Back to Sender Prayers: A Misguided Battle Against the Wrong Enemy?

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Rethinking spiritual warfare through the lens of Christ’s love and biblical truth.

**Beloved in Christ**,

I greet you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace and our perfect example in all things. Today, I’d like to lovingly reflect with us all—especially those who minister in the name of the Lord—on a particular practice that has become widespread in prayer circles: **the “back to sender” prayer.**

## 1. Is “Back to Sender” Biblical?

While the intention behind such prayers is often rooted in a desire for protection, we must ask ourselves: **does this align with the spirit of Christ’s teachings?** As followers of Jesus, we are called to a higher standard—**one that does not repay evil for evil, but overcomes evil with good.**

“Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”  
— Romans 12:17–18 (NIV)

“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”  
— Romans 12:21 (NIV)

“Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.”  
— Romans 12:14 (NIV)

## 2. Our Real Enemy is Not Human

When we say “back to sender,” we are essentially asking that harm fall upon the person who sent it. But Scripture teaches that **our true battle is not against people**:

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities… against spiritual wickedness in high places.”  
— Ephesians 6:12 (KJV)

**People are not the root of evil; they are often tools used by the enemy.** Therefore, our prayers should target the spiritual source, not the human vessel.

“The tongue has the power of life and death…”  
— Proverbs 18:21 (NIV)

**Our mouths are meant to bless, heal, and build—not to destroy.** Paul reminds us that our calling is to be peacemakers, not agents of vengeance.

“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up…”  
— Ephesians 4:29 (NIV)

## 3. How Should We Respond to Evil?

We are called to stand strong, clothed in God’s armor:

“Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.”  
— Ephesians 6:16 (KJV)

“Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”  
— Ephesians 6:17 (KJV)

Instead of sending evil back, **we are to cancel and destroy it spiritually**, while asking God for divine protection and transformation for our enemies.

“See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone.”  
— 1 Thessalonians 5:15 (ESV)

“If anyone returns evil for good, evil will never leave their house.”  
— Proverbs 17:13 (NLT)

## 4. Uproot Strongholds, Not People

It is absolutely biblical to **tear down spiritual strongholds and destroy demonic altars** in prayer:

“The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.”  
— 2 Corinthians 10:4 (KJV)

We are to be aggressive in the spirit, but compassionate in the physical. **We do not rejoice when our fellow human beings suffer**, even if they have wronged us.

“Do not gloat when your enemy falls; when they stumble, do not let your heart rejoice.”  
— Proverbs 24:17 (NIV)

## 5. Jesus Is Our Example

Jesus, on the cross, did not curse those who crucified Him. He said:

“Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”  
— Luke 23:34 (KJV)

If **Christ lives in us**, our hearts should reflect that same mercy and forgiveness.

## 6. Be Different from the World

When we use “back to sender” prayers, **we risk behaving like those who curse**. But we are called to be different—holy and harmless.

“Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.”  
— Matthew 10:16 (KJV)

Let us **not mirror darkness**, but shine Christ’s light by praying from a place of victory:

“No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper…”  
— Isaiah 54:17 (KJV)

Not that the weapon returns to the sender, but that **it is rendered powerless by God’s authority.**

## 7. A Call to All Believers

To every believer—and especially those who lead others in prayer—let us ask:

Are our prayers forming Christ in people, or are they teaching retaliation in disguise?

Let us be **ministers of reconciliation, not retribution.** Let our words and prayers be seasoned with grace, filled with the Spirit, and aimed at defeating darkness—not destroying souls.

In love, truth, and grace,  
A fellow servant in Christ

By Martin N. Wanjiru