

LOVING OUR ENEMIES

By W. Edmund Smith

The commandment of Jesus for us to love our enemies and to bless those that curse us indeed shows the superiority of the covenant of grace to that of law, and gives us a real touchstone by which we may test our inner character. Paul said: "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."

But someone may ask, is it possible for me to have the same feelings of love towards one whom I know to be my enemy and the enemy of all righteousness, that I have towards one who is my tried and true friend? I say No! That is impossible and we can understand this plainly when we make proper discrimination in the different qualities of love.

Love towards a true friend and a godly man involves a degree of admiration for his character. He possesses qualities of character that make him stand high in your estimation of moral and spiritual values.

Again, such love implies fellowship: that is a blending of spirit with spirit which makes you feel better after a personal contact. When you say goodbye, it is with a strong desire to meet again.

Again, in such love there is involved trust and confidence: To your friends you can open your heart with a feeling that they will not betray your trust. If you are in need, a true friend will be willing and glad to give aid.

Now do you think that the fullest measure of grace can inspire admiration, trust and confidence in one whom you know to be base and mean and treacherous? Can you have fellowship with such a person? Oh, you can meet him and be courteous towards him, but you can't have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, and these do not exist merely in the abstract; they are the expression of human personalities that are in league with the powers of darkness.

How then can we love our enemies? We can love them so that we can sincerely pray for them. But if they prove to be the awful enemies of mankind we must pray that God will frustrate their evil purposes and the purposes of all evil men.

When I heard some say what they would like to see done to Hitler in awful torture, it made me shudder. They were only showing the same spirit that Hitler and his henchmen possessed. I am glad that America and Britain are showing a measure of Christian love in sending clothing and food to those whom they have conquered, and who would have crushed us to the earth had they been successful. We are showing them that we conquered but to save. Yes, to save ourselves and to finally save them. The awful spirit of revenge would like to see these enemies tortured to the same degree in which they measured it out to others. That is not the spirit of Christ.

We are waiting for the sentences to be passed upon the war criminals. I believe for the good of Germany, and for the moral lesson it will teach others who would like to be world conquerors, it will work for the good of all mankind for these men to suffer as murderers suffer, in order that men may have a proper regard for international law.

Paul told us how we are to love our enemies. "If thine enemy hunger, feed him," and that doesn't mean to give him the poorest food you may have, but give him the best. "If he thirst, give him drink for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head."

While we cannot have that same emotional love that includes admiration, fellowship and trust towards our enemies, we can desire to do them good and not ill; we can rejoice in the opportunity of helping them in time of need; we can pity them.

The worst enemies of Jesus were the Pharisees. How Jesus prayed for them and strove to bring them to the light! But they perverted all his good teachings, ridiculed his claims to Messianic authority; they dogged his footsteps night and day to trip him, to trap him, to hinder the influence of his word and works. They consented that he did miracles, but it was because he was in league with the devil. Could Jesus have the same attitude towards them that he had towards those who gladly followed him, and sat at his feet drinking in every word he spake; who saw in his miracles the proof of his divinity, and who testified this is truly the Christ the saviour of the world?

Even in that little band of apostles he had chosen there were three that seem to have come closer to Jesus than the others. John has the temerity to call himself "that disciple whom Jesus loved." Did he not love them all? Yea verily. But there was something in John that brought him into a peculiar relation to the blessed Son of God.

Turn, will you, to the 23rd chapter of Matthew and read there Jesus' terrible denunciation of the Pharisees. The meek and gentle Jesus became an awful messenger of judgment and fiery indignation against the hypocritical religious men of their day. But when they nailed him to the cross he cried: "Father forgive them for they know not what they do!" When Stephen preached that wonderful sermon before the Sanhedrin he reached the climax of his sermon when he cried: "Ye stiff necked and uncircumcised of heart, ye do always resist the truth. As your fathers did, so do ye." They gnashed upon him with their teeth, and threw him out and battered him with stones. But the love of Stephen shone forth in his cry: "Father, lay not this sin to their charge." No man can show holy wrath but a holy man. But when his enemies may turn on him with revilings and torture, love, and not hate, will come forth. Yes, love is not merely a namby pamby thing. It is terrible in its judgment and condemnation of evil. But it ever holds the attitude of forgiveness to its enemies.

CHRIST OUR SANCTIFIER

By Dr. A. B. Simpson

The very name of sanctification has become associated with phrases, fads and fanaticisms which have made it distasteful to many persons. Holiness is confounded with sanctimoniousness, Pharisaism and self-perfection, and the devil has set up his scarecrows all along the way to frighten God's children away from their heritage of blessing.

The holiness we teach is this: The Lord Jesus Christ Himself so dwelling in our hearts and so walking in our steps that we shall live like Him. It does not minister to our pride or self-sufficiency, for before we can receive it, we must come to the end of ourselves, and never become self-constituted, or self-sufficient apart from Christ; but live a life of simple dependence moment by moment on Him alone. Therefore it is, on the one hand, the easiest life to live because we do not need to climb up to some high attainment, but simply take Christ Himself as He meets us on

the level of our nothingness and continually draw from Him grace and strength for all our needs, trials and triumphs. On the other hand, it raises us infinitely higher than the highest human perfection, because its standard is not Adamic perfection but divine holiness. It takes us in our nothingness, and gives us His fullness. And all this we receive by simple union with Him. We do not have to attain to it, but we obtain it as the gift bestowed as freely as His precious blood and His eternal salvation.

Two simple steps take us into all this fullness of blessing; namely, the yielding of ourselves in complete surrender, and the receiving of Christ by simple faith, and thenceforth abiding in Him by the same two links of yielding and trusting to the end, even as He has said in His Word, "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him."

The divine agent in this blessed experience is the Holy Spirit. It is His province to reveal the Lord Jesus to us as our Sanctifier, and then to minister Him to us moment by moment for the supply of every need in our spiritual life. Therefore the baptism of the Holy Spirit is simultaneous with our union with the Lord Jesus as our Sanctifier; the Spirit does not act apart from Christ, but it is His to take of the things of Christ and show them unto us.

Standing in the background Himself, He makes the person of Christ the object of our faith, fellowship and love; and, while it is true that our deeper life is the fruit of the Spirit, it is also true that Christ Himself is made unto us of God our "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

This experience of receiving Christ as our Sanctifier marks a definite and distinct crisis in the history of a soul. We do not grow into it, but we cross a definite line of demarcation as clear as when the hosts of Joshua crossed the Jordan and were over in the Promised Land and set up a great heap of stones so that they never could forget the crisis hour. Beloved, have you entered your Promised Land?

"The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it" (I. Thess. 5: 23-24).—The King's Herald.

"REVIVE US AGAIN"

E. W. Lawrence

The Psalmist's prayer: "Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?" is the heart cry of multitudes of God's redeemed people today. But revival never comes to an unprepared people. For revival to be ours, specific conditions must be fulfilled.

There must be a sense of need followed by a consciousness of God's willingness to answer the prayers of His saints. The need is evident on either hand. Amid a godless world, a world engulfed in the monster arms of chaos and spiritual darkness, the need is only too apparent. And in this environment, the church of the living God is weak, powerless and ineffective. Called to be responsible for the moral leadership of the world, the voice of the church is either completely disregarded or accounted as belonging to another age.

It was when Jewry was at the furthest point of her degeneration that "in the fulness of times God sent forth His Son, born of a virgin." So, likewise, it is at times such as these through which we are passing today when God is waiting to make bare His arm