

## A POWERFUL PRAYER FOR YOUR ENEMIES

Perhaps one of the hardest commands Jesus gives to us as His disciples is to bless, love, and pray for our enemies. But how can you pray for someone who wants to harm you? In ourselves, we can't. But through the power of God's Spirit working through us, all things are possible. Through Jesus, we can pray for our enemies. Here's one way you might pray:

### **A Prayer for Your Enemies**

*Lord Jesus, following Your example and command, we pray for our enemies today. We ask first that You would saturate our lives with the Holy Spirit's power and might. Send Your love flowing through us, and forgive us for holding on to anything that could hinder our prayers. We release any unforgiveness, thoughts of revenge, or hateful emotions that can quench Your Spirit in our hearts. Then give us wisdom as we seek how to bless, to love, and to pray for our enemies.*

*We pray for you to bless our enemies and to orchestrate events in their lives that will leave their hearts exposed before you. As You characterized blessing in the [Beatitudes](#), we pray that You would give them a poverty of spirit that recognizes their deep need for You. We pray they will discover Your comfort in times of mourning, and they would be humbled before You—in Your way and Your time. We pray You would show them mercy before it is too late—knowing we were all God's enemies before You extended mercy to us—and that they would, in turn, be merciful to others.*

*Lord, we pray that instead of lusting for pure evil, they would hunger and thirst for Your purity and righteousness, become advocates of Your justice and that their warring spirits would be changed into peacemaking. Remove the façade of well-being; tear down the lies that have deceived them; and hedge their ways until they can see no way out but up. We pray You would show them the futility of what they are doing because in opposing God's kingdom and in their darkness, they are often oblivious about the true reasons for their behavior and resulting consequences. Reveal to them any deep hurts or traumas in their own lives that may be contributing to their destructive actions.*

*Knowing how you sometimes use pain and difficulty to bring blessing to our lives, we pray the same for our enemies. Use whatever means You need to soften stony hearts, open blind eyes, and to help them realize their ultimate neediness for You. If necessary, allow persecution in their own lives so they can experience Your blessing. Speak to them in miraculous, supernatural ways if necessary, through a dream, a movie, another believer, Your Word—or even through our own lives if we are ever confronted. In some way, let them witness Your power and recognize that You are the source. We pray for conviction, for an honest evaluation of their own destiny, and for a sense of desperation*

*if that's what it takes for them to consider Your claims and to discover Who You really are. Pursue them, even allowing goodness to lead them to repentance. And give us patience and a deep trust in You, Lord, even when we can't see any change in our enemies. When we waver, not wanting to pray for our enemies, help us to remember Your grace in our own lives, and what we would be without You.*

### Why Should We Pray for Our Enemies

Why should we pray for our enemies? Because Jesus did. He prayed for those who opposed Him, for those who devised evil against Him, and ultimately as He hung on the Cross, Jesus prayed for His Father to forgive all those who had a part in His death—because they didn't know what they were doing. Jesus modeled unconditional love and how we should pray for our enemies, then commanded us to do the same.

Prayer is an amazing discipline and privilege. What usually happens when we pray for anyone, is that the prayer acts as a boomerang. God may or may not answer in the way we prayed, but God often chooses to bless and change us as a result of our obedience to pray. It's hard to stay angry at someone for whom you earnestly pray. Prayer also leaves the consequences, revenge, and complete justice to God. It's a transference of our will into God's hands. By praying for our enemies, God's Spirit can supernaturally show love and kindness through us or another that may ultimately change them. That process can also eradicate our fear of our enemies, because perfect love casts out fear. Jesus said not to be afraid of those who could destroy us physically. Instead, we are to fear—a reverent attitude—the One Who determines and fulfills our soul's destiny.

### What Does the [Bible](#) Say about Praying for Enemies?

In the Old Testament, even righteous people prayed for God to destroy their enemies in cruel ways. Their prayers were not prayers of blessing. Proverbs and other passages talk about how to treat our enemies in positive ways. But Jesus turned life upside down with His command to bless, to love, and to pray for our enemies. While not defining who our enemies were, in the Beatitudes Jesus described enemies as those who mock us, persecute us, lie about us, or spitefully use us. And that we were blessed if we experienced those things. He added that those who were not for Him were against Him. Jesus taught a new way to live life: with love, not hate. He encouraged us to recognize that the true enemy behind all wrongs is Satan—and how to resist him. But regarding our earthly enemies, when we don't know how or what to pray for them, we can trust the Holy Spirit to pray through us.

### 7 Bible Verses that Give Us Perspective about Praying for Our Enemies:

- [Proverbs 16:7](#) NASB, *When a man's ways are pleasing to the Lord, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.*

- **Matthew 5:44** KJV, *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.*
- Luke 23:24 NIV, *Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."*
- Mark 11:25 NIV, *"And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."*
- **Romans 12:20-21** MSG, *Our Scriptures tell us that if you see your enemy hungry, go buy that person lunch, or if he's thirsty, get him a drink. Your generosity will surprise him with goodness. Don't let evil get the best of you; get the best of evil by doing good.*
- 1 Peter 3:9 TLB, *Don't repay evil for evil. Don't snap back at those who say unkind things about you. Instead, pray for God's help for them, for we are to be kind to others, and God will bless us for it.*
- **Proverbs 20:22** NLT, *Don't say, "I will get even for this wrong." Wait for the Lord to handle the matter.*

To Jesus, every person mattered. He came to show us the Father's complete love, even while we were still His "enemies." And when He called us as His followers, He didn't leave us without a model. Knowing we would be mistreated and even persecuted for belonging to and believing in Him, He commanded us to pray for our enemies. When we do, God's power is unleashed in them—and in us.