

When DARKNESS FALLS

INVESTIGATING RELIGION'S HISTORY OF EVIL

Part 6: Dawn of a New Day

INTRODUCTION: The Headless Horror of History

Colossians 2:16-19; Ephesians 4:14-16

ASKING THE BETTER QUESTION: WHAT _____ JESUS DO?

HOW DID JESUS LOVE HIS ENEMIES?

1. Formed a new community: Where enemies learn to live in peace
**Matthew 10:2-4; Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:13-16;
Matthew 10:37-39; Mark 8:34-37; Luke 9:23-25**
2. Cast a new vision: See God at _____ in the enemy
Matthew 8:8-13; Luke 7:1-10; John 8:1-12
3. Unleashed a new more powerful weapon: _____ - _____ service
Matthew 5:38-45; Mark 10:41-45; Luke 6:27-31; John 18:36-37

THE JESUS WAY OF TAKING OUT YOUR ENEMY

1. The first enemy to wipe out is the enemy you have created in your _____
Ephesians 6:12

2. Engage in hand to _____ combat

Romans 12:17-21

3. Do a _____: Disarm them with love before they make their move

CONCLUSION - Dream With Me

Colossians 2:8; Hebrews 12:2

HOME CHURCH QUESTIONS...

WARMING UP...

1. Discuss this quote. "In all nations, you are not allowed to kill anyone in your own country. Yet, if you are at war with another country and you kill the right enemy, you get a medal. The only difference with Christians is that they are apart of a higher kingdom that includes every nation. Therefore, according to their king and his rule, they are not allowed to kill." (See John 18:36,37)
2. After briefly reviewing this week's message, share one thing that most challenged, encouraged, or perplexed you.

LOOK TO THE BOOK...

3. How would a Christ-follower committed to peace respond to a man that says, "I am too much of a man to sit back and do nothing if my family is in danger"? I'd be a coward if I didn't fight." Which do you think requires more courage, actively loving your enemies and standing for peace at all costs or arming yourself and using violence to protect yourself and your loved ones? Why? Read Matthew 26:50-52 and consider Jesus statement, "Those who draw the sword, die by the sword." Now discuss this statement, "Actively loving my enemies and living without a weapon is best way to keep my loved ones safe." Do you agree or disagree? Why?
4. Read Matthew 5:38-45 and Luke 6:27-31. a) In your group make a list of perceived or potential enemies. Try to identify those who could be enemies from within your local community or city, those that would be enemies to your country and those that are viewed as global or international enemies. b) Now, brainstorm ways that Christians could love these enemies in an effort to disarm them of their hate and win them over as friends and allies. c) What are the barriers that Christ-followers must overcome to put these ideas into action? d) If you have time, read the story Jesus told in Luke 10:30-35 for further insights to this discussion. What did it cost this Samaritan to love his enemy. (Remember Samaritans were social outcasts).
5. Read Romans 12:17-21 and Exodus 34:4-7. When faced with death and injustice the Christ-follower can take confidence in knowing God is the ultimate judge of humanity and will right all wrongs. a) After reviewing these passages, why do you think God asks Christ-followers to only demonstrate His character of love and compassion to all people and yet not attempt to judge and kill people they way He does. b) How does it make you feel to know that God is a God of both mercy and justice, of both life and death? c) How does this Biblical teaching fit in with popular notions of God today? d) Read Acts 5:1-11. What can we learn from this story in the New Testament?

SO WHAT?...

6. Take a few moments to quietly meditate on **I John 2:3-6**. Share with the group ways that you can actively begin to love someone who is either a perceived enemy or someone who you need to reconcile with. Pray for each other for the grace and strength to walk as Jesus walked.

Tim Day @ THE MEETING HOUSE - Sunday, October 31 / November 7, 2004

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