given only to those who responded; it was given to the whole world. In John 3:16 we read, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

When God ultimately provided the blessing of salvation for sinners, it was provided for all men, for Jesus Christ became as we read in I John 2:2, "the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only (who believe), but also for the sins of the whole world."

Here Jesus defines our **ENEMIES** as those who curse us, hate us and exploit us selfishly. Remember at our Lord's crucifixion, he left us a perfect example when He said "to love our enemies."

**He had been scourged thirty-nine times by the cat-of-nine tails.**

**His body had been beaten beyond recognition.**

**He had been wrongfully tried.**

**His hands and feet had been nailed to a cross.**

**He had been the object of jeers, profanity, hatred, malice and unbelievable persecution and suffering.**

So what did our Lord do with all this hateful malice heaped against Him? Did He open His mouth from the cross and issue a curse against His enemies? Do you remember His first words? They were "FATHER, FORGIVE THEM; for they know not what they do." What a tremendous example of loving those who hated Him.

In Ephesians 4:31-32 we read, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

Now since Christ's love is an act of the will, and not simply an emotion, Jesus has the right to command us to **LOVE OUR ENEMIES**. Is there a way this is possible? **YES**, remember, "God loves the wicked, but he does not love the wickedness of the wicked."

Therefore,

It is possible to love a person, hate that person's conduct and yet help that man if he is in trouble.  
It is possible to hate the bad language and wicked habits of an unsaved individual, and yet speak kindly of him and deal kindly with him. Thus, **we return GOOD FOR EVIL.**

Can we do good to our enemy even though he many have done evil to us? Yes, by rendering good for evil we might have an opportunity to win that man to Christ. Though we cannot avoid having enemies, we are to be no man's enemy.

To love a person who has abused, misused, and ill-treated us is the **HIGHEST TEST OF TRUE CHRISTIANITY**. It is not **EASY**, but by the grace of God it is **POSSIBLE**. Jesus said to the disciples in John 13:34-35, **“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another.”** I believe this command is also for those in the family of God who in some way abused, misused, and ill-treated us.

**SECOND: We are to BLESS those that curse us and do GOOD to those who do evil to us.** Again in Matthew 5:44 we read, **“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you,...”** In other words, **DEEDS, and ACTS** of kindness should be showered upon those who hate us, abused us, misused us, and ill-treated us. It may be that such deeds and acts will have to be done anonymously. But we should never fight malice with malice. **OUR WEAPONS ARE SPIRITUAL.** We are to fight:

**HATRED** with **LOVE**,  
**SELFISHNESS** with **UNSELFISHNESS**,  
**CURSING** with **BLESSING**,  
**GREED** with **GENEROSITY**,  
**UNKINDNESS** with **KINDNESS**,  
**CRITICISM** with **PRAYER**,  
**BAD** with **GOOD**.

We are to **BLESS** those that curse us and do **GOOD** to those who do evil to us, in words, deeds and actions. The Apostle Paul amplifies this for us in Romans 12:14-21 where we read,

**“Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. (15) Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. (16) Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. (17) Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. (18) If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. (19) Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. (20) Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. (21) Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”**

Verse 14, **“Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not”** is simply a re-statement of Matthew 5:44. The key idea in this passage is found in verse 19, **Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.” WE ARE TO LEAVE VENGEANCE IN THE HANDS OF GOD.** Revenge is not sweet, yet you have either said it or thought it as I have,

**"I'll show him a thing or two, to let him know how it feels."  
"I'll get revenge if it is the last thing I do."  
"I'll never be caught dead in the same place with them."**

My friend, it is **NOT** my job to seek to get even or to seek vengeance. And it is not your job either. **"VENGEANCE IS MINE, saith the Lord."** It is God's business to see:

**Who needs vengeance, and  
When this vengeance should be performed, and  
What form the vengeance should take.**

It is not my job to fight the battles against those who fight me. Never is one more like the Lord Jesus Christ than when he takes an attack **WITHOUT RISING TO DEFEND OR AVENGE HIMSELF.**

“Stop right there, preacher. Are you saying that we are to act and react against our **HUMAN NATURE AND NEVER AVENGE OURSELVES?**” According to verse 19, there is no way around it.

