

NEWS BRIEF



LOVE your enemies &
PRAY for those who
persecute you...” Matthew 5:44

As a part of the Great Commission found in Matthew 28, Christ commands His disciples (and each of us) to **go into all the world and make disciples, to baptize and to teach the disciples to obey everything He commanded.**

To **love your enemies** is one of those commands. And it is a tough one. The natural inclination is to hate your enemies. Pay back those who hurt you. Essentially hit back...an eye for an eye mentality. That's how I grew up but I even went a step further. Not an eye for an eye but rather two eyes for one eye. You hit me and I will hit you back two times as hard so that you will think twice before hitting me again.

Jesus, of course, set a different kind of standard. He gave His very life for sinners who pressed all around Him during His time in and around Jerusalem. His love and forgiveness extended far beyond time restraints and included you and me and others who will come after us. Forgiveness is not easy when you are deeply hurt. However it is important if we are to truly represent our Lord.



Take the Apostle Paul for example. On the road to Damascus Paul met Christ like a head on collision.

The incredible love of Christ smashed through the barriers of hate and Paul's head went spinning. He went on to become one of the great ambassadors for our Lord even writing 13 of the 27 books of the New Testament as the Holy Spirit directed him. Paul also suffered greatly as he traveled extensively throughout the known world declaring the Good News.

Fast forward to today and travel with me to a slum in Uganda. **Jimmy, a graduate of GSSM, had just lost his job, was recently married with a child on the way, lived in a slum himself, was very poor but offered his life in service to the Lord whatever that would mean.** Following much prayer Jimmy got up on a warm, sunny morning and walked down the road to another slum which was heavily populated with people living wall to wall in shacks. Rivulets of water clogged with sewage ran between the shacks giving off a less than pleasant order.

As Jimmy paused at one of the openings to this huge slum, he sensed that God was asking him to go into the slum and tell them about Jesus. As Jimmy considered this possibility he suddenly remembered that this particular slum was heavily populated by Muslims. Now Muslims and Christians not only don't like one another but for the most part consider themselves to be enemies. It could be a dangerous place for a Christian because of this hatred. Jimmy could have argued with the Lord because of this, but he didn't. Instead he prayed once again and asked God to protect him and guide him as he entered this potentially hostile environment. There were no welcome signs, no smiles, only looks that seemed to say "what do you want here?" "Go away."

As Jimmy entered the slum he saw five young boys playing with a worn out soccer ball. Jimmy then approached the 5 boys and asked them if they had a coach. "No", they replied. "Would you like to have one?" Jimmy asked. "Yes that would be great" the boys responded. Jimmy then stated he needed to get permission from the warden of the slum and then he would be back. The warden was pleased to have someone take interest in the lads. So many of the young people in the slums would often get in trouble stealing things and would be involved in all kinds of undesirable activities. Jimmy went back to these 5 boys and reported that all was well and he would be back the next morning to work with them. Well, the rest is history.

But here is the interesting part: Jimmy never preached at them. He never debated with any of the Muslims. He didn't even talk about Christ at first. He simply loved these people and helped them in whatever way he could. **He prayed for them.** Soon a crack opened here and there. **Before long Jimmy was able to share his faith.** Not a "in your face" way mind you...just a gentle, caring manner that caused people to want to hear more as Jimmy continued his loving, compassionate ways.



This whole community is changing as a result.



His feeding program, children's choir, dance and drama programs and his impressive sports activities and assortment of teams has caused the entire slum community to sit up and take notice as their children come home telling them all about Jesus and His incredible love and salvation. Isn't that great?

The name Jesus is no longer a curse word. It is a treasured name embraced by those who now belong to Him and want others to know about him too.

Love in action. The tough kind. And it is working. In fact, Jimmy has now added two more slums to his ministry. Hatred is on the run and is being chased out by the special love of Jesus Christ.

The apostle Paul writing to those in Rome had this to say: *"Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath for it is written, "It is mine to avenge, I will repay" says the Lord.*

On the contrary:

"If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this you will heap burning coals on his head. Do not be overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good"





All of this brings us back to the cross of Calvary...

where the Son of God gave His very life for each of us who would respond to His invitation to become part of His family.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

Thank you for your prayers and support for Jimmy and many other GSSM students like Jimmy who are willing to go into hostile areas to share the Good News. Their one weapon is love...a love that only Jesus can provide.

Happy Easter and thank you again for your much needed help in equipping more and more workers to go into the harvest fields of a world greatly in need of the Savior.

Blessings!

Russ Carr & Alyssa Carr Mahone

