

# God, as an Enemy

by Erlo Stegen

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*God is like an enemy to those who are proud and disobedient, but He desires to be in a relationship with those who are humble and obedient.*

**Duration:** 1:22:00

**Scripture:** Exodus 25:9, Proverbs 22:6, Isaiah 35:8, Matthew 6:33, 1 Corinthians 10:11

**Topics:** "Enemy Of God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the message shared by another preacher and highlights key points. He emphasizes the importance of teaching children the ways of the Lord and encourages preachers to have a burning passion for Christ. The speaker also mentions the vows of the Nazirite and the power of the word of God. He shares his own struggles and the opposition he has faced as a preacher. The sermon ends with a reference to the book of Lamentations and the destruction of Israel.

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## Transcript

Before I bring you the message I feel God has laid on my heart I would like to underline some points. Our brother spoke about and touched on in his message and I'd like to do that with red ink. So please bear with me.

If I just carry on where our brother stopped. He told us how his father had taught him as a young man. It was good to hear you speaking as a young man but I think he was a bit younger than what he is now.

That a man can have as much of Jesus as he wants. He opened us his heart and shared with us his longing for a double portion. It's good to hear young people speaking like that.

Before I carry on I would like to ask you preachers concerning your children. What you are teaching them. I know of one preacher who said I've got a TV in my home but not for myself.

I don't need it. It's just for my children. It's good if you preachers teach your children the way they should go.

May that way be the Lord's highway of holiness. Getting back to the point. You can have as much of Jesus as you want.

That's a curse in this time of ours that we are so full of other things that we haven't got a great appetite and a hunger and thirst for Christ. Sometimes children don't have an appetite and the foolish mother doesn't know why. And the reason is simply that the child drinks too much Coca-Cola in between his cakes and sweets.

Of course there'll be no appetite. How should you have a hunger for godly and divine things and the word of God. If you fill yourself with the newspapers, magazines and all evil things direct out of hell.

And as I our young brother spoke I thought of Moody. Dear Moody. When he heard that a person said the world has yet to see what God can do through one man who's fully surrendered to Christ.

And he showed us what God can do through a man who wasn't so well educated in the wisdom of this world. But what God could do through him. When he spoke about the unrestricted passion for Christ.

I hope that those are not just empty words to you. But words that are ringing within and pouring oil on the flame. On the passion for Christ.

When child stood that brilliant sportsman. Heard his farewell in England before he left. He felt that God wanted him at that time in the Belgian Congo.

He wasn't only a married man and a father of quite a few children. Like myself. But a sick man as well.

Going to the missionary's grave. And this decent dignified Christian came to him. And he said Mr. Stud is it true what I've heard.

That you a man in your position with a family that you are going to leave your wife and children behind. Going to the heart of Africa. He said Sir.

If it is true. That Jesus Christ left heaven and all his glory and came into this world for us. It's a small thing.

If I leave my family behind. And go and spend my life. Amongst those so called cannibals.

That's not only a passion for Christ. But an unrestricted passion for him. Dear fellow preachers.

Is that fire burning within you? And can you say with the words of that song. If I ever I loved you Lord. Tis now.

That's never been a time in my life. Where I more loved you. Than now.

In actual fact. There are so many points. That the whole my whole sermon would consist of that.

What we have heard. From our young brother. We preached about the vows of a Nazarite.

That doesn't appeal to anybody. In the modern Christendom. We want to be free.

Do whatever what we like. And everybody does what he likes. The oneness in Christ.

The brotherly love. The brotherly love. Seeking the same goal.

Being taught by the same spirit. Seems to be further away from us. Than Mars.

From this planet earth. We want freedom. The same as the political freedom.

Do what we like. We want to kill, we kill. If we want to save, we save.

If we want to kill, we kill. If we want to steal, we steal. Oh the old hymn.

The words of the old hymn. Make me a captive Lord. So that I shall be free.

Who of us wants to be a bond servant of Christ. Not only a servant. A bond slave of Christ.

And that's our freedom. That's our heaven. And if we bishops, preachers, evangelists, don't want that, what do we want? Maybe we're wasting our time with something that's not worthwhile.

May God grant us that we won't be in the sight of God, clowns in a circus, riding the monkeys. Thank you for the word we heard this morning. May God find more young men with that goal.

Which we find in Philippians three in the life of Paul. That was just a few words, few points to underline what our brother has told us. Shall we pray? Oh Lord, we ask you to once again to speak to us.

