



# Gateway to Life Sermon Notes

*"And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified." (Acts 20:32)*

August 20, 2017

## CRIES FOR JUSTICE

### Introduction

Note → [Psalm 139:17–18 & vv 19-22](#)

We need a means have handling these verses ethically and helpfully.

[Psalm 109](#) (Pew Bible, Page , OT)

### Imprecatory Prayers

Dr. Walter Kaiser teaches us that these prayers are ***“an invocation of judgment, calamity or curse against one’s enemies who are simultaneously enemies of God.”***<sup>1</sup>

The problem:

- a) **One the one side** you have a words like David: *“Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD? And do I not loathe those who rise up against you? I hate them with complete hatred; I count them my enemies”*; and,
- b) **On the other side** you have the words of Jesus: like *““You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,”* (Matthew 5:43–44, ESV).

Wrong ways to solve the problem:

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_
- d) \_\_\_\_\_
- e) \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>1</sup> <https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/ajet/vols/23-1.pdf>

 [2 Timothy 3:16–17](#)

## Why Does It Matter?

- #1. . . . will affect your view of the \_\_\_\_\_.
- #2. . . . will affect your view of the \_\_\_\_\_.
- #3. . . . will affect your view of the \_\_\_\_\_.
- #4. . . . will affect your \_\_\_\_\_.

## The Interpretative Key

1. The New Testament doesn't correct the Old Testament; it clarifies it. The Old Testament clearly teaches love for one's enemies. (E.g., Lev 19:17f, 33-34. Prov 24:16); and
2. The New Testament is full with prayers for justice and judgment on God's enemies, including from the very mouth of our Savior. (E.g. Mat 23:13ff; 1Cor 16:22; Galatians; Rev 6:10, 19:1-6)

## **The Old and New Testaments hold in tension the requirement to love the enemies of God and hate the enemies of God -- simultaneously.**

*“The truth is that evil men should be the object simultaneously of our ‘love’ and of our ‘hatred’, as they are simultaneously the objects of God’s<sup>1</sup> . . . to ‘love’ them is ardently to desire that they will repent and believe, and so be saved. To ‘hate’ them is to desire with equal ardour that, if they stubbornly refuse to repent and believe, they will incur God’s judgment.” – Dr. John Stott<sup>2</sup> [Footnote 1 added]*

The answer is found in the character of God →

- a. God's motive is compassionate. [2 Peter 3:9](#)
- b. God will always change from judgment to mercy if someone repents. [Isaiah 55:7](#)
- c. God's methodology is \_\_\_\_\_ [Psalm 86:15](#)
- d. God's ultimate disposition is holiness. [Psalm 5:4](#)

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<sup>1</sup> “For you are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not dwell with you. The boastful shall not stand before your eyes; you hate all evildoers. You destroy those who speak lies; the Lord abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.” (Psalm 5:4–6, ESV)

<sup>2</sup> <https://truthwartoday.wordpress.com/2012/02/25/the-imprecatory-psalms-lectures/>

## How To Pray For Christ's Enemies.

Martin Luther: *"We should pray that our enemies be converted and become our friends, and if not, that their doing and designing be bound to fail and have no success and that their persons perish rather than the Gospel and the kingdom of Christ."*<sup>1</sup>

**Motive??** [Psalm 83:13-18](#)

The psalmist calls upon the severity of God so that they would seek Him. But if they don't that ultimately God will be glorified.

### Practical Application

- A. For God's Kingdom to come means that sin and sinners will be vanquished.
- B. Every time we read a prayer calling for justice we should be reminded that our God is holy and He cannot forgive sin. He must punish sin.
- C. When we read prayers of imprecation it should re-double our love, our praying and our witness to those who still hate the Lord.
- D. When we read such calls for judgment they should, as did David, call us to examine our own lives. Notice as we return to [Psalm 139:19-24](#)

Pastor Jim MacLellan

Box 298, Elk Point, Alberta T0A 1A0  
780 724-4194 or jim@elkpointbaptistchurch.com  
www.elkpointbaptistchurch.org



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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.the-highway.com/articleJune00.html>