

Am I My Friend Or Foe?

I want to start this email with an anecdote, which hopefully will enable you all to understand what I am going to talk about in a few minutes time.

Saved By His Worse Enemy, and taken from the Bible School Journal

Author unknown

During the Revolutionary War there lived in Pennsylvania a pastor by the name of Peter Miller. Although Miller was greatly loved by everyone in the community, there was one man who lived near the church who hated him and had earned an unenviable reputation for his abuse of the minister. This man was not only a hater of the church, but it also turned out that he was a traitor to his country, and was convicted of treason and sentenced to death.

The trial was conducted in Philadelphia, and no sooner did Miller hear of it than he set out on foot to visit General Washington and interceded for the man's life. But Washington told him, "I'm sorry that I cannot grant your request for your friend."

"Friend!" Miller cried. "Why, that man is the worst enemy I have in the world!"

"What?" the general exclaimed in surprise. "Have you walked sixty miles to save the life of an enemy? That, in my judgment, puts the matter in a different light. I will grant him a pardon for your sake."

The pardon was made out and signed by General Washington, and Miller proceeded at once on foot to a place fifteen miles distant where the execution was scheduled to take place that afternoon. He arrived just as the man was being carried to the scaffold, and when he saw Miller hurrying toward the place, remarked, "There is old Peter Miller. He has walked all the way from Ephrata to have his revenge gratified today by seeing me hung". But scarcely had he spoken the words when Miller pushed his way through to the condemned man and handed him the pardon that saved his life.

About two thousand years ago, a man named Jesus was put to death on a Cross.

He was, to many people, regarded as a personal foe, a person who had to go.

Many gathered at the execution site – family groups – friends – single people out for the day. Even some of His closest friends were there.

BUT NOT ONE ATTEMPTED TO GET A PARDON FOR HIM.

A question I often ask myself is “If I had been there in those days, would I have walked many miles to get a pardon, and then further miles to deliver it?”

To answer the above question, I must admit that I answer myself with another question, “Am I My Friend Or Foe?”

Therefore, I was my own worst friend and my own biggest foe.

Let me give you an illustration where at times it can become a pastoral problem.

I do not like teaching in large churches with many people present. I prefer teaching in the home groups, where people open up – just like a flower coming into full bloom.

I am a teacher. I get an immense joy from watching people as I try and present Jesus as a real person, and then, that light in their life appears to come on, their eyes open up, a smile spread over their being, and they suddenly are able to release the radiance of the Lord in their lives.

I was never, especially in my younger days a naturally warm person. I was, and still am to a certain extent, a ‘loner’.

Yes, I do care about each and everyone of you. Yes, I do care about each and everyone at the end of the telephone line. Yes, I do care about Helen’s family and their ‘problems’, which, had they accepted Jesus when I was there, I know the problems would not seem so big now.

Now, at least from about a week ago, I have a great joy. Helen has shared the joy – her sister accepted the Lord.

Yes, I am still my own worst friend and my own biggest foe, all because mankind has not changed a lot.

Two thousand years ago they nailed His Plans for them to the Cross. Two thousand years later, I am having to learn that His Plans for Helen’s sister were for now, NOT THEN.

Peter Miller got to his friend as he was about to be hung. God’s Plans for Yahweh Jireh Ministries at His appointed time, BUT IT WILL NOT BE TOO LATE.

I have always been able to love quietly, but from what I remember I locked the emotions away when I was about six.

Arriving at school, the little girl who usually sat next to me at the desk was not there. She had been killed by a bomb that night.

Starting to cry, I remember being told to stop, as boys did not cry!

The only other time I remember when my emotions just about blew the lock away was with a small white casket – a baby just six days old, and I had to keep my emotions locked up.

Thus I remained my own worst friend and my own biggest foe.

To all of you here tonight, “I love you”, to those we are still seeking to help, “I love them”.

Why Half-Dead?

Dr. Park Tucker, former chaplain of the federal penitentiary in Atlanta, Georgia, told of walking down the street in a certain city, feeling low and depressed and worried about life in general. As he walked along, he lifted his eyes for a moment to the window of a funeral home across the street. He blinked his eyes a couple of times, wondering whether his eyes were deceiving him.

But sure enough, he saw in the window of that funeral home was this sign, in large, bold words: “Why walk around half-dead? We can bury you for \$69.50. PS We also give green stamps”.

Dr. Tucker said the humour of it was good medicine for his soul. Many people are walking around half-dead because worry has built a mountain of problems over which there is no path, and they have surrendered to fate.

Gospel Herald

Everybody, when we finish, GIVE SOMEONE A HUG, AND A BIG SMILE – WE'RE NOT HALF DEAD!