

PUT THAT SWORD AWAY



Artist: Berna Lopez

And behold, one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword."

Matthew 26:51-52

The urge to pull out the sword.

Or the gun.

Or the venomous tongue.

"I'm fighting the Lord's battle. Why shouldn't I use my sword?"

That's what they said during the Crusades. And what a bloody mess followed.

Whenever Christians listen to their "leaders" instead of Jesus, two realities rise up to negate everything Jesus says:

Money.

Money becomes our power instead of the Spirit of God.

The sword.

The sword becomes our security instead of the Living Word.



Why Do you Strike Me? Anne Cameron Cutri

False prophets are always busy promising protection and power through money and the sword. Jesus calls us to follow a different road.

"You have heard that it was said, `An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'

But I say to you, Do not resist one who is evil. But if any one strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also; and if any one would sue you and take your coat, let him have your cloak as well; and if any one forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.

Give to him who begs from you, and do not refuse him who would borrow from you.

You have heard that it was said, `You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."

Matthew 5:38-45

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Gracious Father, give us the determination to lay down our need to control things, to lay down our need to strike out in defense. Give us the strength to put our swords away. You alone are our security. Keep us loving and praying for our enemies, for those who oppose us, for those who disagree with us. May the desire to honor you and live as your sons and daughters vanquish our need to take matters that belong to you into our own hands.



Maranatha Mirror Messages

mmirror.net

maranathamirror18@gmail.com

586-530-6983 (text or call)