Thank you for what you have spoken already last night and this morning. And bless your servants for it. Amen.

Two, three, four days ago, I said, Lord, the minister's conference is drawing closer. And I'm expected to say a word as well. What should I say? For some time, I was like a woman who is in labor and childbirth.

I said, oh God, show me. What do you want me to say? And early in the morning, still nighttime, I stretched for my hand for the Bible. I usually have it with me on my bed or sometimes just on my right-hand side on the floor.

I said, oh, please God, tell me, what should I speak about? And I took this Bible and I opened it and I read, the Lord is like an enemy. An enemy. This word sparkled, was full of power.

I said, oh no God, you can't expect me to speak about that word. The Lord is like an enemy. I said, no Lord.

As it is, I'm a bad guy in this world amongst some preachers. The day when God ran the heavens and came down and poured out his spirit, I thought the whole Christian world would rejoice. But how wrong I was.

It took seven years before the first churches opened their doors. And some only with 13 years. And to this very day, there are believers that say, oh no, that's not a good man.

It's not an easy way. But I made a vow as well, many years ago, and I said, Lord, if these words can't speak, these lips, the truths, let them turn to dust. And I said, God, why is there book lamentation in the Bible? Wouldn't we be better off without it? Then I again took the Bible.

The Lord is like an enemy. He has swallowed up Israel. He has swallowed up all her palaces and destroyed her strongholds.

He has multiplied mourning and lamentation for the daughter of Judah. I said, God in heaven, do you really expect me that I should speak to 2000 preachers? About God being an enemy to Israel and Judah. I said, God, I can't do that.

I'm sorry, I can't. I've got enough foes and enemies to bury some visitors. And by the way, I haven't even asked Pastor Wilkerson what he's going to speak about and his son.

And in the middle, I've got to say something. And then I come with this. This is supposed to be a feast for you.

And then I come and upset the whole thing. It would be much easier to speak about other things. About hallelujahs and amens and rejoice in the Lord and God is love.

Of course, there is an amen. Of course, there are hallelujahs. Of course, God is the God of love.

But to speak about the Lord is our enemy. Seems to be out of tune. And it took many, many hours.

If not days, till I bowed. I said, God, I had hoped for another word, but not a word like this. The Lord is like an enemy.

And then slowly but surely, God brought me to my senses. And when I heard the Lord's servant speaking last night, I felt at home. I'm so glad that I've got to know Pastor David Wilkerson as a man with a backbone.

There are so few and far between men of God with a backbone. It's a tragedy if a child is born and it's got no backbone. It's just a jellyfish.

May God work amongst his preachers and his servants that we'll be more than just a jellyfish. Sometimes we just hear whisper or just some birds singing or just a person gossiping about another man of God. And we are influenced by that.

We can't stand in this time of ours. In spite of the fact that God's Holy Word charges us not to accept the thing without two or three witnesses. But sorry to say that in many places, the devil can do what he likes.

But may God grant that we won't be counted amongst the wrong crowd, the wrong priesthood. We heard there are two sides. God has promised that in the last days he's going to pour out his spirit upon all flesh.

At the same time, the Bible speaks of the great falling away. And we see it around us and in all the world where we've got so far as to justify homosexuality by saying it's not damnable because it's an act of love. And some churches are willing to give their blessing.

I was so glad when I heard our brother speaking about what kind of men and women we should have on our pulpits. Now back to our text. God, like an enemy.

Before revival broke out in 1966, we gathered every morning, every evening, studying the scriptures and we took the book of Acts. God showed Moses on the mountain what the tabernacle should be like. And he said, Moses, everything according to the divine plan I gave you.

And in Acts we see the early church. That's what a church should be like, even in our time. And we've got the Bible.

We've got our rules and regulations. And then some Christians came and said, couldn't we come together at 2 o'clock? Couldn't we come together at 2 o'clock in the afternoon on Saturday? We've got to do our washing. We've been working all week.

Coming together at 7 in the morning, half past 5 in the evening. Couldn't we come together on Saturday at 2 o'clock? Without thinking, I thought, well, that's a good idea. Okay.

We were searching for God with all our hearts and with many tears and strong crying. We felt like the man of God, John Knox. Oh, God, give me Scotland or I'll die.

And as we gathered together in that old cow shed, suddenly I realized, oh, outside are the tennis courts. And the magistrate, assistant magistrate, postmaster, police sergeant, all those whites were close by playing tennis. And here I, with a bunch of blacks, am on my knees crying to God, what will they think of me? As it is, they blame us missionaries for having spoiled everything and spoiled the black men.