It is a statement that has **NO LOOPHOLES.**

It does not say, “**Never avenge yourself except under such-and-such conditions. No, it says NEVER AVENGE YOURSELF.**”

“Pastor,

**Are we not to stand up for our rights?**

**Does it not stand to reason that we should defend ourselves?**

**Doesn't common sense tell you to take care of yourself?”**

Someone said, “**By now you should know that oftentimes common sense is not spiritual sense. That is our problem. We put our common sense to work where we ought to apply our heart to God's supernatural way, which makes perfect common sense because it is His way. He wants us to learn the value of substituting His way for our way.**”

In verse 19, notice the phrase, “**give place unto wrath.**” The idea here is to “**STAND BACK AND LET MAN'S WRATH WORK.**” If evil rushes towards us, we are **TO LOVE THE EVILDOER AND STAND BACK WHILE HE STRIKES OUT IN BLIND SELFISHNESS.**

Remember the little chant you said as a child, “**Sticks and stones may break my \_\_\_\_\_ (bones), but \_\_\_\_\_ (names) will never hurt me.**” Listen, our enemy may hurt us outwardly, but he cannot hurt us in the **CITADEL** of the heart where Jesus Christ holds us.

Vindication may not come until the Judgment seat of Christ for a Christian who has become my enemy, but it will be made manifest in the present of the universe.

Now in verse 20-21 we are instructed on how to act, “**Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.**” The principle by which a Christian is to love is that of **OVERFLOWING LOVE** which will ultimately be **OVERCOMING LOVE.** We are to return kindness for unkindness. **IF YOU ARE THE VICTIM OF SELFISHNESS OR UNKINDNESS, YOU MUST STAND IN CHRIST AND LOVE THE EVILDOERS IN RETURN.**

**THIRD: We are to PRAY for those who spitefully use us.** Once again, returning to Matthew 5:43-44 we read, “**Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. (44) But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which spitefully use you, and persecute you...**”

Now the word “**despiteful**” means to “**unintentionally harm**” someone. So what are we to do about being used or harmed by accident? **PRAY FOR THEM.**

Someone said, “**When we pray for our enemies, we find it easier to love them. It takes the POISON out of our attitude.**” Oh, how I have had to do this over the years with those who have called themselves my enemies.

**I guarantee it is not easy, but it is God's way.**

I guarantee it is not easy, but it does work.

So what are we to do to our enemy? We are to **LOVE** those that hate us. We are to **BLESS** those that curse us. We are to **DO GOOD** to those who do evil to us. We are to **PRAY** for those who spitefully use us.

**FOURTH: We are not to go to court with a Christian Brother or Sister.** This was obviously a problem in the church at Corinth, for in I Corinthians 6:1-8 we read,

**“Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? (2) Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? (3) Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? (4) If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church. (5) I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?(6) But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers. (7) Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? (8) Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren.”**

Our churches and Christian schools are plagued by people who at the drop of a hat are easily offended and will think nothing of going to court against another Christian. Yet the text tells us:

**Number 1.** In matters between brethren the church should be the judge.

**Number 2.** There are times when you might be absolutely right, but it would be better to be wrong, (“defrauded”) and to lose then to continue to fight with your enemy.

**FIFTH: When our enemy strikes out, do not look at the criticism as being personal.**

Turning to Psalms 119:165 we read, **“Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.”** Here is a verse I would encourage you to underline in your Bible, to memorize, and certainly to practice. O! I am sure you have heard it said:

**"You had better be careful how you treat her."**

**"You have to handle him with kid gloves lest you offend him."**

This reference is saying **"Don't have a wounded spirit."** If you love the Word of God how much is there that will offend you? **NOTHING SHOULD OFFEND YOU.** This verse teaches us the more time you spend in the Word of God the more you take from the Word of God. The more you take and apply to your life, **THE MORE YOU CAN HAVE VICTORY OVER ANY ENEMY.**

Here is a little exercise that will help you as it has me over the years. **Look at your enemy as BROKEN RATHER THAN BAD.**

**When my watch stops running, I do not fight back and throw it against the wall. I simply replace the battery.**

**When people harshly criticize me, I do not take offense or think that THEY ARE BAD. Rather, I look to see if perhaps they are broken in some way and NEED HELP TO BE FIXED.** On the other hand, their criticism of me may be justified in order to show a character flaw in my life that needs to be fixed.

It has been said, **“Behind every smile there is a broken heart. Behind the hardness of a heart there is a broken heart which made it hard.”** People with hard, broken hearts are not bad; they are just broken. We must stop to ask ourselves: **“If that person hurts, and they have hurt me, then why would I turn around and hurt them some more?”**

Perhaps the most difficult step towards Christian maturity occurs when the Christian learns to **LOVE** those who **HATE** him, **PRAY** for those who spitefully use him, **BLESS**

those who curse him and **DO GOOD** to those who do evil to him.

