



Type: Book Chapter

Love Your Enemies

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Source: *Gospel Doctrine: Selections from the Sermons and Writings of Joseph F. Smith*

Published: Salt Lake City; The Deseret News, 1919

Pages: 421-426

Abstract: We Are Not Discouraged—I Forgive All Men—We Leave Our Enemies in God's Hands—Leave Results in God's Hands—Our Debt to Our Enemies—A Prayer for Our Enemies—The Golden Rule—Why the World Does Not Love Us—Love One Another—Keep Aloof from the Wicked—The Enemies to Fear

CHAPTER XVIII

Love Your Enemies.

WE ARE NOT DISCOURAGED. We are not disheartened, we are not discouraged, we are not faint-hearted. We believe in the Lord and we know that he is mighty to save, that he has guided the destinies of this people from the first moment until the present, and that it is not in consequence of the wisdom of men that we have escaped the plots, schemes and machinations of our enemies, and that we have been permitted to live and grow in the land, to become what we are, but it is through the wisdom, mercy and blessing of Him who rules the destinies not only of men but of nations. We owe all to God; we extend our thankfulness and gratitude to him for the manifestations of his love and care and protection.—*Oct. C. R.*, 1906, p. 2.

I FORGIVE ALL MEN. I feel in my heart to forgive all men in the broad sense that God requires of me to forgive all men, and I desire to love my neighbor as myself; and to this extent I bear no malice toward any of the children of my Father. But there are enemies to the work of the Lord, as there were enemies to the Son of God. There are those who speak only evil of the Latter-day Saints. There are those—and they abound largely in our midst—who will shut their eyes to every virtue and to every good thing connected with this latter-day work, and will pour out floods of falsehood and misrepresentation against the people of God. I forgive them for this. I leave them in the hands of the just Judge. Let him deal with them as seemeth him good, but they are not and cannot become my bosom companions. I cannot condescend to that. While I would not harm a hair of their head, while I would not throw a straw in their path, to hinder

them from turning from the error of their way to the light of truth; I would as soon think of taking a centipede or a scorpion, or any poisonous reptile, and putting it into my bosom, as I would think of becoming a companion or an associate of such men.

These are my sentiments, and I believe that they are correct. If you can throw yourself in the way of the sinner to stop him in his downward course, and become an instrument in the hand of the Lord of turning him from the way of vice, iniquity, or crime, into the way of righteousness and uprightness, you are justified, and that is demanded of you. You should do this. If you can save a sinner from his wickedness, turn the wicked from the course of death that he is pursuing, to the way of life and salvation, you will save a soul from death, and you will have been an instrument in the hand of the Lord of turning the sinner unto righteousness, for which you will receive your reward. Some of our good Latter-day Saints have become so exceedingly good(?) that they cannot tell the difference between a Saint of God, an honest man, and a son of Beelzebub, who has yielded himself absolutely to sin and wickedness. And they call that liberality, broadness of mind, exceeding love. I do not want to become so blinded with love for my enemies that I cannot discern between light and darkness, between truth and error, between good and evil, but I hope to live so that I shall have sufficient light in me to discern between error and truth, and to cast my lot on the side of truth and not on the side of error and darkness. The Lord bless the Latter-day Saints. If I am too narrow with reference to these matters, I hope that the wisdom of my brethren and the Spirit of Light from the Lord may broaden the soul.—*Oct. C. R.*, 1907, pp. 5, 6.

WE LEAVE OUR ENEMIES IN GOD'S HANDS. We thank God for his mercies and blessings; and I do not know but

what we owe in some small degree gratitude to those who have bitterly opposed the work of the Lord; for in all their opposings and bitter strife against our people, the Lord has developed his power and wisdom, and has brought his people more fully into the knowledge and favor of the intelligent people of the earth. Through the very means used by those who have opposed the work of God, he has brought out good for Zion. Yet it is written, and I believe it is true, that although it must needs be that offenses come, woe unto them by whom they come; but they are in the hands of the Lord as we are. We bring no railing accusation against them. We are willing to leave them in the hands of the Almighty to deal with them as seemeth him good. Our business is to work righteousness in the earth, to seek for the development of a knowledge of God's will and of God's ways, and of his great and glorious truths which he has revealed through the instrumentality of Joseph the Prophet, not only for the salvation of the living but for the redemption and salvation of the dead.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1908, p. 2.

LEAVE RESULTS IN GOD'S HANDS. God will deal with them in his own time and in his own way, and we only need to do our duty, keep the faith ourselves, to work righteousness in the world ourselves, and leave the results in the hands of him who overruleth all things for the good of those who love him and keep his commandments.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1905, p. 6.

