

American Decency Association

PO Box 202, Fremont MI 49412 231-924-4050 www.americandecency.org
Encouraging Christians to guard their heart January 2023

Is The Enemy of My Enemy Really My Friend?

by R. Albert Mohler Jr.



We are not living in a season of peace. Thinking Christians must surely be aware that a great moral and spiritual conflict is taking shape all around us, with multiple fronts of battle and issues of great importance at stake. The prophet Jeremiah repeatedly warned of those who would falsely declare peace when there is no peace. The Bible defines the Christian life in terms of spiritual battle, and believers in this generation face the fact that the very existence of truth is at stake in our current struggle.

The condition of warfare brings a unique set of moral challenges to the table, and the great moral and cultural battles of our times are no different. Even ancient thinkers knew this, and many of their maxims of warfare

are still commonly cited. Among the most popular of these is a maxim that was known by many of the ancients - "the enemy of my enemy is my friend."

That maxim has survived as a modern principle of foreign policy. It explains why states that have been at war against one another can, in a very short period of time, become allies against a common enemy. In World War II, the Soviet Union began as an ally of Nazi Germany. Yet, it ended the war as a key ally of the United States and Britain. How? It joined the effort against Hitler and became the instant "friend" of the Americans and the British. And yet, as that great war came to an end, the Soviets and their former allies entered a new phase of open hostility known as the Cold War.

Does this useful maxim of foreign policy serve Christians well as we think about our current struggles? That is not an uncomplicated question. On the one hand, some sense of unity against a

common opponent is inevitable, and even indispensable. On the other hand, the idea that a common enemy produces a true unity is, as even history reveals, a false premise.

We must not underestimate what we are up against. We face titanic struggles on behalf of human life and human dignity against the culture of death and the great evils of abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia. We are in a great fight for the integrity of marriage as the union of a man and a woman. We face a cultural alliance determined to advance a sexual revolution that will unleash unmitigated chaos and bring great injury to individuals, families, and the society at large. We are fighting to defend gender as part of the goodness of God's creation and to defend the very existence of an objective moral order.

Beyond all these challenges, we are engaged in a great battle to defend the existence of truth itself, to defend the reality and authority of God's

American Decency Association

PO Box 202, Fremont MI 49412 231-924-4050 www.americandecency.org
Encouraging Christians to guard their heart January 2023

Is The Enemy of My Enemy Really My Friend?

by R. Albert Mohler Jr.



We are not living in a season of peace. Thinking Christians must surely be aware that a great moral and spiritual conflict is taking shape all around us, with multiple fronts of battle and issues of great importance at stake. The prophet Jeremiah repeatedly warned of those who would falsely declare peace when there is no peace. The Bible defines the Christian life in terms of spiritual battle, and believers in this generation face the fact that the very existence of truth is at stake in our current struggle.

The condition of warfare brings a unique set of moral challenges to the table, and the great moral and cultural battles of our times are no different. Even ancient thinkers knew this, and many of their maxims of warfare

are still commonly cited. Among the most popular of these is a maxim that was known by many of the ancients - "the enemy of my enemy is my friend."

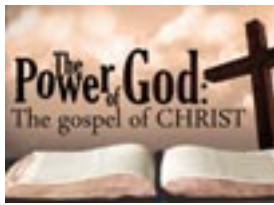
That maxim has survived as a modern principle of foreign policy. It explains why states that have been at war against one another can, in a very short period of time, become allies against a common enemy. In World War II, the Soviet Union began as an ally of Nazi Germany. Yet, it ended the war as a key ally of the United States and Britain. How? It joined the effort against Hitler and became the instant "friend" of the Americans and the British. And yet, as that great war came to an end, the Soviets and their former allies entered a new phase of open hostility known as the Cold War.

Does this useful maxim of foreign policy serve Christians well as we think about our current struggles? That is not an uncomplicated question. On the one hand, some sense of unity against a

common opponent is inevitable, and even indispensable. On the other hand, the idea that a common enemy produces a true unity is, as even history reveals, a false premise.

We must not underestimate what we are up against. We face titanic struggles on behalf of human life and human dignity against the culture of death and the great evils of abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia. We are in a great fight for the integrity of marriage as the union of a man and a woman. We face a cultural alliance determined to advance a sexual revolution that will unleash unmitigated chaos and bring great injury to individuals, families, and the society at large. We are fighting to defend gender as part of the goodness of God's creation and to defend the very existence of an objective moral order.

