



# SEEDS

SEEDS is a monthly e-newsletter featuring the writing and words of Good News Associates, Affiliates and Board Members.

## Overcome Evil Jesus' Way

By Jan Wood



**G**OD LOVES—AND YEARNS FOR RESTORATION—for our broken world. But God is a realist. God is not caught by surprise when people, relationships, cultures and nations turn their backs on their Divine Purpose and become misshapen. They become a sad shadow of what they could be. At best this estrangement from one's purpose is a painful loss; at worst it becomes diabolically destructive.

Many of us are finding ourselves bewildered and disoriented in these present times. Things are becoming grotesquely misarranged. Basic building blocks of commonality are being destroyed with intentionality. Logic and facts are no longer the common currency of our working together. Compassion and goodness are considered weak and unnecessary. Truth is totally irrelevant. Might makes right. Creating fear is both a method and a joy. Wealth is the new form of godliness.

We are not the first to find ourselves stirred by malevolent spirits—and we will not be the last. But we are not powerless! Jesus clearly modeled and taught how we could live on earth as it is in heaven in the midst of adversity. It sounds upside down and backwards to our ears, but the way of Jesus is the path that overcomes evil.

It goes something like this. . . . Stay tucked into God's presence 24/7. Don't wander out on your own. Inhale God's love and exhale it to everyone—including the enemy. Do good to those who persecute you. Don't answer evil with another evil; don't do tit for tat. Don't take revenge. Let

your words emanate like a sweet fragrance. Replace fear with compassion and grace—trusting God for unfaltering justice. Give freely. Forgive generously. Do goodness in all things.

Quakers had an image for this cockamamie way of living—the Lamb’s War. This is such a paradox! The lamb is the opposite of any fearsome force. It isn’t aggressive. It isn’t the brightest of all animals. It has a gentle quality. Yet, this is the symbol of Friends’ peacemaking testimony. It is not that God’s people do not fight evil, injustice, unholy arrangements in oneself and others. We do fight. And fight valiantly. But victory comes with facing evil with the character of Jesus- the Lamb of God. The image rises from Revelations 17:14,

*. . . they will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is the Lord of lords, King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful.*

Jesus has given us the key to winning. The key to liberating folks into a fuller life. The key to bringing about “thy will on earth as it is in heaven.”

Interestingly, following Jesus in the Lamb’s War doesn’t really seem heroic and special. It can feel insignificant in the face of the huffing and puffing of evil. But we are part of a real David and Goliath story. Each act of goodness, of Godness, is a pebble that finds its mark to transform our world. So here are a few everyday practices that break the grip of the powers that assault us.

— Stay aware. Stay involved. Don’t seek a false peace by avoiding what is going on.

— Be grateful in all things. Express your gratitude for all that you are blessed with. Pay it forward with gratefulness when things don’t look like they are going well. Offer the sacrifice of gratefulness for the promise of transformation when things are truly tragic and irreversible. *Be grateful as an act of overcoming evil.*

— Love generously. Where love seems like a bridge too far, hitchhike on God’s love. Love—based not on merit—but on grace. *Love as an act of overcoming evil.*

— Create something every day. The nature of God is creation; the nature of evil is destruction. Creation cuts through the fog of powerlessness. *Create as an act of overcoming evil.*

— Laugh. Laughter is an active repudiation of the myth that we are held in the grip of angst and sadness. Laughter is a witness that we are not victims of mis-arrangement. *Laugh as an act of overcoming evil.*

— Sing. Sound waves have no end. Fill your world with songs of praise, of goodness, of justice, of mercy. *Sing as an act of overcoming evil.*

*Overcome evil with goodness!*