

THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

“To you who hear, I say: love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.”

Luke 6: 27

As you were reading the passage above what was going on inside of you? Were you wondering if Jesus was for real? Or, that’s easy for him to do because He is God but for the rest of us it’s not so easy. Or, were you wondering why you should even have to do this at all? That person who acted as enemy should not have; the person who curses you is wrong to do so, siding with the enemy of all enemies; the one who is envious of your goodness needs to ask God to reveal to them his goodness within them. And the person who is passive aggressive and destructive of you behind your back? They should get a grip—and cut it out.

We think like that sometimes. So, why does Jesus teach what he does? First of all, because he teaches the way that God is, with us—always. Especially when we have affronted him or mistreated and disrespected one of his little ones. Including the little one inside of each of us. Think about this for a moment. You are all familiar with the expression about how a person “Is his own worst enemy.” How “people shoot themselves in the foot all the time.” How, “I have a tendency to self-sabotage anything good I want to do.” In effect, I act towards myself as an enemy might be expected to act. Can I at least stop hating myself (myself as my own inner enemy?)

If I can stop hating the enemy, then can I become neutral towards the enemy? And finally, can I look upon the enemy as someone who is in need himself or herself, who has been wounded by life and is lashing out at another, Can I pray for the healing of that enemy in their own soul? Can I pray for them, stop hating them, begin actually caring about what is going on inside of them? And if I do, what happens? I am changed, for one. I am more like God. And the one whom I hated feels the change that something inimical to them is not there anymore. Rather, there is something beneficial, uplifting, gracious even. A heart softens, and is changed. By loving the enemy. God does it. Why not try it? That is the question of the week.