

THE PROBLEM OF ENEMIES

Psalm 55: 11 - 14

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I. INTRODUCTION

- a. It is an honor to have friends, but it is not necessarily a dishonor to have enemies – Luke 6:26; Gal. 4:16; Matt. 5: 10 – 12; 10:22.
- b. In some cases, it is as complementary to have enemies as friends.
- c. Just as you can tell a man by his friends, you can sometimes tell a man by his enemies.
- d. It is no complement to say that a Christian lived so many years and never had an enemy – This could not be said of Christ and Paul – 2 Tim. 3:12; 2 Tim. 4:14.

II. WE HAVE ENEMIES WITHOUT CAUSE:

- a. The Psalmist David said: *“Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me; neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause”* – Psa. 35:19.
- b. Our enemies we have without a cause – the trouble is in their hearts.
 - i. Job said, *“But ye should say, why persecute we him, seeing the root of the matter is found in me?”* – Job. 19:29.
- c. Some of the reasons within our enemies as to why they hate us without a cause:
 - i. They are unfair and unreasonable people – 2 Thess. 3:2.
 1. They are filled with enmity, hate, and bitterness.
 2. They need a “whipping boy”.
 - ii. Because they have talked about you – Prov. 26:28 – *“A lying tongue hateth those that are afflicted by it”*.
 1. The loose-tongued person builds opposition to you in his mind in an effort to justify the wrong done you.
 - iii. Because they have mistreated you.
 1. They may have failed to pay a debt owed you.
 2. They may have cheated you.
 3. They may have overcharged you.
 - iv. Enmity may result from reproof:
 1. Prov. 9:8; Gal. 4:16.
 2. Every gospel preacher has enemies because he has “stepped on toes”.
 3. But he has no choice, for the truth must be preached and men’s sins must be rebuked.
 - a. Peter rebuked Simon – Acts 8: 18 – 23.
 - b. Paul rebuked Peter – Gal. 2: 11- 12.
 - c. John even went so far as to mention in a letter the name of Diotrefes and the sin he had committed – 3 John 9.
 - d. Paul gave this instruction to Timothy: *“Them that sin rebuke before all, that others may also fear”* – I Tim. 5:20.
 4. The Word of God and the Preacher’s work – 2 Tim. 4: 16 – 17; 4:2.

5. Being successful or popular may make enemies for you.
 - a. *“Envy is the rottenness of the bones”* – Prov. 14:30.
 - b. Envy knows no rest.
 - c. *“Love envieth not”* – I Cor. 13:4.

III. WHAT TO DO ABOUT ENEMIES

- a. Do good unto them – Matt. 5:44; Rom. 12:20.
- b. Pray for them – Matt. 5: 44 -45.
 - i. Jesus – Luke 23:34.
 - ii. Stephen – Acts 7 :60.
- c. Refrain from getting on the level of an enemy – I Pet. 2:23.
- d. Rejoice not at the failings of an enemy.
 - i. Prov. 24:17 *“Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth”*
 - ii. I Cor. 13:6
- e. Remember that it is through God’s commandments that you can be made wiser than your enemies – Psa. 119:98.
- f. We can pray for deliverance from our enemies – Psa. 59: 1.
- g. Let us always remember that God is stronger than our enemies and can care for us despite them – Psa. 19:5.

IV. CONCLUSION

- a. I cannot help having enemies, but I can help my attitude toward them.