



A New Battle Plan

Matthew 5:43-48 NIV

JESUS' SURPRISING DEMAND: ENEMY LOVE.

Matthew 5:43-45a *“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven.”*

3 WAYS TO DISARM MY ENEMY AND GLORIFY GOD:

1. I WILL FORGIVE EVEN MY WORST ENEMIES.

I used to be God’s enemy and He forgave me.

Colossians 1:21 NLT *This includes you who were once far away from God. You were his enemies, separated from him by your evil thoughts and actions.*

Colossians 3:13 *Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.*

2. I WILL LOVE MY ENEMIES IN PRACTICAL WAYS.

God shows common grace to all, even His enemies.

Matthew 5:45b *He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.*

3. I WILL PRAY FOR THE GOOD OF MY ENEMIES.

I will pray for their salvation and transformation.

Matthew 5:46-48 *If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”*

4 GOSPEL TRUTHS MY ENEMY MAY NOT KNOW:

1. FORGIVENESS DOESN'T NEGATE JUSTICE.

God will always make justice prevail.

Romans 12:19–21 *Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

2. BY FAITH I HAVE ENTERED GOD'S BIG STORY.

God is the author and He will masterfully use the twists and turns caused by my enemies for good.

Romans 8:28 *And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*

3. THE ENDING OF THE BIG STORY IS A GREAT ONE.

My reward will far exceed any costs I might incur by forgiving, loving, and praying for my enemies.

Romans 8:18 *I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.*

4. I KNOW THAT JESUS' LOVE ISN'T FICKLE.

He won't stop loving me if and when I falter.

Romans 8:38–39 *For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

*“To return evil for good is devilish;
to return good for good is human;
to return good for evil is divine.”*

-Alfred Plummer