Beyond all these challenges, we are engaged in a great battle to defend the existence of truth itself, to defend the reality and authority of God's



gladly help an atheist save a neighbor from danger, or even beautify the neighborhood. Those actions do not require a shared theological worldview.

revelation in Scripture, and to defend all that the Bible teaches. A pervasive anti-supernaturalism seeks to deny any claim of God's existence or our ability to know him. Naturalistic worldviews dominate in the academy, and the New Atheism sells books by the millions. Theological liberalism does its best to make peace with the enemies of the church, but faithful Christians have no way to escape the battles to which this generation of believers are called.

So, are the other enemies of our enemies our friends? Mormons, Roman Catholics, Orthodox Jews, and a host of others share many of our enemies in this respect. But, to what extent is there a unity among us?

At this point, very careful and honest thinking is required of us. At one level, we can join with anyone, regardless of worldview, to save people from a burning house. We would

At a second level, we certainly see all those who defend human life and human dignity, marriage and gender, and the integrity of the family as key allies in the current cultural struggle. We listen to each other, draw arguments from each other, and are thankful for each other's support of our common concerns. We even recognize that there are elements common to our worldviews that explain our common convictions on these issues. And yet, our worldviews are really quite different.

With the Roman Catholic Church our common convictions are many, including moral convictions about marriage, human life, and the family. Beyond that, we together affirm the truths of the divine Trinity, orthodox Christology, and other doctrines as well. But we disagree over what is supremely important—the gospel of Jesus Christ. And that supreme differ-

ence leads to other vital disagreements as well - over the nature and authority of the Bible, the nature of the ministry, the meaning of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and an entire range of issues central to the Christian faith.

Christians defined by the faith of the Reformers must never forget that nothing less than faithfulness to the gospel of Christ forced the Reformers to break from the Roman Catholic Church. Equal clarity and courage are required of us now.

In a time of cultural conflict, the enemy of our enemy may well be our friend. But, with eternity in view and the gospel at stake, the enemy of our enemy must not be confused to be a friend to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

[Taken from Tabletalk, December 2013]

Christians must strive for unity and peace. May division only come where others have broken from the Word.



gladly help an atheist save a neighbor from danger, or even beautify the neighborhood. Those actions do not require a shared theological worldview.

revelation in Scripture, and to defend all that the Bible teaches. A pervasive anti-supernaturalism seeks to deny any claim of God's existence or our ability to know him. Naturalistic worldviews dominate in the academy, and the New Atheism sells books by the millions. Theological liberalism does its best to make peace with the enemies of the church, but faithful Christians have no way to escape the battles to which this generation of believers are called.

So, are the other enemies of our enemies our friends? Mormons, Roman Catholics, Orthodox Jews, and a host of others share many of our enemies in this respect. But, to what extent is there a unity among us?

At this point, very careful and honest thinking is required of us. At one level, we can join with anyone, regardless of worldview, to save people from a burning house. We would

At a second level, we certainly see all those who defend human life and human dignity, marriage and gender, and the integrity of the family as key allies in the current cultural struggle. We listen to each other, draw arguments from each other, and are thankful for each other's support of our common concerns. We even recognize that there are elements common to our worldviews that explain our common convictions on these issues. And yet, our worldviews are really quite different.

With the Roman Catholic Church our common convictions are many, including moral convictions about marriage, human life, and the family. Beyond that, we together affirm the truths of the divine Trinity, orthodox Christology, and other doctrines as well. But we disagree over what is supremely important—the gospel of Jesus Christ. And that supreme differ-

ence leads to other vital disagreements as well - over the nature and authority of the Bible, the nature of the ministry, the meaning of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and an entire range of issues central to the Christian faith.

Christians defined by the faith of the Reformers must never forget that nothing less than faithfulness to the gospel of Christ forced the Reformers to break from the Roman Catholic Church. Equal clarity and courage are required of us now.

In a time of cultural conflict, the enemy of our enemy may well be our friend. But, with eternity in view and the gospel at stake, the enemy of our enemy must not be confused to be a friend to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

[Taken from Tabletalk, December 2013]

Christians must strive for unity and peace. May division only come where others have broken from the Word.