

DAILY BIBLE VERSES AND PRAYER THOUGHTS:

MONDAY - VERSES: 2 Chronicles 20:7; Proverbs 27:10; Matthew 11:19; John 15:13-15 PRAYER THOUGHT: Thank God that He is your friend and not your enemy.

TUESDAY - VERSES: John 3:16; James 4:4; Romans 5:6-10; PRAYER THOUGHT: Thank God that even when you were His enemy He loved you.

WEDNESDAY - VERSES: Matthew 5:43-48; 1 John 4:16-21 PRAYER THOUGHT: Ask God for help to learn to love like He has loved you.

THURSDAY - VERSES: Luke 6:26-27; Mark 11:25-26; Luke 23:33-34 PRAYER THOUGHT: Ask God to help you learn to pray for your enemies and start by making a list of enemies and praying for them by name.

FRIDAY - VERSES: Romans 3:14; Ephesians 4:26, 31; Hebrews 12:15; James 3:10-16 PRAYER THOUGHT: Ask God to help you overcome any anger and bitterness that you may feel toward any of your enemies.

SATURDAY - VERSES: Romans 12:17-21; 1 Peter 2:21-23 PRAYER THOUGHT: Ask God to help you find ways to do good to one specific enemy in the next two days.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. At least once a day read over this material and read or sing the song.
2. Place the scripture where you will see it often each day.
3. Think of an enemy and what kindness you could do for them.
4. Each day write down your successes in loving your enemy.
5. Plan to tell the class, next week, an example of how you or someone else practiced loving your enemy, or tell the class about an enemy you have problems forgiving.



Do good to your friends to keep them, to your enemies to win them. - Benjamin Franklin I destroy my enemies when I make them my friends. - Abraham Lincoln Have we not come to such an impasse in the modern world that we must love our enemies - or else? The chain reaction of evil - hate begetting hate, wars producing more wars - must be broken, or else we shall be plunged into the dark abyss of annihilation. - Martin Luther King, Jr.

SPIRITUAL HEALTH REGIMEN - WEEK 16

LOVE ENEMIES - 11-4-12 to 11-11-12

SCRIPTURE - Matthew 5:44 "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,

COMMENT - As children of God we must love all, as God does, even our enemies. We are to treat them in such a way that they become our friends and perhaps lead them to salvation.

SONG - TO LOVE SOMEONE MORE DEARLY

1. To love some one more dearly ev'ry day, To help a wandering child to find his way, To ponder over a noble thought and pray, And smile when evening falls, And smile when evening falls: This is my task.
2. To follow truth as blind men long for light, To do my best from dawn of day till night, To keep my heart fit for His holy sight, And answer when He calls, And answer when He calls: This is my task.
3. And then my Savior by and by to meet, When faith hath made her task on earth complete, And lay my homage at the Master's feet, Within the jasper walls, Within the jasper walls: This crowns my task.

THOUGHTS

A little girl one day went to her mother to show some fruit that had been given her. "Your friend," said the mother, "has been very kind."

"Yes," said the child. "She gave me more than these; but I have given some away."

The mother inquired to whom she had given them.

She answered, "I gave them to a girl who pushes me off the path, and makes faces at me."

When asked why she gave them to her, she replied, "Because I thought it would make her know that I wish to be kind to her, and she will not, perhaps, be so rude and unkind to me again."



I read the story recently of how Louis XII of France treated his enemies after he ascended to the throne. Before coming to power, he had been cast into prison and kept in chains. Later when he did become king, he was urged to seek revenge but he refused. Instead, he prepared a scroll on which he listed all who had perpetrated crimes against him. Behind every man's name he placed a cross in red ink.

When the guilty heard about this, they feared for their lives and fled. Then the king explained, "The cross which I drew beside each name was not a sign of punishment, but a pledge of forgiveness extended for the sake of the crucified Savior, who upon His cross forgave His enemies and prayed for them."



Love is

- Slow to suspect -- quick to trust.
- Slow to condemn -- quick to justify.
- Slow to offend -- quick to defend.
- Slow to reprimand -- quick to forbear.
- Slow to belittle -- quick to appreciate.
- Slow to demand -- quick to give.
- Slow to provoke -- quick to conciliate.
- Slow to hinder -- quick to help.
- Slow to resent -- quick to forgive.



In the days of the American Revolutionary War there lived at Ephrata, Pennsylvania, a Baptist preacher by the name of Peter Miller who enjoyed the friendship of General Washington. There also dwelt in that town one Michael Wittman, an evil-minded man who did all in his power to abuse and oppose this preacher. One day Michael Wittman was involved in treason and was arrested and sentenced to death. The old preacher started out on foot and walked the whole seventy miles to Philadelphia to plead for this man's life. He was admitted into Washington's presence and at once begged for the life of the traitor. Washington said, "No, Peter, I cannot grant you the life of your friend." The preacher exclaimed, "My friend, he is the bitterest enemy I have." Washington cried, "What? You've walked seventy miles to save the life of an enemy? That puts the matter in a different light. I will grant the pardon." And he did. And Peter Miller took Michael Wittman from the very shadow of death back to his own home in Ephrata -- no longer as an enemy, but as a friend.