I said, well, let me rather shut the door, the old fashioned doors where you push the window up and then you close it. And as I closed the window so that they shouldn't hear outside, I heard the voice of God. All right, Erlo, close the window, then I'll be outside, you'll be inside.

I didn't need an interpretation for that term. I understood it. Now, as I stood before that little congregation, I suddenly saw with my eyes words this big in capital letters.

Before my eyes, God resisteth the proud. It's one thing to talk to you about it now, another thing to experience such a thing with God. I said, oh God, I've been a missionary in full time service for 12 years.

All these years I thought the devil is giving me a hard time, makes it very difficult. And today I see God is resisting me. And I said, oh, if only it would be the devil, then by God's grace, there would still be a chance of overcoming him and being victorious.

But facing God, him resisting me, then there's no hope for me in this world and in the world to come. I said, God, is it you that have been opposing me and resisting me all these years? I said, oh, I can't be with you as long as there's a trace of pride in your life. I personally resist the proud.

Dear friends, if God is like an enemy to us, is there any future? There's a wonderful word in the Bible that says, if God is Taurus, who can be against us? One man and God is in the majority, even if the whole world is against him. How blessed it would be if it would say, God is for us, who can be against us? But that little word, if God is for us, dear friends, we can't just take it for granted that God is for us. If we proclaim a humanistic gospel, if we proclaim the gospel with sin in our lives, having not kept our marriage vows, how can we expect God to be for us? Won't he be like an enemy to us? Should I recall and repeat the message we heard last night? Is God like the modern Christian, modern believers? Oh, he's a good guy.

Yes, he slipped and he's fallen. He's divorced his wife and he's done this and that. Yes, that's his weak point.

But nevertheless, let's just close an eye to that and carry on with it. And then we've got preachers in our pulpits that are unfaithful, that can lie, can steal, can be unfaithful, even in money matters. And we expect God in heaven to bless the man who says, touch no unclean thing.

I want to be your God, dwell among you, walk among you, but touch no unclean thing. Dear brothers, touch no unclean thing. I know many of many wonderful Christians, Christian women, leaders in their congregation, but where are they today? Yes, in heaven, but they died because of AIDS.

It's a dangerous thing to be a woman, even a woman of a preacher in this time of ours. I know of many that have died as a great loss to the church of Christ. The men were unfaithful and God dealt with them as an enemy.

I don't say that he dealt like an enemy with those sisters, with those men. What does God expect of a man of God, of his servants? Doesn't the Bible say they should be like a flame of fire? What does he expect of his church? Shouldn't the church of Christ be the greatest force in this world? No army as great, as strong, as holy, as glorious as the church of our Lord Jesus Christ. But what has happened? Oh God, I understand why there is a lamentation in the Bible.

There are so many verses. I won't even expound on it, I'll just read it to you. Shall I just read some verses to you from 1 Corinthians chapter 10? For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea.

If only we would have time to speak about the meaning of being under the cloud. That means to be in God's presence, under the control of the Holy Spirit, being led by his holy word. He doesn't want us to be unaware of it and to forget it.

They were baptized under the cloud and in the sea. They all ate the same spiritual food. And all drank the same spiritual drink.

For they were all drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them and the rock was Christ. I don't know whether we are hard of hearing. I don't know whether we are blunt or whether we are sharp.

I don't know whether we are blunt or whether we are sharp. May God grant that we'll never lose that spiritual sharpness. They were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them and the rock was Christ.

Nevertheless, with most of them, God was not well pleased for they were laid low in the wilderness. And I said, oh God, it's not only lamentations in the Bible. There's more to it than just lamentations.

God wasn't well pleased with them and he struck them down. People that drank of the spiritual rock which was Christ. When we read these verses, it awakens a godly fear in our hearts, which is the beginning of wisdom.

And where there is no godly fear, there's only foolishness and stupidity and lightness. When we read these verses, it awakens a godly fear in our hearts, which is the beginning of wisdom. And where there is no godly fear, there's only foolishness and stupidity and lightness.

And it is written as examples for us that we should not crave evil things as they also craved. And do not be idolaters as some of them were. As it is written, the people sat down to eat and drink and stood up to play.

Nor let us act immorally as some of them did and 23,000 fell in one day. Nor let us try the Lord as some of them did and were destroyed by the serpents. Nor grumble as some of them did and were destroyed by the destroyer.

