

Who Did You Say To Help?

On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink."

Romans 12:20 (NIV)

There are some things about Christianity that seem to run contrary to modern thinking. In our verse for today, Paul states one of these contradictions. What Paul says is to be good to those who would do you harm. When your enemy is in need of food or drink and you can help meet that need, then do so.

Most people believe that to help your enemy will increase your suffering. If you gave your enemy food when he/she is starving, they would be strengthened by the food and be better able to harm you. In war time the opposing nations give their food supplies only to their own troops. Certainly the generals commanding the armies would never dream of supplying food and water to those they wish to conquer.

When our Lord was being crucified He prayed several times to the Father to forgive the men who were causing His death. This is a clear illustration of a person do-

ing good to those who were harming Him. The greatest need the executioners had was for forgiveness for the crime of murder.

Jesus' prayer was answered because we witness the repentance of the people around the cross following His death (Luke 23:48). Later in Acts 6:7 we read that many of the priests in Jerusalem became obedient to the faith.

Being merciful to the person who betrays you, lies about you to others, cheats you out of money, or does some other evil thing against you can be part of the process that brings them to repentance and forgiveness both with you and the Lord.

Certainly the enemy will not understand at first why you are being kind to him instead of seeking him harm. However, if you persist in being loving to the one who hates you, you will overcome evil with good (Romans 12:21).

You may find it difficult to

deal in love with someone who has hurt you deeply. Everything in you may cry out for you to respond in kind. You might feel an urgent temptation to strike back against the enemy.

However, the Lord wishes His people to be kind to those who do evil things to them. This is His will for you. If the Lord wants you to do something you find impossible to do, rest assured He will give you the strength to go forward in obedience to Him.

The Lord never requires from His people anything He will not support with His mighty power. Elsewhere Paul tells us that God will supply all of our need according to His riches in glory (Philippians 4:19).

So, the task may seem impossible but the required resources are guaranteed. Take heart Christian friend. Your God is with you and you are certain of success.