



Do you
know your
ENEMIES?

Sammy is a good friend of mine. We are both from the Middle East. He is intelligent, sincere and very strong. Once he told me, "You are always nice to people; you probably have no enemies."

I said, "No Sammy, you are wrong. I have many enemies, and they are very powerful."

Sammy was quite surprised. "I would never have suspected that. Tell me who they are and where they live. I will take care of them. I don't care how strong they are."

"Thank you, my good friend," I remarked, "but you cannot take care of these enemies because they live within me. Their names are pride, selfishness, evil thoughts, the desire for revenge, and many others. They are the worst enemies of man, because they live within him and lead to sin against God. And, of course, any sin against God is more serious than any illness or disaster."

Sammy grew silent, bowed his head and said in a low voice, "I am ashamed to admit I have done these things and worse." Then, sorrowfully, he prayed, "O God, I'm a sinner. Please have mercy on me and forgive me." I too bowed my head and asked God to show Sammy the way of salvation.

I looked at him and his eyes were wet with tears. "Sammy, you have just confessed to God that you are a sinner and asked him to forgive you. Do you know God's answer?"

He said he was not sure, so I read these words from God's Word: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

"Wonderful!" he exclaimed. "But why is He called 'faithful and just' and not 'merciful and kind?' "

"You have a keen mind," I answered, "and this is a very good question. Of course God is very merciful and kind in forgiving us, but He is also faithful and just. He is just, because Christ willingly died for us. He bore the punishment for every one who believes in Him and receives Him by faith. He is also faithful in forgiving, because He promised that whoever believes in Christ will never perish but will have eternal life."

Sammy was thrilled to hear these facts from the Word of God. I invited him to read the Bible regularly. I also quoted the following verses from the Bible and he promised to read them:

“God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).

“Most assuredly, I (Christ) say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment but has passed from death into life” (John 5:24).

“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1).

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

—*Rafique*

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