

## Wednesday with the Word

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### **How To Deal with Your Enemies: A Battle Plan for Holiness**

#### **Your enemies are on your side.**

God uses your enemies to get you where God wants you to go and then God deals with your enemies. The problem we have is we don't understand the divine purpose of our enemies. Our enemies are a blessing from God. Their opposition is confirmation that we are doing what God is calling us to do. There is not one recorded story in scripture where God is using someone for God's glory that they didn't face opposition. Opposition from enemies is a part of God's plan.

I am not saying that God is sadistic and God wants to put you through tough times. I am saying that God knows that for you to do what God has for you to do you have to have some fight in you. You have to be able to deal with obstacles, hard times, good times, ups and downs and deal with enemies in a Godly way if you are going to succeed and do what God has called you to do.

Enemies aren't there to discourage you but rather they are there to propel you to stay focused and do what God has called you to do. If you stay in the will and way of God you will win. Enemies are meant to draw us closer to God. They empower us to develop a Godly strategy to deal with distractions and stay focused. We are not called to cozy up to our enemies, we are not called to entertain them and support their mess or lick them up because we are called to love them. To love them means we pray for them while not agreeing with them or tolerating their mess. We pray for their turn and for God to bless them that they might draw close to God. We pray that they turn before God turns on them. We pray the best for them because we love them and we know that God loves them. We actually want the best for them because we love them. This is that agape love, Godly love. They are not our friends or buddies but they are to be loved. We are not called to like them or be like them but we are called to love them, care for them and pray the best for them.

Enemies are meant to push us closer to God so that we will stay in the will of God. We will stay close to God and allow God to protect us as we stand our ground and do our work. When we stay in the will of God, God will be a fence and protect us. God will keep us focused but for this to happen we have to be obedient to God's word and God's way of dealing with enemies. God will also instruct us and lead us on how to deal with enemies God's way. God calls us to stand up to enemies but not to fight the way they fight.

God is clear:

**2nd Corinthians 10:3-6**

**3** We live in this world, but we don't act like its people **4** or fight our battles with the weapons of this world. Instead, we use God's power that can destroy fortresses. We destroy arguments **5** and every bit of pride that keeps anyone from knowing God. We capture people's thoughts and make them obey Christ. **6** And when you completely obey him, He will punish anyone who refuses to obey. CEV

**Matthew 5:43-48**

**43** You have heard people say, "Love your neighbors and hate your enemies." **44** But I tell you to love your enemies and pray for anyone who mistreats you. **45** Then you will be acting like your Father in heaven. He makes the sun rise on both good and bad people. And he sends rain for the ones who do right and for the ones who do wrong. **46** If you love only those people who love you, will God reward you for that? Even tax collectors love their friends. **47** If you greet only your friends, what's so great about that? Don't even unbelievers do that? **48** But you must always act like your Father in heaven. CEV

God is not asking us to be friends with our enemies. God is not saying we have to spend time with them, take them out and tolerate their mess. God is saying love them, with a Godly love. God loves them. To love them means we pray for them. The more you pray for your enemies the easier it will for you to deal with your enemies. When you pray for your enemies God will show you their pain and their brokenness. God will have you feel for them while not following them, putting up with them or letting them mess you up. You can love folk you don't follow or agree with. You can care for them and pray for their deliverance. You can pray that they turn before God gets them for being an enemy to God. When, people decide to come against you for doing what God has called you to do, they have become an enemy to God.

**What specifically do we pray,  
when we pray for our enemies who God calls us to love?**

**Romans 12:9-18**

**9** Be sincere in your love for others. Hate everything that is evil and hold tight to everything that is good. **10** Love each other as brothers and sisters and honor others more than you do yourself. **11** Never give up. Eagerly follow the Holy Spirit and serve the Lord. **12** Let your hope make you glad. ***Be patient in time of trouble and never stop praying.*** **13** Take care of God's needy people and welcome strangers into your home. ***14 Ask God to bless everyone who mistreats you. Ask him to bless them and not to curse them.*** **15** When others are happy, be happy with them, and when they are sad, be sad. **16** Be friendly with everyone. Don't be proud and feel that you are smarter

than others. Make friends with ordinary people. 17 Don't mistreat someone who has mistreated you. But try to earn the respect of others, 18 and do your best to live at peace with everyone. CEV

We can hate what they do to us and others, because it is evil, but we are called to love them, feel for them and have concern for their soul.

### **Principles & Practices: A Practical Guide for Dealing with Your Enemies**

1. **Be sincere in your love for your enemies.**
2. **Hate what is evil.** You don't love the evil they are doing but you pray for the person who is being controlled by evil.
3. **Never give up.** Evil doers intend to discourage you, distract you, produce dissension and discord which gets you off focus. You have to commit to not giving up and giving in to their messiness.
4. The way you **never give up is by following the power of the Holy Spirit.** You get in touch with the Holy Spirit by the power of prayer.
5. **Be patient! God's plan and work takes time.** The key to perseverance and being able to stay focused is by constantly being in prayer. If you never stop praying you will never give up and stop having hope.
6. **Ask God to bless those who mistreat you.** You aren't praying for God to get them but rather you are praying for God to bless them. **When you pray this prayer it turns how you see them and how you respond to them. You are not so much trying to change their heart as you are trying to change your heart and mind.** If you care for them you don't want to get them back because you realize that they are in a miserable position trying to go against God.
7. **Don't mistreat them or try to get them back.** Don't go where they go and don't fight how they fight. Treat them with dignity and respect but don't be a door mat. You can stand up in love and resist them in love but don't try to get them back.

### **Romans 12:17-21**

**17** Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men.

**18** If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.

**19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.** **20** Therefore

*"If your enemy is hungry, feed him;*

*If he is thirsty, give him a drink;*

*For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head."*

**21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.** NKJV

## Psalm 27 Contemporary English Version (CEV)

**(By David.)**

A Prayer of Praise

You, Lord, are the light  
that keeps me safe.

I am not afraid of anyone.

You protect me,  
and I have no fears.

**2**

Brutal people may attack  
and try to kill me,  
but they will stumble.

Fierce enemies may attack,  
but they will fall.

**3**

Armies may surround me,  
but I won't be afraid;  
war may break out,  
but I will trust you.

**4**

***I ask only one thing, Lord:***

***Let me live in your house***  
***every day of my life***  
***to see how wonderful you are***  
***and to pray in your temple.***

**5**

***In times of trouble,***  
***you will protect me.***  
***You will hide me in your tent***  
***and keep me safe***  
***on top of a mighty rock.***

**6**

***You will let me defeat***  
***all of my enemies.***  
**Then I will celebrate,**  
as I enter your tent  
with animal sacrifices  
and songs of praise.

**7**

*Please listen when I pray!*  
*Have pity. Answer my prayer.*

**8**

**My heart tells me to pray.**

I am eager to see your face,

**9**

so don't hide from me.

I am your servant,  
and you have helped me.

Don't turn from me in anger.  
You alone keep me safe.

Don't reject or desert me.

**10**

Even if my father and mother  
should desert me,

you will take care of me.

**11**

**Teach me to follow, Lord,  
and lead me on the right path  
because of my enemies.**

**12**

Don't let them do to me  
what they want.

People tell lies about me  
and make terrible threats,

**13**

but I know I will live  
to see how kind you are.

**14**

**Trust the Lord!**

**Be brave and strong  
and trust the Lord.**

**2nd Timothy 1:6-7**

**6** Therefore I remind you to **stir up the gift of God** which is in you through the laying on of my hands. **7** For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.