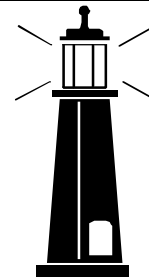


The Berryville church of Christ



Bible Beacon

"Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." (Psalm 119:105)

Volume 2, Issue 47

November 30, 2003

Avenge Not Yourselves

Kevin Cauley

Enemies come in all different shapes and sizes. There are physical enemies who seek to take our lives. There are enemies in the business world who would destroy our way of earning a living. There are enemies within families when close bonds have been severed due to a "falling out." And, there are spiritual enemies who teach a different doctrine or a changed gospel (Galatians 1:6-9). As Christians, it's a guarantee that we will have enemies (John 15:20). Perhaps the greatest test of a Christian within the New Testament is not how he treats his friends, but how he treats his enemies.

As humans, when we are wronged, we tend to want to lash out in response to that wrong and defend ourselves. Usually in pursuing such a course of action, we demand only what is "equitable" for ourselves in relationship to the harm that has been done to us. Vengeance is the demanding attitude that what was done to me ought to also be done to my enemy. Christians, however, are directed not to harbor such thoughts in their sanctified minds. Romans 12:19-21 says, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

Our Lord Jesus gave us the quintessential example of this very attitude through his life. His enemies were all of the enemies listed above rolled up into one: physical, financial, familial, and spiritual. How our Lord acted toward his enemies should spur us toward the same behavior. He is our example, our pattern. Peter writes, "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither

was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously" (1 Peter 2:21-23). When pursued by our enemies, how do we respond? Do we avenge ourselves or do we "give place unto wrath?" Do we revile or revile not? Do we threaten or threaten not? Do we seek to render our own verdict, or do we commit ourselves to the righteous judge? Do we try to overcome evil with evil or do we overcome evil with good?

The truth of the whole matter is this. Through our sins, we placed ourselves at enmity with God. And God, in all of his righteous might, had every right to take vengeance on us. However, He did not do this. He chose to give us a way whereby we could be reconciled to Him. This He did through His Son, Jesus. What we could not do for ourselves, God did for us through his Son while we were His enemies. Romans 5:6-10 states, "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. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

Those who are our enemies deserve our mercy and love, not because they are our enemies, but because we were once God's enemy and that is how God looked upon us in such a state. To treat them otherwise, is to invite the same judgment that we mete out upon them upon ourselves (Matthew 7:1). The greatest test of the Christian may be how we treat our enemies, but the same test is ultimately how God will judge us as well. Dear Christian, "Love your enemies."

Kevin's Korner



First let me say to everyone that I hope you had a very happy and wonderful Thanksgiving weekend. We have so much to be thankful for in our lives. Personally, words cannot describe the thankfulness that I hold in my heart for this congregation of the Lord's people. I have been amazed this past year as all of you have joined together to the accomplishment of many of the goals that the eldership has set for us. We had at the beginning of last year our budget which was set by the elders and the congregation responded overwhelmingly to that need. Thank you for your generosity in this regard. We had our friends and family day this past year and we did wonderfully well in inviting those around us to come to that event. We have had challenges this past year but the congregation has maintained the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. We have made evangelistic efforts over this past year and baptized several into Christ to become members of our congregation here. Our young people are to be especially commended for their work in this regard. YES! I am thankful for you and all of the hard work that you do for the kingdom of Christ. You make my job pleasant and enjoyable. You encourage me and strengthen me. You are truly a blessing to me. I can only pray that I have been and will be of equal blessing to you.

Our "Turkey Day" went very well! We had quite a feast. Sister Joann Bragg came over and brought us some yummy cranberry sauce and sweet potatoes. We also had turkey, ham, sweet potato casserole, potato casserole, pecan pie, pumpkin pie, angel biscuits and pumpkin bread. We still have leftovers. After lunch we went to the nursing home to visit Iola and Pauline. They were both doing well. Iola was dressed up for the holiday and looked very nice. The boys had a fun time playing checkers while we visited there. It was a wonderful Thanksgiving day.

This past Friday we went to pick up my mother from the airport in Springdale. She is going to be staying with the kids while Mary Lynn and I are in Costa Rica. Though her flight was delayed a little, it was good and she arrived safely. Of course, she had to endure my driving back to Berryville. We all made it back to the house around 7:00 PM. Overall our holiday weekend has been wonderful.

