

LESSON NINE ENEMIES AND STRIFE

Why does the subject of enemies and strife belong in a church setting? Are we not supposed to love one another, be kind and tenderhearted toward one another, and care for one another? Certainly once we come to know Christ, we should not have enemies, there should be no reason for strife or contention in our relationships, and we should all be one great big happy family. Yet there is contention, there is strife, and there is feuding. Many people leave the church because the behavior they see practiced in the church is so ungodly. Why is it so difficult to live out the apostle Paul's injunction to be united, having the same mind and the same purpose?

As it appears in the Bible, the term "enemy" is multi-faceted. Moses had a very real enemy in the person of Pharaoh. Joshua faced enemies as he led the Israelites into the Promised Land. The Israelite Kings were constantly at war. The Israelite people went into exile at the hand of their enemies. Nationally, the Israelites had enemies that wished them great harm. Many of the Psalms that were written by David are a journal of his attempt to understand God's perspective regarding his enemies. The enemies in David's life were both national enemies and people whom he should have been able to trust. They caused him great anxiety and grief. David consistently sought God in order to understand the pain of being chased by his enemies and he reminded himself constantly of God's character and covenant. It was only in a loving, faithful relationship with the Lord that David was kept from sinking into a pit of depression and self-pity.

On a more practical scale, there are numerous examples in Scripture of contentious relationships between individuals. King David had Saul as his enemy, Hagar had Sarah as her enemy, Jeremiah had the King of Judah and the Babylonians as his enemies, and these are only a few examples. These relationships are characterized by strife and contention. They are painful relationships that include isolation, betrayal, misunderstanding, mistreatment, and in some cases physical abuse.

There is another relationship characterized in Scripture by strife and contention and that is the relationship of humanity to God. Prior to trusting in Christ we are considered to be an enemy to God. We live in rebellion to all that Christ has done. We are called God haters and enemies of the cross. Strife characterizes the relationship humanity has with God until we accept what Christ has done on our behalf. Christ's work on the cross was done for the sole purpose of restoring the relationship between God and humanity, to eliminate the strife, and to bring peace and purpose into our lives. We may not have enemies in our life like David did, and we may live a very peaceful existence, but unless we have placed our faith in Christ and accepted all He has done on our behalf, we are enemies to God.

The good news however, is that this is not God's intention. He has gone to incredible lengths to reach out to us in relationship, to reconcile each of us as individuals to Himself. He desires a relationship in which He can love us, delight in us, bring us into a community of faith, and guide us to wholeness and completeness in Him. God does not want us to be His enemy; He wants us to be His friend. Everything that Christ did in His life and on the cross was for this purpose. All we need to do is accept His gracious offer.

DAY ONE: STRIFE

Strife is a very negative word, yet it occurs in the Bible 32 times, 18 of which are in Proverbs. In communicating the necessity of being wise and living in a right relationship with Yahweh, the author of Proverbs thought it necessary to address this attitude/behavior exhaustively. There are those who are called "the wicked" and are active in stirring up strife. We are to avoid those people. What is also being asked of the reader of Proverbs is to search our hearts, to be willing to look at ourselves and see if in some way we may be contributing to a relationship or a situation that is contentious. Strife is defined by Webster's Dictionary as a bitter, sometimes violent conflict, dissension, or an act of contention. Most of us can probably think of relationships we have that are tense and we may not think our behavior is contributing to the situation, but the book of Proverbs asks us to direct our gaze inward to discern our part in the relationship. In some relationships our actions may be healthy and necessary, but there may also be those in which our words, attitudes, or actions contribute to a contentious situation. In this Lesson we will be discussing strife, the underlying attitudes that are associated with strife, how it manifests itself, how we can avoid it, and God's perspective.

We will begin by exploring what motivates a person to participate in such negative behavior. The following verses in Proverbs give us insight into the heart of the person who stirs up strife.