OUR DEBT TO OUR ENEMIES. I was going to say that we did not owe anything to our enemies; that was the first thought that sprang into my mind, but I will hold that back. I think we owe something to our enemies, too, for the advancement of the cause of Zion, for up to date everything that has been done to thwart the purposes of God and to frustrate his designs has been overruled for the good of Zion and for the spread of truth. And that will continue

to be the case until the end, for they are fighting God's work, and not mine nor that of any other man.—*Oct. C. R.*, 1906, p. 2.

A PRAYER FOR OUR ENEMIES. Let the Lord God have mercy upon those who seek to hurt the cause of Zion. O God, pity the misguided, the erring, the foolish, the unwise. Put thy Spirit in their hearts, turn them from the error of their ways and from their follies, and bring them back into the way of righteousness and into thy favor. I ask mercy for my enemies—those who lie about me and slander me, and who speak all manner of evil against me falsely. In return, I beseech God my heavenly Father to have mercy upon them; for those who do it, not knowing what they are doing, are only misguided, and those who are doing it with their eyes open certainly need, most of all, the mercy, compassion and pity of God. May God pity them. May he have mercy upon them. I would not harm a hair of their heads, for all I am worth in the world. I would not throw a block in their way to prosperity. No; and I beseech my brethren that they keep hands off the enemies of our people and those who are paving their own road to destruction and will not repent, who are sinning with their eyes open, who know that they are transgressing the laws of God and villifying and lying against the servants of the Lord. Have mercy upon them. Do not touch them; for that is just what they would like. Let them alone. Let them go. Give them the liberty of speech they want. Let them tell their own story, and write their own doom. We can afford it. They do not hurt us, and if it affords them any amusement, I am sure they are welcome to it.—*Oct. C. R.*, 1905, p. 95.

THE GOLDEN RULE. We need mercy; then let us be merciful. We need charity; let us be charitable. We need forgiveness: let us forgive. Let us do unto others what we would that they should do unto us. Let us welcome the new

year and dedicate to it our best efforts, our loyal service, our love and fellowship, and our supplication for the welfare and happiness of all mankind.—*Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 46, January, 1911, p. 16.

WHY THE WORLD DOES NOT LOVE US. “If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you” (John 15:19). The followers of Jesus were his chosen people, and because they were chosen by him, the world hated them. The Jews were the chosen people of God, and because they were his chosen people the world hated them. Nowhere in the world today is the word Jew wholly disassociated with the feeling of contempt. The feelings may differ greatly in degree, but they are all of one kind. The word “Mormon,” or Latter-day Saint, is everywhere likewise associated with feelings of contempt. Contempt is the heritage of a chosen people. Ought we therefore to court the contempt of the world? By no means. On the other hand, we should not be discouraged because it comes to us unsought. Some of our friends—mostly in the Church, some few out of it—would lift us out of the contempt of the world, and keep us out of it, if we would simply be governed by their counsels. The truth is, we are not strangers to hatred; and the contempt of the world has been our lot so much that we have no reason to be discouraged when it comes, even in violent forms. The danger lies not so much in our own peculiarity as in the disposition of many of our people to court popularity at all costs, as if it were something devoutly to be wished for. There is too often a timid submission before the indignation storms that occasionally sweep over the country.—*Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 39, August, 1904, p. 464.

LOVE ONE ANOTHER. Let us, brethren, love one another, and exercise patience and forbearance, avoiding judgment, except when called upon to render it, and then tem-

pering the law with a father's love. The Latter-day Saints must be promoters of both law and religion, as exemplified in the justice and mercy of God.—*Improvement Era*, Vol. 6, 1903, p. 550.

KEEP ALOOF FROM THE WICKED. We should keep ourselves aloof from the wicked; the dividing line should be distinctly drawn between God and Belial, between Christ and the world, between truth and error, and between right and wrong. We ought to cleave to the right, to the good, to the truth, and forsake the evil.—*Deseret Weekly News*, Vol. 31, 1882, p. 674.

THE ENEMIES TO FEAR. For my part I do not fear the influence of our enemies from without, as I fear that of those from within. An open and avowed enemy, whom we may see and meet in an open field, is far less to be feared than a lurking, deceitful, treacherous enemy hidden within us, such as are many of the weaknesses of our fallen human nature, which are too often allowed to go unchecked, beclouding our minds, leading away our affections from God and his truth, until they sap the very foundations of our faith and debase us beyond the possibility or hope of redemption, either in this world or that to come. These are the enemies that we all have to battle with, they are the greatest that we have to contend with in the world, and the most difficult to conquer. They are the fruits of ignorance, generally arising out of unrebuked sin and evil in our own hearts. The labor that is upon us is to subdue our passions, conquer our inward foes, and see that our hearts are right in the sight of the Lord, that there is nothing calculated to grieve his Spirit and lead us away from the path of duty.