

Enemies

Believe it or not, not everyone likes Christians. Did you know the Bible tells us that sometimes people will not like you, solely because you are a Christian? Christians, like all other people that walk the earth have difficulties and struggles. The Bible never promises a life free of troubles because you are a Christian. Sometimes people will even hate you because you are a Christian. In this lesson we will look at what the Bible has to say about Christians having enemies.

Christians will have enemies

Matthew 5:11-12 “Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.” Following God and trying to spread His word is never promised to be easy. Yes, a Christian must be obedient to God and try to spread His word, but sometimes other people will not take kindly to this. Sometimes people will make a Christians life difficult, however no human can take away your soul. Any level of hardship here on earth, while real and trying, is only temporary. Faithful Christians have an eternal home in Heaven waiting, making any struggles on earth worth facing.

Matthew 5:44 “But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;” A Christian has a difficult task of not wanting to destroy their enemies. Christians certainly don’t have to like, or enjoy having an enemy, but the goal is not to destroy them. Christians should pray for those that oppose them, and should the chance arise, try and teach their enemy about God. No one knows for sure who might accept or reject the Gospel, and it is certainly not up to me or you to decide. Even someone that abuses or causes a Christian difficulty needs to be given a chance to either accept or reject the Word of God. The goal of a Christian is to try and convert their enemy not destroy them. Perhaps sometimes an enemy can become a fellow Christian, perhaps they will not.

Matthew 10:22 “And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.” Think of all the difficulties that early Christians faced. They had to endure persecution to the level most of us hopefully never will. So they certainly had enemies. Christians must remember if they endure to the end a reward in Heaven is greater than any difficulty an enemy can inflict.

Luke 6:22-23 “Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.” and **2 Timothy 3:12** “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” Being persecuted by an enemy will by no means be fun or enjoyable, but think closely about what these verses say. Christians will at times face difficult situations. If a faithful Christian is persecuted for their faith, it is not fun for sure, but rejoice a Heavenly home awaits the faithful. Troubles never seem good when we are going through them but in the end facing hardship for the cause of Christ is worthwhile.

Christians live in the world but are not of the world

2 Corinthians 6:17-18 “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” A faithful Christian will not look like the rest of the world in the way they live. A faithful Christian will not take part in sinful activities, or be involved in sinful things that other people are. The world will see a Christian living a different kind of life. A faithful Christian will stand out as different. This does not mean constantly letting everyone know about you, or saying look at me, or being arrogant. A Christian’s values and goals are different from those of other people, so eventually they will probably notice. Sometime that gives Christians an opportunity to try and teach others.

Ephesians 5:11 “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.” and **James 4:4** “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.” Faithful Christians cannot value the world so much that they become a party to sinful activities. There is no grey area, one either walks in the dark or the light. A Christian’s goal is not friendship with the world, but rather to live pleasing to God. Sometimes those two things will be at odds, and the faithful Christian will choose God over the world, if that makes enemies so be it.

1 John 2:15-17 “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.” A faithful Christian can certainly enjoy many aspects of this world that are not sinful, but God must come first. If a Christian puts God first and it causes people to mock or persecute them, so be it. Remember pleasing this world is not the goal of a Christian, but rather pleasing God and going to Heaven is.

Christ will stand with Christians, they can endure

Matthew 28:19-20 “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” This put short and sweet is the mission of faithful Christians. As Christians we must try and teach others about God. Hopefully, some people will be reached and become Christians themselves. Many people will reject God, and some may even become angry. People have the free will to accept or reject God and are responsible for the consequences of their own choices. If a Christian makes an enemy because they tried to teach someone that is okay, God wants His people to try and teach others.

Romans 8:31-39 “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is

even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” and **Revelation 2:10** “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” Mankind can cause a faithful Christian much pain and difficulty, but cannot take away anyone’s soul. God gave His son so that all might be saved. Faithful Christians will be saved, no matter what hardships, or how many enemies this world puts in their path. God’s side is the winning side. Don’t you want to be on His side? The only thing ultimately worth fearing is losing one’s soul and going to Hell. God’s faithful will be in Heaven. Don’t you want to be there?

1 Corinthians 10:13 “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” We will face difficulties on this earth but we will never face something that takes over our will and forces us to sin. We will always have the choice to be faithful to God, or not. Which choice will you make?

Christ loved His enemies

Luke 23:33-34 “And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.” Jesus is willing to forgive all that truly repent. Jesus loves everyone and wants everyone to be saved. Christians must try very hard to treat their enemies the same way. Christians must love their enemies enough to try and teach them about Christ. Christian must try very hard to not respond to evil actions with their own evil actions. This is not easy but it gives the Christian the possibility of teaching their enemies through example something about God.

Romans 5:6-8 “For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Christ died for everyone no matter how evil or vile a person is. Anyone willing to change their lives and become a baptized faithful Christian will be forgiven of their sins. While someone with an evil past might face consequence for their sinful behavior on earth, they can still go to Heaven. We can never think that someone is not worth saving, even our enemies, Christ did not have that attitude.

Conclusion

If you choose to be a Christian, and I hope you do, from time to time in this life you might have to deal with people that will not like you because of that. That is okay. We do not need everyone

to like us. In fact, even if you are not a Christian, there are likely to be some people that will not like you. While as a Christian, we must try very hard to not return evil for evil when people do not like us, a faithful Christian does not need everyone to like them to go to Heaven. While as a Christian, we do want to try and convert our enemies to Christ if we can, that does not alter our ability to make it to Heaven if we can't. People not liking us is just part of being in this world, but that is okay. A faithful Christian's enemies can not take their opportunity to go to Heaven away from them.