

Lent Day 19: Prayer for our Enemies

By: James Yang

“...love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.” – Matthew 5:44

Prayer for our enemies is not about changing them first. It is first and foremost about our submission before God. It is about exposing first what lives in us—bitterness, pride, fear, and resentment. In prayer, we place ourselves before God, confessing that we are not the judge. We are not the savior. Traces of our sinful old selves need God’s deliverance, forming and transforming into more of His likeness.

Revenge promises relief, but it only tightens the chains around our hearts and then drains it of life. Lent reminds us that freedom comes through forgiveness, and forgiveness always costs something. That cost was the blood of Jesus. Retaliation multiplies harm. Love interrupts it.

The justice Jesus teaches is not rooted in vengeance, but in transformation. Hatred cannot heal what is broken. Only love can. This is the way Jesus Himself walked—steadfastly toward the cross, refusing violence, entrusting Himself to the Father. But why? Because he understood with absolute clarity of his purpose and his mission.

Whose way are we following?

Lent is not about despair. It is about hope born through trust, repentance, and obedience.

Some of us carry long-held wounds, broken relationships, or shame we cannot shake. But Jesus meets us here—not with condemnation, but with mercy.

There is no sin too great, no failure too deep, and no heart beyond repair. The One who calls us to love our enemies is the same One who went to the cross for us.

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.

— Romans 8:1-2