Tomorrow, Lord willing, we will arrive in Costa Rica and begin our campaign with the brethren

there. We certainly do covet your prayers. We will be taking off from the big airport close to Springdale at 5:45 AM. So we will have a very early start to a very long day ahead of us. We hope to arrive at the airport in San Jose a little after noon on Monday. Our time there will be spent in personal evangelism and preaching both at the Tres Rios church and at the new congregation in Coronado that we helped to start this past year. While we are there we will also have a special ladies class, a youth meeting on Saturday, and a special Bible class workshop. We do have a lot of work before us, so we do solicit your prayers. I am going to be sure to take plenty of digital pictures that I can share with the congregation when we get back. This year I am going to leave the video camera at home so that my mother may video tape the Christmas special at the elementary school for us.

Please note that there will be no bulletin next week due to our scheduled trip to Costa Rica. So I am placing a few announcements that would be in that bulletin in this one early. Refer to this next week. Please note that Saturday, December 13th, will be the second Saturday of the month and the day on which the monthly men's breakfast will be held. The Sunday evening that I return (December 14th) we will have questions and answers. Please try to get those questions in the box between now and then. Ladies Bible class for Wednesday, December 10th, will be rescheduled to Thursday, December 11th at 10:30 AM. This is so I can take my mother to the airport on Wednesday morning.

Of course, John, Larry, Susan, Mary Lynn, and I will be returning from Costa Rica on the 8th of December. Please pray for us going and coming. Our Father will certainly bless our work when we pray.

Elders: Clay Bozarth, Leon Duncan, Bruce Foster, Bill Fort, Glenn Quigley

Deacons: Ken Smith, Brent Stevens, Rusty Windle.

Preacher: Kevin Cauley 870-423-6707

Times of Worship and Study

Sunday Morning Bible Class:.....9:30 AM
 Sunday Morning Worship: 10:30 AM
 Sunday Evening Worship:6:00 PM
 Ladies Bible Class:..... 10:30 AM
 Wed. Evening Bible Class:.....7:00 PM

Death in the Pot

Tom Moore

" **A**nd Elisha came again to Gilgal. And there was a dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him; and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and boil pottage for the sons of the prophets. And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred them into the pot of pottage; for they knew them not. So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O man of God, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof. But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot" (2Kgs. 4:38-41) There are many valuable lessons to be learned from this biblical events - let us consider a few.

As there was a famine in the land during the days of Elisha, so is there a famine of the word of God in our day. Amos writes, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord Jehovah, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor athirst for water, but of hearing the words of Jehovah. And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of Jehovah, and shall not find it" (Amos 8:11-12). Friends, such seems to describe our day as well. In many places the word of God is not found. Sadly, even in the Lord's church (at least in many places) little of the word of God is found. Many of our pulpits are preaching more "philosophy" than they are the word of God - that's a spiritual dearth! Can you hear the prophet's cry, "My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge" (Hos. 4:6). Will you heed the prophet's cry? Philosophy will not stop the spiritual famine in the church - this can be accomplished only by the word of God. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God (1 Pt. 4:11).

The world, too, is starving without the gospel message. We need to provide the "bread of life" that the world need not hunger or thirst spiritually (Jn.6:35). Friends, do you care enough for your family, your friends, and your neighbor down the road to help them in their spiritual dearth? Will you not be involved

Sunday's Sermons

For 11/30

Morning..... **Our Mission**
 Scripture Matthew 28:18-20
Evening..... **Honesty**
 Scripture Romans 12:17

in teaching to help stop this terrible spiritual famine?

But, let us beware lest we be as the servant of 2 Kings 4 and gather wild gourds and poison the pot. Many in our day think they are being fed good spiritual food -but in many places, "there is death in the pot!" There is "death in the pot" because false doctrine is being taught. It is the pure word of God that saves - not the doctrines of men. False doctrine is deadly whether it be a little or a lot. This is why Paul warned that "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (1 Cor.5:6). In rat poison, over 99% of the ingredients are good, but it is the other 1% that kills the rat. Friends, spiritually speaking, this is why we need to be concerned that we are true to the teaching of the Bible in every point.