1. Read Proverbs 6:12-14, 10:12, 13:10, 15:18, 16:28, 17:19, 28:25, 29:22, and 30:33.

According to these verses, what attitudes are present in the person who is said to stir up strife?

2. Which of these attitudes speaks the most to you and why?

.

3. Can you think of situations in which you have seen these attitudes displayed? What was the outcome of the situation?

4. Can you think of other attitudes that might lead to strife or contention?

5. According to Prov. 10:12, 13:10, and 28:25 what is the opposite of strife?

6. Read Proverbs 6:16-19 and 11:20.

How does God view the spreading of strife? What are some of the other negative behaviors that are discussed in these two verses?

7. In Prov. 6:19, what relationships are effected by the spreading of strife?

8. How do you think God might feel about strife in the church?

9. How does God view those who walk blamelessly?

10. Read Proverbs 26:17 and 26:21.

To what do these two proverbs compare the stirring up of strife?

11. What happens when you take “a dog by the ears?” How quickly do charcoal and hot embers ignite and spread fires?

12. What is the overall warning?

13. Read 1 Timothy 6:3-6.

To what does Paul (the author of the letter to Timothy) attribute the occurrence of envy and strife?

14. Read Titus 3:8-9.

In 3:9, how does Paul summarize the spreading of strife? What are other worthless behaviors?

15. Read Proverbs 17:14, 18:18, 20:3, and 22:10.

What does the author of Proverbs suggest as motivations for abandoning strife? Do you think he is convincing?

DAY TWO

Other words that are associated with strife are “wicked,” “evil,” “turmoil,” “winking,” “mocking,” and “contention.”

1. Read Proverbs 2:11-15, 4:14-16, and 17:13.

Proverbs associates strife with wicked and evil men. In this context, what are the actions of this evil person?

2. Read Proverbs 14:16 and 21:10.

What other words characterize the wicked person? How does this person treat his neighbor?

3. Read Proverbs 18:3. How do others view the wicked man?

4. Can you think of a person in your life who fits the description of a “wicked person”? What is it like to be around them?

5. Read Proverbs 15:16. What is your reaction to this verse?

6. Read Proverbs 10:18, 15:17, and 26:26.

What things are associated with hatred?

7. Read Proverbs 14:9.

What attitude is expressed by the fool? How does he view sin?

8. Read Proverbs 10:10 and 16:30.

What do you think it means to “wink the eye?” How else is this person characterized? What does his behavior cause?

9. Read Proverbs 3:29-30, 11:9, 11:12, 18:19, and 25:17.

The following verses address our relationship with our neighbor/brother. How are we supposed to treat our neighbor/brother?

10. What might our relationship look like if we act offensively?

11. Read Proverbs 17:9. What is the result of the person who is careless with his words?

12. Read Proverbs 18:1. What is the result of the person who quarrels against wisdom?

13. Read Proverbs 11:3. What is the result of walking on the wrong path?

14. Read Proverbs 11:29 and 17:1. What is the result of strife in our own home?

15. What is your reaction to these verses? Do you see behaviors that you might sometimes exhibit in your relationships?

DAY THREE

The book of Proverbs consistently reminds us to pay attention to the words that we use. In the context of the topic “enemies and strife” our words are very powerful. They can start rumors, they can hurt reputations, they can spread lies, and they can destroy relationships. The following proverbs focus on the words that we use.

Read Proverbs 12:6, 12:13-15, 13:2-3, 16:27, 18:8, 20:19, and 26:20-21.

1. According to these proverbs, how are the words of the wicked person described?

2. What are the actions of the wicked person?

3. What other adjectives are used to describe the wicked person?

4. In Day Two we looked at characteristics of the wicked person. This person was very evil, violent, and bent on destruction. How do these verses differ? Is it a little easier to see yourself in these proverbs?

