

## Matthew 5: Dealing With Our Enemies

**Matt. 10:16** <sup>16</sup> “Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves.

Who are the wolves?

**2 Timothy 3:12-13** <sup>12</sup> Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. <sup>13</sup> But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived

Evil men are wolves; imposters are wolves in sheep's clothing- and we live among them every day.

They deceive because they feed on lies, and the veil of their deception grows ever thinner as their deeds grow darker.

**Mark 13:12** <sup>12</sup> Brother will betray brother to death, and a father *his* child; and children will rise up against parents and have them put to death.

**Matthew 24:9-10** <sup>9</sup> “Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. <sup>10</sup> At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another.

**Luke 21:17** <sup>17</sup> and you will be hated by all because of My name.

These are our enemies and this is what they will do when nothing is left to restrain them.

Jesus always had opposition, as did His apostles. In the West today, we are a little short on enemies. Why is that?

**Luke 6:22-23, 26** <sup>22</sup> Blessed are you when men hate you, and ostracize you, and insult you, and scorn your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man. <sup>23</sup> Be glad in that day and leap *for joy*, for behold, your reward is great in heaven. For in the same way their fathers used to treat the prophets. <sup>26</sup> Woe *to you* when all men speak well of you, for their fathers used to treat the false prophets in the same way.

**We compromise the Word of God.**

**Mark 8:38** <sup>38</sup> For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”

**We hide the truth about Jesus.**

**John 7:7** <sup>7</sup> The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil.

**We do not testify against evil deeds.**

When our wills are submitted to Jesus, and we are walking by the Spirit, we will have enemies for Christ's sake. How should we deal with them?

**Matthew 5:38-48** <sup>38</sup> “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.’ <sup>39</sup> But I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. <sup>40</sup> If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. <sup>41</sup> Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two. <sup>42</sup> Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you. <sup>43</sup> “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ <sup>44</sup> But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, <sup>45</sup> so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *the* good, and sends rain on *the* righteous and *the* unrighteous. <sup>46</sup> For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? <sup>47</sup> If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing *than* others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? <sup>48</sup> Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

**Luke 6:35-36** <sup>35</sup> But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil *men*. <sup>36</sup> Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

Why do we struggle so much with the idea of loving enemies and suffering willingly for Christ's sake?

Imagine a world in which we live a tailored existence, rarely experience hardship, and we are constantly being reminded to protect our own self-interest. What kind of people do you suppose such a society would produce?

**1 Corinthians 3:3** <sup>3</sup> for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?

This quality exceeds the capacity of "mere men," who are fleshly. Loving an enemy while being mistreated is truly divine.

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**1 Peter 3:13-16** <sup>13</sup> Who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good? <sup>14</sup> But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. And do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled, <sup>15</sup> but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; <sup>16</sup> and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.