

HATRED IN THE AIR

Children are very prone to blurt out that they hate someone when they do not get their way. But, they do not truly mean it and soon become friends again with the person at whom they lashed out. With adults, hatred is much more intense. Have you ever had anyone hate you to the extent that they not only wish you harm but work to make it happen? Most of us may have had such an experience. Certainly, Jesus did.

I write this at a time when the lead news story on television and in newspapers is the foiled terror plot to blow up no less than ten airplanes headed for cities in the United States. At least that number of individuals were, and continue to be, willing to die in order to inflict such harm upon us Americans. Why? Because they hate us.

Webster defines “hatred” as “prejudiced hostility.” “Hostility” is defined as “deep-seated ill will.” “Prejudice” is a condition of making a judgment based on an unwarranted opinion. In other words, all things considered, there is no logic to what hatred promotes. That appears to be the state of the human condition in which we live today.

Lest we think that we are entirely innocent, we need to remember that peace in the world begins with us, - so does hatred. Certainly, none of us can see ourselves taking the blame for individuals wanting to blow up planes over our cities. Nevertheless, we should take stock of our relationships with family and neighbors. How do we treat them, especially those who have gotten in our way in some fashion or another? The corporate world can give us some poignant case histories. But, then, so can other segments of our society, including the Church.

Jesus was reconciled to the fact that he lived among those who hated him. They hated him because of who He claimed to be and the good that He did. It should be the same with us, as his disciples. After all, He did warn that it would be no different with his disciples than it was with him.

I try very hard not to hate and I very much dislike being hated. Yet, if I strive to remain true to myself and my calling, I cannot avoid the latter. Neither can our nation. However, if we have strayed from the noble principles of our founding fathers and thus incurred the hatred, we need to be honest and make amends. On the other hand, hatred toward us can be a confirmation of our being authentic as champions of good. Somewhere in all this, there is the continual battle between good and evil.

The thought of planes filled with innocent people flying toward our cities where they will be blown up disturbs me greatly. The fact that there are individuals willing to die in order to make that happen saddens me even more. What is the meaning of all this?

In ages past, the Almighty allowed humankind to continue in its own follies in order to have it see the error of its ways. I have heard of parents overseeing a smoking session on the part of their child. The kid would get so sick that he or she never wanted to smoke again. Perhaps, we are living in a similar situation. It prompts me to wonder if the Lord has not left us up to our own follies once again.