5. Read Proverbs 14:23. What else should accompany our words?

6. Read Proverbs 25:8-10. How should we go about addressing a difficult situation?

7. Read Proverbs 18:2 and 18:6. How does the fool use his words?

8. Read Proverbs 12:17. What type of words should come from our mouth?

9. Is it difficult for you to control your words? Do you find yourself falling into some of these negative ways of speaking? If so, what can you do to speak words that are edifying and beneficial to those with whom you may not get along?

DAY FOUR: WHO ARE OUR ENEMIES

There are three different words used for enemy in the Old Testament, two of which appear in Proverbs. The first is *ayab* and it used to describe enmity or hatred. It is associated with hostility, which brings forth angry, harmful acts. The second word is *sane* which is derived from the word “to hate”. This word emphasizes the emotional attitude that underlies the idea of being an enemy. The Israelites would have had a much different perspective of an “enemy” than we have in our modern American culture. They experienced warfare. They were captured, subdued, and forced to be slaves by numerous cultures. They understood what it meant to have enemies and they experienced the real threat of being attacked by their enemies. When David refers to his enemies in the Psalms, he primarily has this thought in mind. Although David’s writings share the cultural background of Proverbs, the idea of “enemies” is addressed differently. Proverbs is not concerned as much with national threats to our well being as it is with interpersonal threats in the smaller context of our family and neighborhood.

1. Read 1 Samuel 18:5-9.

King Saul was the first king of Israel. The people of Israel asked God for a king because they wanted to be like other nations. Although this was not God's desire for Israel, He relented and gave them what they asked for in King Saul. Saul did not rule well, and it was made known to him that David was going to be his successor. This passage in 1 Samuel recounts the beginning of the story.

What is the root of King Saul's dislike of David?

2. Read 1 Samuel 18:19-30.

How did Saul treat David? Did his plan work? How did Saul view David? How did David behave?

3. Read 1 Samuel 24:4-7.

At this point in the story, Saul was seeking to kill David and David was in hiding. While David was hiding in a cave, Saul entered it unaware of David's presence. Saul was vulnerable and David had the opportunity to sneak up on him and kill him, yet he chose not to do so.

What do David's men encourage David to do? What does David do? Why is David bothered by his action?

4. Read 1 Samuel 24:18-22.

In this passage, David approaches Saul and tells him what he has done. Saul tells David that he is back in his favor and it appears that he is genuinely touched by the fact that David spared his life. This passage records Saul's response, but we find out later in the book that Saul's favor is short-lived.

How does Saul respond to David? Why do you think this interaction with David was not enough to secure Saul's relationship with David?

5. Read Psalm 42:8-11, 43:1-5, and 143:1-12.

How does David describe the oppression of his enemy? What is his emotional state?

6. How does David deal with the physical and emotional distress that he experiences at the hand of his enemies?

7. Is this something you could do in your own life when you are confronted by people who wish to harm you?

8. Read Matthew 5:43-48.

What does Jesus ask his followers to do?

9. In light of the later developments in Jesus' life, was He laying down an expectation that He was not willing to meet Himself?

10. How hard would it be for you to love and pray for your enemies? Does it help to know that Jesus faced real enemies in His life and that He is there with you in your life?

11. Read Proverbs 16:7, 24:17, and 25:21.

According to Proverbs, how are we supposed to treat our enemies? Is this in line with what Jesus taught? Why do you think the term “and hate your enemies” was added to the command to love one’s neighbor?

DAY FIVE: The Opposite Of Strife And Contention

Up to this point, Lesson Nine has focused on the negative aspect of strife and enemies. Now we will look at the opposite of strife and contention. How do we overcome our anger toward one who has harmed us, how do we go forward and love those who are so difficult to love?

We looked at David’s relationship with Saul and discovered that Saul considered David to be his enemy until his death. However, Saul’s son Jonathan had a completely different relationship with David, and he remained loyal to David even when he knew it would displease his father.

1. Read 1 Samuel 18:1-3.

How is Jonathan’s relationship with David characterized?

2. How many friends do you have in your own life like this? Are you this kind of friend to others?

3. Read Proverbs 20:6, 20:28, and 21:21.

How important is loyalty to a relationship?

