

give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head" (Romans 12:20). "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:21). God's love is greater than the power of evil. "See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men" (I Thessalonians 5:15).

#### V. Stephen demonstrated it:

"And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep" (Acts 7:59-60). Stephen forgave (blessed) those who were stoning him to death. Saul (later named, Paul) observed Stephen forgiving those who were stoning him. This most likely prepared Saul's heart to receive Christ a little later.

#### VI. Additional Scriptures:

"A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother" (Proverbs 18:24).

"Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins" (Proverbs 10:12). When we see people as our friends, we show them more grace when they sin against us and others.

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made

perfect in love" (I John 4:18). Often our enemies remain our enemies because they are also afraid of us whether or not they admit it.

#### VII. It is a principle of sowing and reaping:

"Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;" (II Corinthians 9:10). God provides the seed of love, but we are responsible to sow the seed.

"In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good" (Ecclesiastes 11:6). We don't know what seed will produce, but the Scripture says that there will be some seed that will produce a harvest.

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" (Luke 6:38). The more seed that we sow, the greater the harvest.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). When we plant seeds of love, we can expect a future harvest of love based upon the word of God. AMEN.



## The Weapon Of Love

To lay a foundation, we are to respond with people differently from the way that we respond to the attacks of the devil and his powers even though the people may be under the influence of the powers of darkness. I also recognize that there are some principles of Biblical truth across the board. In both cases, our weapons are spiritual weapons. "(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)" (II Corinthians 10:4). We are not to fight an individual (a personal enemy) in the flesh. So how do we do spiritual warfare when we are under attack by people? We can start with the fact that it will be just the opposite as our old fleshly nature wants to respond. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Galatians 5:17).

See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AxijbXy58HQ>

### I. Some Old Testament Passages:

“If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him” (Exodus 23:4-5). “Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth:” (Proverbs 24:17). “If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee” (Proverbs 25:21-22).

### II. Jesus gives us some vivid examples:

“Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also” (Matthew 5:38-39). My first thought is, “But it hurts!” However, recognizing that there is a matter of self preservation, we are to also look at what Jesus said. In the context, he is saying not to strike back in revenge.

“And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also” (Matthew 5:40). Jesus is saying that we **overcome** by GIVING the grace of love.

“And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain” (Matthew 5:41). A Roman centurion

might compel a man carry his bag one mile, but it would be unthinkable for the man to show love and carry for two miles. Jesus also said concerning a servant, “So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do” (Luke 17:10). Faith is demonstrated through love.

“Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away” (Matthew 5:42). Again, my first thought would be, “But, God he may not return it or he will destroy my possession.” “Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matthew 5:43-45). Love is the weapon that we are to use with people. We don't overcome through cursing people (speaking evil of them), but by blessing (speaking well ... and praying for God's blessing to come on them).

“For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is

perfect” (Matthew 5:46-48). To be “perfect” or complete, we are to love others and not just the people that are loveable.

### III. Jesus himself put the principle in practice:

“This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:12-13). This is exactly what Jesus did.

“For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:6-8).

“And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled” (Colossians 1:21).

### IV. Paul spoke about it:

“Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men” (Romans 12:17). “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men” (Romans 12:18). “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord” (Romans 12:19). “Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst,