Dear Open Door Family

It is no secret that there are awful things happening in many places of our world today. You cannot watch or listen to the news these days without hearing about violence and upheaval in some country of the world. Sometimes it is clear across the world many times zones away. But at other times it is much, much nearer to us. People are being mistreated, abused, tortured, and killed. There are many reasons; some do it in the name of religion, others for the sake of power or economic profit. The motivation may be different but the results are the same, people suffer. Even God's people suffer. Sunday night at Open Door Cara W. shared with us about her ministry in a very dangerous section of Mexico. It was amazing to hear how God is using the unrest and the violence to touch the hearts of people. For many the violence has made them realize they need divine help and so they start looking for God in ways that never would have happened during times of peace and prosperity. Of course, this is nothing new. When Paul wrote to the church in Rome he knew that many of them had suffered or would suffer for their faith, for being followers of Jesus Christ. Yet he states clearly what they are supposed to do in the face of hardship, suffering, and evil.

Romans 12:21 *(HCS) Do not be conquered by evil, but conquer evil with good.*

Romans 12:21 *(JBP) Don't allow yourself to be overpowered with evil. Take the offensive - overpower evil by good!*

Luke 6:27-28 *(HCS) "But I say to you who listen: Love your enemies, do what is good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.*

Susan Roland shared the following about these verses: "Sometimes we fool ourselves by thinking people will know we are Christians and will want to know more about Jesus just because we are nice. (And we're not even always nice!) But, there are a lot of nice people that don't know Christ. As Francis Chan puts it, 'There has to be more to our faith than friendliness, politeness, and even kindness.' *If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them...* Luke 6:32-36 The thing that really bewilders the world is when we love our enemies. 'True faith is loving a person after he has hurt you. True love makes you stand out.' Who are the people you avoid or who avoid you? Who are the people who have hurt you or your friends or your kids? Are you willing to love them today? They will know you are a Christian by your love!"

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, I admit that I do not always love those with whom I have disagreements and struggles. Please Lord, may I have Your heart for them. May I seek to honor You in the way that I pray for them and show Your Love for them. Lord, I cannot do this Alone, please help me!

Pastor Mark Kieft
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