4. Read Hosea 6:6.

What does God desire? Why do you think God prizes loyalty over sacrifice?

5. Read Proverbs 17:17 and 18:24.

How do these verses describe friendship?

Lawrence O. Richards writes, "When we respond to our enemies with love, we become partners in God's radical solution to hostility and hatred. Our love communicates his, and we become agents of reconciliation, introducing our enemies to the transforming power of God."

6. Read Proverbs 3:3, 16:6, 16:32, 17:27-28.

What aspects of our character will help keep us from engaging in contentious behavior?

Although we face real enemies in our lives, it is helpful to keep in mind that we were once enemies of God. Until we placed our faith and trust in the Son, Jesus Christ, we were at enmity with God.

7. Read Philippians 3:17-21.

How does Paul describe enemies of the cross of Christ?

8. How does Paul contrast this description in 3:20?

9. Read Romans 5:8-11.

At what point in time did Christ die for us? This passage uses two words to describe our spiritual state; what are they?

10. What did God the Father and God the Son do for us?

11. How many times does Paul mention the word “reconcile”? Why do you think this word is so important to him?

12. Read 2 Corinthians 5:18-19.

Paul says that we have been given the ministry of reconciliation? What does that look like in your own life?

13. Read 1 Peter 5:8. Who is our real enemy?


14. Read 1 Corinthians 15:25-27. What is our last enemy? What will ultimately happen?

15. Read Romans 16:20. What is our enemy’s ultimate demise?


16. Does this give you confidence to know that the Savior of the world has the power to conquer Satan and to abolish death?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Hebrew words for enemy¹:

 *ayab* means “to be an enemy,” and is derived from the word for “enmity, hatred.” These words imply active hostility that issues in angry, harmful acts. This word is most commonly used throughout the Old Testament.

sarar means “to show hostility toward,” and *sar* indicates an adversary or enemy. This word group tends to emphasize hostile actions.

 *sane* emphasizes an emotional attitude and indicates strong antagonism and opposition.

“All of these words are used in the OT to speak of relationships between individuals and the hostility of the unbelieving to God. But they are primarily used in the OT to describe relations between Israel and other peoples.”

The word translated “enemy” in the New Testament is *echthros*. It is translated “hostility” and “hatred.” This word describes that extreme negative attitude that is the opposite of love and friendship. The New Testament views this attitude as the source from which hostile acts flow. It is the inner source rather than the acts themselves that are focused on.

The Bible locates the origin of hostility in sin. Human beings have been twisted and our original form distorted. We were created to love God and others, but sin’s warping power has distorted this natural order of interpersonal relationships. Sin has also created hostility to God. We have become rebels in thought and action. “We were God’s enemies,” Paul affirms (Rom. 5:10), and he develops this thought in other passages. “The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so” (Rom. 8:7). Hostility spilled over into every human relationship (Eph. 2:14-16), for this was the fate of sinful humanity, as Paul wrote to the Colossians, “You were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior” (Col. 1:21). Selfishness displaced love, leading to quarrels, to tensions, and to wars (James 4:1-3).

So the Bible teaches that hostility toward others, and the resultant interpersonal and international tragedies, have their origin in sin. Sin has distorted humanity and created hostility toward God and others.

During this age in which grace rules, anyone can respond to the offer of salvation in Jesus. Anyone can experience an inner transformation that frees his or her heart from

Lesson Nine, For Further Study

¹ This section is taken from the “Expository Dictionary of Bible Words,” by Richard O. Lawrence.

hostility and replaces hostility with love. *Echthros* is an expression of man's sinful nature (Gal. 5:19-21). But God's Spirit produces an overcoming love, patience, and kindness (Gal. 5:22).

God's approach to the transformation of enemies into friends is to be copied by Jesus' followers. In Christ's days on earth the popular understanding of "love your neighbor" included the corollary "hate your enemy" (Mt. 5:43). Jesus corrected this notion, which was never taught in the Old Testament (Old Testament believers were, in fact, advised not to be glad when their enemies suffered misfortunes). Jesus taught, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous (Mt. 5:44-45).

God does not allow the antagonism of a hostile humanity to turn him from his chosen course of love. If you and I are to bear the family resemblance as children of God, we must model our interpersonal relationship on the example his actions provide. We must not respond to hostility with hostility, but instead we must respond with love.

SCRIPTURE FOR LESSON NINE

DAY ONE

Strife

Proverbs 6:12-14 A worthless person, a wicked man, Is the one who walks with a perverse mouth, ¹³ Who winks with his eyes, who signals with his feet, Who points with his fingers; ¹⁴ Who *with* perversity in his heart continually devises evil, Who spreads strife.

Proverbs 10:12 Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all transgressions.

Proverbs 13:10 ¹⁰ Through insolence comes nothing but strife, But wisdom is with those who receive counsel.

Proverbs 15:18 ¹⁸ A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, But the slow to anger calms a dispute.

Proverbs 16:28 ²⁸ A perverse man spreads strife, And a slanderer separates intimate friends.

Proverbs 17:19 ¹⁹ He who loves transgression loves strife; He who raises his door seeks destruction.

Proverbs 28:25 ²⁵ An arrogant man stirs up strife, But he who trusts in the LORD will prosper.

Proverbs 29:22 ²² An angry man stirs up strife, And a hot-tempered man abounds in transgression.

Proverbs 30:33 ³³ For the churning of milk produces butter, And pressing the nose brings forth blood; So the churning of anger produces strife.

God's View Of Strife

Proverbs 6:16-19 ¹⁶ There are six things which the LORD hates, Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him: ¹⁷ Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, And hands that shed innocent blood, ¹⁸ A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that run rapidly to evil, ¹⁹ A false witness *who* utters lies, And one who spreads strife among brothers.

Proverbs 11:20 ²⁰ The perverse in heart are an abomination to the LORD, But the blameless in *their* walk are His delight.

Result Of Strife

Proverbs 26:17 ¹⁷ *Like* one who takes a dog by the ears Is he who passes by *and* meddles with strife not belonging to him.

Proverbs 26:21 ²¹ *Like* charcoal to hot embers and wood to fire, So is a contentious man to kindle strife.

1 Timothy 6:3-6 ³ If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, ⁴ he is conceited *and* understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, ⁵ and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. ⁶ But godliness *actually* is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment.

Titus 3:8-9 ⁸ This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God will be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men. ⁹ But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law, for they are unprofitable and worthless.

Abandoning Strife

Proverbs 17:14 ¹⁴ The beginning of strife is *like* letting out water, So abandon the quarrel before it breaks out.

Proverbs 18:18 ¹⁸ The *cast* lot puts an end to strife And decides between the mighty ones.

Proverbs 20:3 ³ Keeping away from strife is an honor for a man, But any fool will quarrel.

Proverbs 22:10 ¹⁰ Drive out the scoffer, and contention will go out, Even strife and dishonor will cease.

DAY TWO

The Path And Way Of The Wicked

Proverbs 2:11-15 ¹¹ Discretion will guard you, Understanding will watch over you, ¹² To deliver you from the way of evil, From the man who speaks perverse things; ¹³ From those who leave the paths of uprightness To walk in the ways of darkness; ¹⁴ Who delight in doing evil And rejoice in the perversity of evil; ¹⁵ Whose paths are crooked, And who are devious in their ways;

Proverbs 4:14-16 Do not enter the path of the wicked And do not proceed in the way of evil men. ¹⁵ Avoid it, do not pass by it; Turn away from it and pass on. ¹⁶ For they cannot sleep unless they do evil; And they are robbed of sleep unless they make *someone* stumble.

Proverbs 17:13 ¹³ He who returns evil for good, Evil will not depart from his house.

Proverbs 14:16 ¹⁶ A wise man is cautious and turns away from evil, But a fool is arrogant and careless.

