Getting Even

**TEXT**: **1 John 4:7-9 (ESV)** 7  Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. 8  Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. 9  In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him.

Pollsters have been asking the people of London: “What bothers you most about living in the city?” The most popular answers are:

1. The slowness of the train system
2. The price of providing a place to live and
3. The continuous political fighting over Britain’s decision to leave the Common Market

The greatest difficulty is the average British Oliver and Olivia feels there is nothing he, or she, can do to change things for the better. They feel frustrated and trapped by sad situations and negative circumstances.

Understanding the frustration, Marc Diaper, boss of the fitness company **Gymbox**, decided to make a difference… a difference which he believes will help relieve people’s worries and calm their troubled hearts.

Mr. Diaper’s solution was to create a number of physical activity stations which were designed to make people feel they weren’t so helpless after all. Using the services of a man whose resume says he is an anger management expert AND a fitness instructor, they designed a work out which was most unusual. Included in their regimen were items like….

* Punching bags which sport the likeness of a famous, and for many people, an unpopular political figure.
* Large photos of infamous leaders placed on the floor so the exercisers can drop heavy medicine balls on them.

The folks who put the program together explained, “We thought, what better way to actually release frustration and anger than (to) actually punch your most hated politician in the face on a punch(ing) bag.” And does it work?

The organizers maintain, “(People) They are leaving our classes feeling relieved, lighter and (at the same time) they do something good for themselves, they work on their body.” Their opinion was supported by one lady who said, “I have a problem to get my student loan because of Brexit, so today I really take out my frustration on this whole situation and I feel really good.”

Looking at the program, I have to confess, it is an interesting concept. Then, having paged through Scripture I have to add, “I can’t find anything in the Bible which supports that kind of action.

Moses didn’t put Pharaoh’s face on a punching bag and David didn’t bounce rocks off a likeness of Goliath’s face drawn on a wall. Samson didn’t have much use for the Philistines, but you won’t find him working out in the gym so that he might redirect his negativity.

Indeed, the Lord tells us to get rid of our anger, frustration and pent up fears by walking in the footsteps of the Savior. When we look to Jesus, the Author of our faith, we will see the Redeemer continuously reaching out to those who did their best to destroy Him and short-circuit His message of salvation. His love was so strong, at the Last Supper He tried to warn His betrayer, and from the cross He forgave those who put Him there.

In that spirit, John encourages all who have been loved, rescued and redeemed by the Christ to put a lid on hatred and set free Divinely inspired love.

**THE PRAYER**: Dear Lord, it is the Savior’s sacrifice and victory which have changed my life. May He also change my attitude toward those who do their best to destroy the God-given peace which Passes human understanding. In the Savior’s Name I pray. Amen.