

The Bulletin

Meeks St. Church of Christ

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“How Friends & Enemies Treat You”

By Brian Meade

Everyone would love to live in a world where every person would be our friend rather than our enemy, but we don't live in that world yet! There will be people who, for no fault of own, want to be against us and undermine us as our enemy. Especially, if we are vocal in our stand for truth, as we should be, we will have those who hate truth and hate us as well (John 15:18).

But on the other hand, it is nice to know that we have real friendships that last throughout the years! It is a comfort to have people in our lives that genuinely care for us. True friends are a joy to have in many ways!



But as we may know, there is a vast difference in the way our friends treat us and the way our enemies mistreat us.

And that is the focus of this article—to help us understand when someone is our real friend or just an enemy pretending to care.

As the Bible says, “...deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.” (Proverbs 27:6)

I. Friends Treat Us With Kindness And Respect.

Real friends show that they are our true friends by the way give us the respect afforded to those whom they appreciate. Money or power can't buy this kind of true friendship. It is the kind of traits that makes having a good friend worthwhile to us! And if all friends were like this, the world would be a much better place to live in. These traits of kindness and respect are inherent to the kind of love that friends have for each other. David and Jonathan showed this kind of love for each other in the bonds of friendship. The Bible tells us of their great friendship, “*Now it came about when he had finished speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as himself.*” (1 Samuel 18:1)

Jonathan, who was the son of Saul and was next in line to the throne to be king, did not view David as a threat like his father did. But often helped David escape from the hand of Saul—as Saul wanted to kill his friend David.

It was this kindness that David wanted to show to the son of Jonathan in 2 Samuel 9:6-7, “*Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan the son of Saul, came to David and fell on his face and prostrated himself. And David said, “Mephibosheth.” And he said, “Here is your servant!” David said to him, “Do not fear, for I will surely show kindness to you for the sake of your father Jonathan, and will restore to you all the land of your grandfather Saul; and you shall eat at my table regularly.*” This was not the normal way new kings dealt with the old king's family when ascending to the throne. But kindness reigned in David's decision to spare Jonathan's son Mephibosheth, not only because of the covenant between Jonathan and David (1 Samuel 20:42), but because of the great friendship they had in life (2 Samuel 1:26).

II. Enemies Treat Us With Hatred And Contempt.

David spoke of his enemies when he said to God, “*Look upon my enemies, for they are many, and they hate me with violent hatred.*” (Psalm 25:19)

It only goes without saying, that because our enemies hate us, they want us to fail. They want only bad things to come to us and are happy to see us fail.



Hate is a terrible disease of one's heart! It causes the one infected with it to act out their hatred in very malicious ways! Hate can lead to other sins that stem from it. Violence, murder, bitterness, and wrath all start from a heart of hatefulness.

King Saul had nothing but animosity for David and it showed! *"Saul tried to pin David to the wall with the spear; but he slipped away out of Saul's presence, so that he stuck the spear into the wall. And David fled and escaped that night."* (1 Samuel 19:10)

Even though King Saul was acting with hatred toward David— David did not return hatred back to him. That is the way of God's people to continue to show love toward all men, even our enemies (Matthew 5:44).

III. Friends Help Us When We Need It.

There's a saying that goes: "A friend in need is a friend indeed." Not everybody will go out of their way to give a helping hand to those in need. It might just be giving someone a ride to a doctor's appointment, church services, or home when we don't have a way.

If we live long enough in today's world, we will all see the time when we will need help from others. It is then that a true friend saves the day by helping us in our hour of need. The good Samaritan in Luke 10 was a true friend to the one robbed and left on the road. *"But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion, and came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him. "On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.'* (Luke 10:33-35) He went out of his way and was a true neighbor and friend to the one who was in dire need.

IV. Enemies Hurt Us If They Get Opportunity.

There are those who look for opportunity to help others— and then there are others who look for opportunities to hurt those they hate! Enemies will often plan and dream of others' demise.

Judas was acting more like an enemy than a friend when he sought to betray Jesus. The Bible tells us, that after the chief priests offered him thirty pieces of silver, *"From then on he began looking for a good opportunity to betray Jesus."* (Matthew 26:16)

It may be the time of your most vulnerability that your enemy can do the most damage to you. It is then that we need the Lord's help in deliverance.

David's cry to God for help in Psalm 25:1-2, *"To You, O Lord, I lift up my soul. O my God, in You I trust, Do not let me be ashamed; Do not let my enemies exult over me."*

David showed great restraint in not hurting King Saul when he had the chance in 1 Samuel 26:5-12. Again, that's what God calls us to do even today.

Notice in Romans 12:9-12, *"Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. "But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."*

V. Friends Encourage And Strengthen Us.

There are times when life gets us down and we need cheering up. It is those times that we need a friend to be there for us!

Christians are to be the best friends a person could ever have. If we are a genuine Christian, we know that a little encouragement goes a long way in helping those discouraged.

We must remember the needs of others before our own in selfless service to God (1 Thessalonians 5:11). We are built up as we look up to the God of all comfort (2 Corinthians 1:3-4).

VI. Enemies Kick Us When We are Down.

The opposite of help and comfort comes the expressions of joy that enemies make when they see us down.

It had to be one of the most difficult things Jesus endured while on the cross— to see the gloating of the Jewish leaders as He was dying to save us all (Matthew 27:39-43).

Enemies have great delight in watching us fail and falter! But not so with the godly one who serves God. The Proverb writer tells us, *"Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, And do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles; Or the Lord will see it and be displeased, And turn His anger away from him."* (Proverbs 24:17)

News and Notes: Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, Martha Norvell (Mississippi Care), June Lawson (Lisa Busby's Mom), Debbie Keplinger, Gaddy Hall, Janis Johnson, Daniel Holloway, Tammy Kilgore (Jerry's niece), Betty Hurst, Peggy Harville (cancer), Linda Harris, Kathryn's grandmother, Hazel Corner, Clay Ford, & Allison (12 year old girl that received burns from a house fire/ 80% of her body was burned), Karey Trimble, Clois Wright, Dan & Linda Hunt, Ron Daly.

Our Gospel Meeting begins September 29th and goes through October 4th. Jarrod Jacobs from Caneyville, Ky. will be our speaker for the week. Service times are 7:00 PM Monday through Friday.

Market Street Church of Christ in Athens Al. has a meeting Johnny Felker. River Bend Church has a meeting next Sunday with Donnie Rader. (Details for both meetings in the foyer)

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Doug George
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #1: "The Nature & Work of Demons"

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Jerry Kennemur
The Book of Acts (Jason Longstreth)
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Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements: Fred Johnson
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Paul Johnson
Hebrews 1:5-7
Song Leader: Paul Busby
Lord's Supper: Doug George
Assisting: Paul Busby & Nathan Meade
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon: "The Nature & Work of Angels"
Closing Prayer: Russell Briggs

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

September 18th:

Auditorium Bible Class: Paul Busby
The Book of Job (Mike Willis)
Page, Question #
Invitation: Russell Briggs
Song Leader: Adam Harris
Closing Prayer: Tim Harris Jr.