Those who deserve love the least need it the most.



After reading the children's book Little Lord Fauntleroy, someone noted that it vividly illustrates the positive influence a person can have when he expresses a warm and trusting attitude toward others. The story is about a young boy of 7 who went to stay with his grandfather. Although the man had a reputation of being extremely mean and selfish, the lad could see nothing but good in him. He said over and over again, "Oh, Grandpa, how people must love you! You're so good and kind in all you do." No matter how disagreeable the elderly man was, the grandson saw the best in everything he did. Finally, the youngster's unquestioning love softened the heart of the cantankerous old man. He couldn't resist the unwavering trust that the boy had in his goodness. As a result, he gradually began to change his ways, and in time he became the unselfish and kind person his grandson thought him to be.

Christians can take a lesson from that little boy. We ought to be more like him in our consideration of each other. If you've tried everything else to stimulate good behavior in someone who is wayward, but have failed, don't be discouraged. Show that person fervent love. Such an attitude can work wonders!



LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

- I. WE ARE TO TREAT OUR ENEMIES WITH LOVE.
 - A. ROMANS 12:14
 - B. ROMANS 12:17-21
 - C. 1 THESSALONIANS 5:15
 - D. 1 PETER 3:8-11
 - E. JAMES 3:8-10
- II. GOD WILL PUNISH THOSE WHO REJOICE IN THE SUFFERING OF THEIR ENEMIES.
 - A. PROVERBS 17:5
 - B. PROVERBS 24:17-18
- III. AS GOD'S CHILDREN LOVING ENEMIES IS NECESSARY.
 - A. MATTHEW 5:43-48
 - B. LUKE 6:27-36
- IV. WE HAVE EXAMPLES OF HOW TO TREAT OUR ENEMIES.
 - A. 1 PETER 2:19-23
 - B. 1 CORINTHIANS 4:12-13

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

SCRIPTURE - (Mat 5:43-48) "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' {44} "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, {45} "that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. {46} "For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? {47} "And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? {48} "Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

INTRODUCTION

A. THE OLD LAW REQUIRED PROPER TREATMENT OF ENEMIES - (Exo 23:4-5) "If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey going astray, you shall surely bring it back to him again. {5} "If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying under its burden, and you would refrain from helping it, you shall surely help him with it.

B. JOY OVER MISFORTUNE WAS NOT PLEASING TO GOD - (Job 31:29-30) "If I have rejoiced at the destruction of him who hated me, Or lifted myself up when evil found him {30} (Indeed I have not allowed my mouth to sin by asking for a curse on his soul);

C. GOD REWARDS THOSE WHO TREAT THEIR ENEMIES WELL - (Prov 25:21-22) If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; {22} For so you will heap coals of fire on his head, And the LORD will reward you.

I. WE ARE TO TREAT OUR ENEMIES WITH LOVE

A. (Rom 12:14) Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

B. (Rom 12:17-21) Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. {18} If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. {19} Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. {20} Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head." {21} Do not be

overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

C. (1 Th 5:15) See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all.

D. (1 Pet 3:8-11) Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; {9} not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. {10} For "He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit. {11} Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it.

E. (James 3:8-10) But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. {9} With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. {10} Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.

II. GOD WILL PUNISH THOSE WHO REJOICE IN THE SUFFERING OF THEIR ENEMIES

A. (Prov 17:5) He who mocks the poor reproaches his Maker; He who is glad at calamity will not go unpunished.

B. (Prov 24:17-18) Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, And do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles; {18} Lest the LORD see it, and it displease Him, And He turn away His wrath from him.

III. AS GOD'S CHILDREN LOVING ENEMIES IS NECESSARY.

A. (Mat 5:43-48) "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' {44} "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, {45} "that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. {46} "For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? {47} "And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? {48} "Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

B. (Luke 6:27-36) "But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, {28} "bless those who curse

you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. {29} "To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either. {30} "Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask them back. {31} "And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise. {32} "But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. {33} "And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. {34} "And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. {35} "But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. {36} "Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

IV. JESUS AND PAUL LEFT US EXAMPLES OF HOW TO TREAT OUR ENEMIES

A. (1 Pet 2:19-23) For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. {20} For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. {21} For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: {22} "Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth"; {23} who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;

B. (1 Cor 4:12-13) And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; {13} being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now.

CONCLUSION

A. HOW DO YOU TREAT YOUR ENEMIES?

B. DO YOU FEEL A SENSE OF SATISFACTION WHEN YOUR ENEMY SUFFERS?

C. ARE YOU A CHILD OF GOD?

1. BY THE NEW BIRTH?

Matthew 5:44

“But I say to you,
love your enemies,
bless those who curse
you, do good to those
who hate you, and
pray for those who
spitefully use you
and persecute you,”