



Welcome to week 5 of News Cleanse!

Today, we're considering how Jesus's radical love changes the way we interact with the news. If you missed our discussion about quantity, quality, eternity, or humility, [catch up here](#).

We're barreling toward Easter, the end of our News Cleanse. If these prayers have grown your peace or turned those groans into English, you'll love TPO's Praying the News. Every Sunday, TPO writer Steph reflects on the week's news in light of the Good News and offers a Scripture-soaked prayer.

[Sign up here](#) to get it in your inbox weekly after Easter.

PONDER | PRAY | PRACTICE

Is your news making you contemptuous or compassionate?

Have you ever found yourself rejoicing at the misfortune of someone else? Hoping the worst for someone? Thinking, "They finally got what they deserved?"

As much as I hate to admit it, I have.

I do an internal fist pump when the car that raced around me gets stuck behind a slower car. On the *very* rare occasion I beat my husband in a board game, I rub it in his face (in my head, but still). When I scroll the headlines and see a political figure I don't agree with has failed in some way, I feel a twinge of satisfaction.

I know, I know... I'm not proud of it. But it comes from a (seemingly) honest place: a desire for justice, for good to win out.

While it's good to seek justice and victory, too often, we put ourselves in the Judge's seat. From our moral high ground, we start to look down on others. And from there, contempt grows: the feeling that a person or a thing is beneath consideration, worthless, or deserving scorn.

Partisan news makes it really easy for us to grow contemptuous. It takes our political opposites—people we think are at best misguided and at worst intentionally taking harmful positions—and encourages us to see them as enemies.

Thankfully, Jesus has a lot to say about enemies:

"But I say to you who listen: Love your enemies, do what is good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you... If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them.... If you do what is good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. Be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful."

Luke 6:27-28, 32, 35-36 (CSB) ([read full passage](#))

Jesus's radical command also comes with real-life examples of how we're to love our enemies: Did someone slap you? Let them strike your other cheek as well. Did someone sue you? Give them more than they asked for. Did someone force you to do something? Double the work they demanded.

And it wasn't empty talk. Jesus prayed for the people who were executing Him *while they were executing Him*. And His most extreme display of love? Willingly dying on the cross so that His enemies—you, me, and the rest of humanity—could have eternal life.

So how would Jesus respond to that criminal, that pop star, or that neighbor with the wrong yard sign? **With an uncomfortable amount of love and grace.**

When we choose to love our political opponents because He first radically loved us, we shine His light for the whole world to see. What a glorious privilege.



Grace and peace.

Bailey Parndley

Writer | The Pour Over

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Is there anyone you read about in the news, on social media, or in your community that you would consider a political enemy?

How would you describe the posture of your heart toward those you consider your enemies? How does that posture express itself externally?

How often do you pray for your enemies? What's motivating your prayers, and what do you pray for?

Lover of my soul,
Thank You for making Your love known
by sending Your only Son for the life of the world.
He modeled turning the other cheek, going the extra mile,
praying for and serving His enemies—even to the point of death.

Light of the world,
You have shown what love is:
not a warm feeling pursued for my own happiness,
but a costly self-sacrifice offered willingly
for the good of the beloved.

Your love is not dependent upon my worthiness—
whether I believe the right things,
make the right choices,
support the right people—
it is rooted in Your character.
You are a God of self-giving, steadfast, faithful, generous, eternal love.

Spirit of love,
Move my heart from contempt to compassion.
Train me to love like You do,
offering grace and blessing even to those who
believe the opposite things,
make the opposite choices, and
support the opposing people.
Compel me to love and to serve and to pray,
seeking the good even of my enemies,

so that Your light shines in this dark world.

Amen.



Yours in Christ,
Steph Juliot
Writer | The Pour Over

Thank you for joining us in prayer! How can our staff pray for you?

[Please let us know here.](#)

PONDER | PRAY | PRACTICE

This week, admit who your enemies are. Then, go out of your way to demonstrate Christ's love for them. Here are a few suggestions:

- Say something kind about them. (If it's someone you know personally, say it *to* them.)
- Perform a random act of kindness.
- Come up with a list of ways you can pray for them (or ask them how you can pray for them!), write those prayer requests down, and incorporate them into your prayer life.

This may feel awkward or uncomfortable—that probably means you're on the right track! Watch how God changes your heart as you demonstrate His radical love.