Proverbs 21:10 ¹⁰ The soul of the wicked desires evil; His neighbor finds no favor in his eyes.

Proverbs 18:3 ³ When a wicked man comes, contempt also comes, And with dishonor comes scorn.

Turmoil

Proverbs 15:16 ¹⁶ Better is a little with the fear of the LORD Than great treasure and turmoil with it.

Hatred

Proverbs 10:18 ¹⁸ He who conceals hatred *has* lying lips, And he who spreads slander is a fool.

Proverbs 15:17 ¹⁷ Better is a dish of vegetables where love is Than a fattened ox served with hatred.

Proverbs 26:26 ²⁶ *Though his* hatred covers itself with guile, His wickedness will be revealed before the assembly.

Mocking

Proverbs 14:9 ⁹ Fools mock at sin, But among the upright there is good will.

Winking The Eye/Babbling Fool

Proverbs 10:10 ¹⁰ He who winks the eye causes trouble, And a babbling fool will be ruined.

Proverbs 16:30 ³⁰ He who winks his eyes *does so* to devise perverse things; He who compresses his lips brings evil to pass.

Neighbor/Brother

Proverbs 3:29-30 Do not devise harm against your neighbor, While he lives securely beside you. ³⁰ Do not contend with a man without cause, If he has done you no harm.

Proverbs 11:9 With *his* mouth the godless man destroys his neighbor, But through knowledge the righteous will be delivered.

Proverbs 11:12 He who despises his neighbor lacks sense, But a man of understanding keeps silent.

Proverbs 18:19 ¹⁹ A brother offended *is harder to be won* than a strong city, And contentions are like the bars of a citadel.

Proverbs 25:17 ¹⁷ Let your foot rarely be in your neighbor's house, Or he will become weary of you and hate you.

Proverbs 17:9 ⁹ He who conceals a transgression seeks love, But he who repeats a matter separates intimate friends.

Proverbs 18:1 He who separates himself seeks *his own* desire, He quarrels against all sound wisdom.

Proverbs 11:3 ³ The integrity of the upright will guide them, But the crookedness of the treacherous will destroy them.

Proverbs 11:29 He who troubles his own house will inherit wind, And the foolish will be servant to the wisehearted.

Proverbs 17:1 Better is a dry morsel and quietness with it Than a house full of feasting with strife.

DAY THREE

Words Of The Wicked

Proverbs 12:6 ⁶ The words of the wicked lie in wait for blood, But the mouth of the upright will deliver them.

Proverbs 12:13-15 ¹³ An evil man is ensnared by the transgression of his lips, But the righteous will escape from trouble. ¹⁴ A man will be satisfied with good by the fruit of his words, And the deeds of a man's hands will return to him. ¹⁵ The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But a wise man is he who listens to counsel.

Proverbs 13:2-3 ² From the fruit of a man's mouth he enjoys good, But the desire of the treacherous is violence. ³ The one who guards his mouth preserves his life; The one who opens wide his lips comes to ruin.

Proverbs 16:27 ⁷ A worthless man digs up evil, While his words are like scorching fire.

Proverbs 18:8 ⁸ The words of a whisperer are like dainty morsels, And they go down into the innermost parts of the body.

Proverbs 20:19 ¹⁹ He who goes about as a slanderer reveals secrets, Therefore do not associate with a gossip.

Proverbs 26:20-21 ²⁰ For lack of wood the fire goes out, And where there is no whisperer, contention quiets down. ²¹ Like charcoal to hot embers and wood to fire, So is a contentious man to kindle strife.

Proverbs 14:23 ²³ In all labor there is profit, But mere talk *leads* only to poverty.

Proverbs 25:8-10 ⁸ Do not go out hastily to argue *your case*; Otherwise, what will you do in the end, When your neighbor humiliates you? ⁹ Argue your case with your neighbor, And do not reveal the secret of another, ¹⁰ Or he who hears *it* will reproach you, And the evil report about you will not pass away.

