

**Raise the ante!**

**In Poker it is "Raise the ante!" In Track and Field, in the Pole Vault, the height of the vault is increased after each successful vault.**

**In the Gospel it means the Old Testament demands have been raised to much higher standards by Jesus.**

**"An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." was the old rule of conduct.**

**No more.**

**Now Jesus proclaims: "Love your enemies!"**

**Say what?**

**Do I have to send them valentines?**

**Do I have to have warm fuzzy feelings toward them?**

**No...but I must will them good--not vengeance nor retribution.**

**If we can at least pray for our enemies we will have fulfilled the Gospel's demands.**

**And so we pray:**

**Deliver me from revenge, rage, and vengeance.**

**Lift up my heart**

**from the dregs of hatred**

**which corrode my soul.**

**forgive me my trespasses,**

**as I forgive those**

**who trespass against me.**

**Amen**