**SIXTH: If our critics have not been privileged to learn what we know, don't hold that against them.** We are so constructed that:

A person could be mean to the rest of the world and **GOOD** to us, and we would think he is good, or

A person could be as mean as a snake to us, and yet **GOOD** to the rest of the world, and we would think him to be bad.

Not everyone is at the same level as you or I in our knowledge of life or the circumstances of life. Not everyone is at the same level as you or I in our knowledge of Biblical truth or Biblical practice. No one criticizes a baby because he cannot ride a bike or a child because he does not know trigonometry. **THEN WHY SHOULD WE HAVE OUR FEELINGS HURT BY THOSE WHO HAVE NOT BEEN PRIVILEGED TO LEARN WHAT YOU AND I ARE PRIVILEGED TO KNOW?**

I must give leeway to those who are my critics, lest I become like them. Nobody needs my wounded spirit to turn into vengeance against them. I know from experience that God can give victory over a wounded spirit, or hurt feelings.

Listen, if my brother or sister in Christ is not doing what I think is right **I HOPE HE CHANGES**. I ought to **PRAY** for him. I ought to **HELP** him.

Listen carefully to this quote, "**A lot of people are convinced that if we could get people cleaned up, we'd have a perfect church. I suppose that is possible. But one thing we have failed to realize is that WE CAN NOT CLEAN ANYBODY UP. ONLY THE SPIRIT OF GOD CAN CLEANSE AND PURIFY.**"

**SEVENTH: As we go through life, we would do well to practice saying these words over and over again:** "I am sorry, please forgive me. I am sorry, please forgive me." Then just as often, learn to say these words: "No problem, I forgive you, I forgive you."

**Forgiveness** is learning to close the case.

**Forgiveness** is learning to put the matter behind you and never again open up the issue.

**Forgiveness** is learning to realize Colossians 3:13, "**Forbearing one another, and FORGIVING one another, if any man have a QUARREL against any; even as Christ FORGAVE you, so also do ye.**"

Through this message, may God encourage you to avoid retaliation against those who offend you, or those who are unkind to you. Isn't it time that we stop tearing down the positions of others in order to elevate our own positions within this ministry? Isn't it time for us to take responsibility for our attitudes and reactions towards all of God's people?

Let me close with a poem entitled "Could We Not Love Each Other?"

Could we not love Each Other?  
The place prepared for me Is near the one for thee.  
Hence, neighbors we will be. Come, be my brother.

Could we not love Each Other?  
The hand that gives thee bread Is the One that keeps me fed.  
Let harsh words be unsaid. You are my brother.

Could we not love Each Other?  
The load your heart doth bear Is the one that we could share.  
We both dwell 'neath His care, Beloved brother.

Could we not love Each Other?  
I have stood in your place, And you my path oft traced,



**So let us offer grace Befitting brothers.**

**Could we not love Each Other?  
The one Who died for you Is my dear Saviour too.  
Is it too much to do To love our brother?**

**Could we not love Each Other?  
That selfsame throne of grace Where thou dost seek His face  
Is my abiding place beside you, brother?  
Could we not love Each Other?**

Are you thinking of someone who perhaps is your enemy or maybe your worse critic? Do not seek retaliation. Don't become offended. May you be challenged and encouraged to apply Matthew 5:44 to **LOVE them, BLESS them, DO GOOD to them, and PRAY for them.**

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If God has spoken to your heart after reading the sermon "**How to Treat Our Enemies**" then right now talk to God about what He has spoken to you.

Do you have the assurance that one day you will go to heaven? If you have no assurance that you know Jesus Christ, then I trust you will decide to accept Him as your personal Savior. The Bible tells us in

Acts 16:31, "**...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...**"

Romans 10:13, "**For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.**"

This prayer is here for those who need to ask Jesus to be their personal Savior: "**I do want to go to Heaven. I know I am a sinner, and I do believe Jesus Christ died for me. I realize I cannot buy this great salvation, nor can I earn it. Knowing Jesus died on the cross and arose from the grave to pay my sin debt and to purchase my salvation, I do now trust Him as my Savior, and from this moment on I am completely depending on Him for my salvation.**"

If you made the decision to accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior let me know? Please send an e-mail to, [pdmikBBM@aol.com](mailto:pdmikBBM@aol.com) and I will send you some literature that will help you in your Christian life.

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