Proverbs 18:2 ² A fool does not delight in understanding, But only in revealing his own mind.

Proverbs 18:6 ⁶ A fool's lips bring strife, And his mouth calls for blows.

Proverbs 12:17 ¹⁷ He who speaks truth tells what is right, But a false witness, deceit.

DAY FOUR

1 Samuel 18:5-9 ⁵ So David went out wherever Saul sent him, *and* prospered; and Saul set him over the men of war. And it was pleasing in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants. ⁶ It happened as they were coming, when David returned from killing the Philistine, that the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy and with musical instruments. ⁷ The women sang as they played, and said, "Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands." ⁸ Then Saul became very angry, for this saying displeased him; and he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, but to me they have ascribed thousands. Now what more can he have but the kingdom?" ⁹ Saul looked at David with suspicion from that day on.

1 Samuel 18:19 - 30 ¹⁹ So it came about at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, that she was given to Adriel the Meholathite for a wife. ²⁰ Now Michal, Saul's daughter, loved David. When they told Saul, the thing was agreeable to him. ²¹ Saul thought, "I will give her to him that she may become a snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him." Therefore Saul said to David, "For a second time you may be my son-in-law today." ²² Then Saul commanded his servants, "Speak to David secretly, saying, 'Behold, the king delights in you, and all his servants love you; now therefore, become the king's son-in-law.'" ²³ So Saul's servants spoke these words to David. But David said, "Is it trivial in your sight to become the king's son-in-law, since I am a poor man and lightly esteemed?" ²⁴ The servants of Saul reported to him according to these words *which* David spoke. ²⁵ Saul then said, "Thus you shall say to David, 'The king does not desire any dowry except a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to take vengeance on the king's enemies.'" Now Saul planned to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines. ²⁶ When his servants

told David these words, it pleased David to become the king's son-in-law. Before the days had expired ²⁷ David rose up and went, he and his men, and struck down two hundred men among the Philistines. Then David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full number to the king, that he might become the king's son-in-law. So Saul gave him Michal his daughter for a wife. ²⁸ When Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David, and *that* Michal, Saul's daughter, loved him, ²⁹ then Saul was even more afraid of David. Thus Saul was David's enemy continually. ³⁰ Then the commanders of the Philistines went out *to battle*, and it happened as often as they went out, that David behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul. So his name was highly esteemed.

1 Samuel 24:4-7 ⁴ The men of David said to him, "Behold, *this is* the day of which the LORD said to you, 'Behold; I am about to give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it seems good to you.'" Then David arose and cut off the edge of Saul's robe secretly. ⁵ It came about afterward that David's conscience bothered him because he had cut off the edge of Saul's *robe*. ⁶ So he said to his men, "Far be it from me because of the LORD that I should do this thing to my lord, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, since he is the LORD'S anointed." ⁷ David persuaded his men with *these* words and did not allow them to rise up against Saul. And Saul arose, left the cave, and went on *his* way.

1 Samuel 24:18-22 ¹⁸ "You have declared today that you have done good to me, that the LORD delivered me into your hand and *yet* you did not kill me. ¹⁹ "For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him go away safely? May the LORD therefore reward you with good in return for what you have done to me this day. ²⁰ "Now, behold, I know that you will surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hand. ²¹ "So now swear to me by the LORD that you will not cut off my descendants after me and that you will not destroy my name from my father's household." ²² David swore to Saul. And Saul went to his home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

Psalm 42:8-11 ⁸ The LORD will command His lovingkindness in the daytime; And His song will be with me in the night, A prayer to the God of my life. ⁹ I will say to God my rock, "Why have You forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?" ¹⁰ As a shattering of my bones, my adversaries revile me, While they say to me all day long, "Where is your God?" ¹¹ Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him, The help of my countenance and my God.