Nor grumble as some of them did and were destroyed by the destroyer. These things happened to them as an example and they were written for our instruction upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Written for our instructions.

Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. And let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. And there I underline it and say Amen.

Jesus said he who believes in me what I do he will do and even greater things. Because I go to the Father. But Jesus also said as the Father sent me so send I you.

What didn't God do through Jesus? One man on earth. If there were 2,000 Jesuses, what would they do through us? Just look at us. Just say we were 2,000 people here.

What shouldn't be happening on earth through us? If there were 2,000 Jesuses, what wouldn't be happening on earth? Think of it. Jesus said they will do greater things than I do because I go to the Father. But we here in South Africa we are just driven away with a flood.

In Psalm 116 106 A disease broke out among the children of God. A plague. And many died.

They didn't know what to do. One man, Phineas, arrived. The Bible says he got up and he judged.

King James Bible says he executed judgment. And then that plague stopped. South Africa is bleeding.

We are being finished off by AIDS. And there is criminality. And not believing.

Godlessness. These things are taking over in spite of thousands of preachers of the Lord Jesus Christ here in this country. I was asked one day, over the telephone, by our Vice President, saying, Why are things like this in South Africa? Are you preachers doing your job properly and faithfully? Could it be that South Africa is in such a situation? If every preacher would be what he is supposed to be according to his high calling? He said, I feel as if I could call together all the preachers of South Africa and you preach to them.

Then the Vice President said, Why are things like this in South Africa? Are you preachers doing your job properly and faithfully? Oh, for men and women who would be like Phineas. Who couldn't stand it any longer. And he executed judgment.

He says, God doesn't allow this. This is an abomination to him. Many preachers would say, I can't.

I can't. I'll be doomed and damned. If I do that.

But, brother, shouldn't we allow it and choose rather to be doomed and damned in modern believers' eyes than to be men that are nothing more than just a jellyfish with no backbone, no guts to stand. One Presbyterian minister asked me once, he said, Elo, if you preach, do you ever touch on sin? I didn't know what to say. My vocabulary just left me.

He said, well, I tried it last Sunday and I touched on two evil things. And then I saw people getting uneasy, moving around, and I quickly stopped it. Well, the humanists can understand it.

They pay your salary. If you preach something they don't like, maybe you lose your job. And what will your dear wife eat and your children? Where will you go? So you rather compromise.

Lower the standard. I'll never forget years ago when a famous preacher passed away. I heard a strange thing.

That his wife was getting sinning, suffering. At night when the sun set, it was just too terrible for her. Because her late husband would appear to her and say, the gates are closed.

I can't enter in. Because of many, the role many played in my life. I'm not going into that problem.

Is such a thing possible? A person died, he goes to heaven or he goes to hell. That's just a ghost, it can't be him. But his dear wife suffered nevertheless.

A certain leader of a certain church attended a meeting. A couple of thousand people were present. And the preacher spoke about the Anglican preacher in England.

And he administered in three, four different congregations. Just before he was pensioned, he awoke one morning. He felt sick.

His wife noticed that there was something wrong. And she said, well, don't you feel so well? Something wrong? Have you got a headache? He says, there's nothing. She carried on wiping the dust in the room and through the side eye.

Looked at him and she said, tell me, are you feeling sick? And he didn't want to tell her what was wrong. Well, some women have got the gift just to carry on, just to persevere. And you know, water can be so soft.

Just a drop and a drop and a drop. And after some months or years, there's a hole drilled into the concrete. Seems as if her wife has got a great influence.

And she just kept on begging him and eventually he says, well, then I'll tell you what's happened. He said, I had a terrible dream. I saw the great white throne coming down from heaven.

Within a moment, we were all caught up. And then suddenly I lost sight of everybody and found myself standing alone before the judgment seat of Christ. The Bible says we'll all have to appear whether and we'll be judged according to what we've done, whether it be good or evil.

And then God called him by name and said, so and so, where are all the elders in those churches you ministered? Where are all the prayer women? Where are all the youth leaders? He said, I didn't know what to say. To make a long story short, said the second thing, where are all the helpers that were in your house helping you? Secretaries? Helping your wife? With the children? All those that used to gather in your house? And then third, where's your wife? Where are your children from the eldest to the youngest? Look to your left and he looked and he saw a long queue. He recognized these people, he had been standing in the pulpit, facing them squarely, preaching to them.

