

Destroy Your Enemies

As the Civil War was coming to an end, it seemed inevitable that the North would prevail. President Lincoln had many discussions with administration “hardliners,” who hotly opposed his intention to be merciful and generous to the South. During one particularly heated conversation, one of those men rebuked Lincoln, saying that the North must “destroy their enemies.”

Lincoln thought quietly for a few moments, then replied, ***“Have I not destroyed my enemies when I’ve made them my friends?”***

That’s the greatest victory a peacemaker can claim: turning enemies into friends. That’s what Jesus did to me and you. Through his great personal sacrifice he paid for our sins and opened the way for our complete forgiveness. He reconciled us to himself and initiated a relationship with us.



Now, is there an enemy in your life whom God has given you the opportunity to “destroy” in a similar manner?

“While we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son” (Rom. 5:10).

“But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you” (Luke 6:27-28).

- Ken Sande

Reflection Questions (Most effective when shared with a friend; James 1:22-25)

- Is there someone in your life who has deeply or repeatedly wronged or hurt you? How? How do you feel toward that person? How have you been treating that person?
- How does your treatment of that person compare to the way Jesus has treated you in spite of your countless sins against him? (Rom. 5:10; Col. 1:21-22)
- How could you imitate Jesus today and take one small step toward making that person your friend rather than your enemy? (Eph. 5:1-2; Luke 6:27-28; Rom. 12:19-21)

For more guidance on converting an enemy to a friend, see Chapter 12 in *The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict* (Ken Sande, 2004).

Permission to distribute: Please feel free to download, print, or electronically share this message in its entirety for non-commercial purposes with as many people as you like.

© 2013 Ken Sande