Psalm 43:1-5 Vindicate me, O God, and plead my case against an ungodly nation; O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man! ² For You are the God of my strength; why have You rejected me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? ³ O send out Your light and Your truth, let them lead me; Let them bring me to Your holy hill And to Your dwelling places. ⁴ Then I will go to the altar of God, To God my exceeding joy; And upon the lyre I shall praise You, O God, my God. ⁵ Why are you

in despair, O my soul? And why are you disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him, The help of my countenance and my God.

Psalm 143:1-12 A Psalm of David. Hear my prayer, O LORD, Give ear to my supplications! Answer me in Your faithfulness, in Your righteousness! ² And do not enter into judgment with Your servant, For in Your sight no man living is righteous. ³ For the enemy has persecuted my soul; He has crushed my life to the ground; He has made me dwell in dark places, like those who have long been dead. ⁴ Therefore my spirit is overwhelmed within me; My heart is appalled within me. ⁵ I remember the days of old; I meditate on all Your doings; I muse on the work of Your hands. ⁶ I stretch out my hands to You; My soul *longs* for You, as a parched land. Selah. ⁷ Answer me quickly, O LORD, my spirit fails; Do not hide Your face from me, Or I will become like those who go down to the pit. ⁸ Let me hear Your lovingkindness in the morning; For I trust in You; Teach me the way in which I should walk; For to You I lift up my soul. ⁹ Deliver me, O LORD, from my enemies; I take refuge in You. ¹⁰ Teach me to do Your will, For You are my God; Let Your good Spirit lead me on level ground. ¹¹ For the sake of Your name, O LORD, revive me. In Your righteousness bring my soul out of trouble. ¹² And in Your lovingkindness, cut off my enemies And destroy all those who afflict my soul, For I am Your servant.

Matthew 5:43-48 ⁴³ "You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR and hate your enemy.' ⁴⁴ "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ 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. ⁴⁶ "For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷ "If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing *than others*? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? ⁴⁸ "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Proverbs 16:7 ⁷ When a man's ways are pleasing to the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.

Proverbs 24:17 ¹⁷ Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, And do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles;

Proverbs 25:21 ²¹ If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink;

DAY FIVE

1 Samuel 18:1-3 Now it came about when he had finished speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as himself. ² Saul took him that day and did not let him return to his father's house. ³ Then Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself.

Proverbs 20:6 ⁶ Many a man proclaims his own loyalty, But who can find a trustworthy man?

Proverbs 20:28 ²⁸ Loyalty and truth preserve the king, And he upholds his throne by righteousness.

Proverbs 21:21 ²¹ He who pursues righteousness and loyalty Finds life, righteousness and honor.

Hosea 6:6 ⁶ For I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice, And in the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.

Proverbs 17:17 ¹⁷ A friend loves at all times, And a brother is born for adversity.

Proverbs 18:24 ²⁴ A man of *too many* friends *comes* to ruin, But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

Proverbs 3:3 ³ Do not let kindness and truth leave you; Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart.

Proverbs 16:6 ⁶ By lovingkindness and truth iniquity is atoned for, And by the fear of the LORD one keeps away from evil.

Proverbs 16:32 ³² He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city.

Proverbs 17:27-28 ⁷ He who restrains his words has knowledge, And he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding. ²⁸ Even a fool, when he keeps silent, is considered wise; When he closes his lips, he is *considered* prudent.

Philippians 3:17-21 ¹⁷ Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. ¹⁸ For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* enemies of the cross of Christ, ¹⁹ whose end is destruction, whose god is *their* appetite, and *whose* glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things. ²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; ²¹ who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

Romans 5:8-11 ⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. ¹¹ And not only this, but we also exult in

God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:18-19 ¹⁸ Now all *these* things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹ namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

1 Peter 5:8 ⁸ Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

1 Corinthians 15:25-27 ²⁵ For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. ²⁶ The last enemy that will be abolished is death. ²⁷ For HE HAS PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET. But when He says, "All things are put in subjection," it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him.

Romans 16:20 ²⁰ The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.