But, consider this about the servant that gathered the poison gourds - he was sincere in what he did but still he poisoned his fellows. The servant "thought" he was doing the right thing, but he was fatally wrong. Many today are sincere in what they believe - but they are sincerely wrong. This is why it is so important that we "Try [or, examine] your own selves, whether ye are in the faith; prove your own selves. Or know ye not as to your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you? unless indeed ye be reprobate" (2 Cor. 13:5). What we think or what we feel in our hearts is not the test of truth - it is strictly what the Bible says.

We also need to be careful because just as the gourd looked good, and yet, was poisoned, so error can go around disguised as truth. Do you remember the warning of Jesus? - "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves" (Mt. 7:15). Things may not always be as they appear. We must heed the word of John, " Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 Jn. 4:1).

Friends, if there is "death in the pot," then let us use the "meal" of God's word to remove the poison. Add the "meal" to the pot and "pour it our for the people" and you will find "no harm in the pot."

Be careful lest there be death in the pot!

Our Record

Week of 11/23

Sunday Class.....	51
Sunday A.M.	66
Sunday P.M.....	52
Wednesday	63
Contribution	\$1447.60
Budget	\$1760.00

News, Notes and Prayer List



- Please remember the following in your prayers: Jessica Anderson, Drake Col-lard, Michael Collins, Brian Guess, Chris Pinkley, Nick Warren.

- We express our deepest sympathies to the family of Lois Jackson who passed away this past week.
- Edith Mischler is in the nursing home in Eureka Springs.
- Art Roberts and Mary Patterson are confined to their homes.
- This afternoon at 2:00 PM is our monthly singing at the Berryville nursing home. Please make your plans to join us there.
- Those interested in our new personal evangelism program, please meet to-night after services to learn more about the program. Ken Smith will be presenting that information.
- Tomorrow morning, the children's home truck will be here to pick up both food and clothing. If you have either, today is the last day to contribute.
- There will be no ladies Bible class this week due to the scheduled trip to Costa Rica.
- Next Sunday night is our monthly youth devotional. Please make your plans to attend.
- The annual holiday potluck at Ken and Debbie Smith's home will be held Friday, December 12th, at 6:00 PM. Please bring a dish of food and a gift for each member of your family to participate in the gift exchange.
- The ladies time out is scheduled for Saturday, December 13th, at 9:45 AM at Mary Lynn's home. See the bulletin board in the back for details.
- The Pantry Item for this week is Pinto Beans.



Those to Serve

	<u>Today</u>	<u>Next Week</u>
Sunday Morning:	November 30th, 2003	December 7th, 2003
Song Leader:	Ken Smith	Ken Smith
Preacher:	Kevin Cauley	Ralph Hunter
Opening Prayer:	John Gass	Leon Duncan
Scripture:	Leon Duncan	Brent Moore
Lord's Table:	Glenn Williams	Bruce Foster
	Larry Elliott	George Eddings
(assist)	Sandy Nieves	Ray Duncan
	Jack Gentry	Perry Foster
Closing Prayer	Bill Fort	Bill Fort
Sunday Night:		
Songs:	Larry Elliott	Brent Stevens
Preacher:	Kevin Cauley	Ralph Hunter
Opening Prayer:	Hugh Atchley	Dale Pinkley
Scripture:	Dale Pinkley	Brandon Foster
Lord's Table:	Ken Smith	Rusty Windle
	Brandon Foster	Bob Moore
Closing Prayer	George Eddings	Ken Smith
Wednesday		
Songs:	Sandy Nieves	Hugh Atchley
Opening Prayer:	Kevin Cauley	Clay Bozarth
Invitation:	Bill Fort	Rusty Windle
Closing Prayer:	Hugh Atchley	Matt Bassing
Monthly Assignments		
Announcements	Leon Duncan	
Worship Coordinator	Matt Bassing	
Communion Prep	Pat Quigley	Tiffany Windle
Communion Carry	Bob Moore	Glenn Williams

The "Berryville Bible Beacon" is published by the Berryville church of Christ. Please contact Kevin Cauley at work at (870) 423-3068 or at home at (870) 423-6707 or e-mail bvcc@alltel.net to contribute information.

For questions or comments, please call (870) 423-3068 or write us at:
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