**Tough Love**

“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). Roger, a Christian in Manila, struggled with doing this. He was a chief in the police department. His neighbor’s boy had quit school and was into drugs. He got a call one day in the office that this teenage boy, being high on drugs, kicked in the side of Roger’s car parked at home. So he, and several others from the department, went to check it out. His car was dented, and they entered into the house to find the boy high on drugs. Did this boy hate Roger?

He brought the boy back to the station, and placed him in a 2 foot by 3 foot wooden box with only enough room for his feet to stick out the bottom. (He was safe, but confined to the point he could not hurt himself as he came off the drugs). The boy yelled and screamed for over an hour. Then he became really quiet. Concerned for his safety, Roger set him in a chair. The boy begged and begged not to go back into the wooden box. Roger handed him a piece of paper. Told him to write down a couple of promises. “I will go back to school”, was the first one. “I will get off drugs and stay off drugs” was the second one. Roger then asked him, “do you promise”? The boy agreed, and signed the paper. Then Roger put the boy back into the box. Then about 1/2 an hour later, Roger took the boy out again and let him go, on one condition. That if Roger ever found out he had quit school or got on drugs again, he would catch him, and put him back into the box.

Many years later, Roger met him by chance on the steps of the court house in Manila. The boy got off drugs and finished school. He continued at the university and became a lawyer. His old druggy friends would ask him from time to time, “How did you get off drugs and become a lawyer?!” The young man, not so young anymore, would give them a standard reply, “if you really want to know how I did it, just go kick Roger’s car” as he smiled at Roger, and they had a good laugh.

We live in a generation that doesn’t believe in tough love. We are in a generation that does’t love God, nor his ways. God captured Manasseh, and put him in prison because of his sins (2Chronicles 33:1-20). Manasseh was much worse than teenager in Manila. But he turned his life around, and served God with all his heart. He too was set free. Jesus himself was the author of tough love to an entire church, “Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent.” (Rev. 3:19). He did not discipline out of hate, but out of love. Sometimes a soft love does’t get the job done. Just because a person is tough, doesn’t mean they don’t love. Dan Peters