And one after the other they were heading for a bottomless pit. And all the cry as they fell one after the other in the bottomless pit. And then he saw his wife and his children and the Lord said, you join that queue.

And when he told his wife, you join that queue, he fell backwards on his baby and closed his eyes once and for all in this world. The Bible says these things were recorded for us. That we will not sin as they sinned and that we won't experience what they experienced.

If you have sinned then repent, confess your sin, turn away from it. If you confess your sin, God is faithful and just, he will forgive you. Break with it completely, say goodbye once and for all and serve the Lord.

God is faithful and just and he will give you the strength that even if temptation comes, he will give you a way of escape. Even if you have sinned, come to the cross, confess it, he will forgive you. And he who has sinned a lot will be forgiven a lot.

Now the leader of that congregation was in the audience that day when this minister was relating the story of this minister. He was upset, went home. He told his wife and a leading lady in his congregation, I'll never, I'll never put my foot at that place again.

He was preaching to me, he meant me, he told me that I'm going to hell. And that preacher didn't know that he was present. He meant me, dear brother, if you sit under a sun and the truth hits home, don't say you spoke about me.

Or he meant me, if the shoe fits you, put it on. Within a few days he died. Early in the morning, the eldest son arrived of that minister, came here to Wasizabantu.

Could you come and take the funeral of my father? Take the funeral of your father? You've got your church, you've got your ministers. I as a stranger should come there? I can't explain what we went through last night. That coffin moved.

That coffin moved and we are afraid to close that coffin. Couldn't you conduct the funeral? And then afterwards, that what happened to that famous preacher's wife, happened here as well. That this man, this man's spirit or whatever it was, demon or what it was, haunted them every night.

And they say, oh when the sun set, oh we'll go through that again. He'll come and says the doors are closed to me. I said he meant me, he preached about me, but God says he didn't even knew that I was saying.

Dear friends, there's more between heaven and earth than what we can dream about. The truth is there's a living God. Let him never be like an enemy to you.

Live a life that is well pleasing to him. Bring joy to his heart. Now in closing.

Next month we'll have an election here in our country. You'll be given the opportunity to put your cross on that paper. You choose.

When Jesus walked this earth, Pilate also told the crowd, here's Jesus, here's Barabbas, you must choose. And we've got to choose right now as well. Jesus or Barabbas.

Barabbas, symbolic of the wrong priesthood. The false priesthood. A humanistic gospel.

A spiritual preacher or a carnal preacher. Where are you putting your cross now? God in heaven is registering it. He makes a note of everything.

And where do you put your cross? What kind of preacher do you want to be from now on? Let's forget the past. From now on, what kind of priesthood, priest, preacher do you want to be? What kind of Christian, what kind of believer do you want to be? Which side do you want to stand? There's the left hand, there's the right hand. There are the goats, the sheep, the Lord's right or left.

Where do you put your cross? South Africa needs upright preachers. People of chosen God who stand on his side. The whole of Africa needs them.

The whole world needs them. Where are the upright preachers? Where are they in our midst? Who can stand for the truth. That God won't regret having called them.

May God keep us. That God won't turn against us and become our enemy. He is the worst enemy.

Give up everything, forsake everything so that you can be well pleasing to him who is above everything. And revive the passion for Christ. That all else will mean nothing to you.

That you'll be the first and the last to you, the Alpha and the Omega. And not a superficial vow. Reverend Wilkerson told us that in some churches after what happened in New York, they were filled after six months, they were empty again.

With Charles Finney, some cinemas closed down for six years. The people went to church. But the heartbreaking thing is what happened after six years.

If you make a vow, let it be much more than just one day or six years. To the rest, for the rest of your life, till your last breath. If you make a vow, let it be much more than just one day or six years.

To the rest, for the rest of your life, till your last breath. If you make a vow, let it be much more than just one day or six years. To the end, upright to the end.

Or will you run out of breath? If you make a vow, let it be much more than just one day or six years. To the rest, for the rest of your life, till your last breath. To the end, upright to the end.

That he'll never have to turn against us as an enemy. This was written for our sakes. So that it shouldn't happen to you and to me what happened to them.

Shall we bow and pray? Shall we rise? Lord, help us not just to be hearers, but that we will hear and do and keep what you say. Help us, Lord, to be faithful to you right to the end. Lord, may those things that are an abomination to you in our lives, that they will be destroyed.

Always. Amen.

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