

## Romans 12:21

*Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

You have heard the term “Fight fire with fire” but where did that come from?

It's actually a term used by fire fighters. *The source of this phrase was actual fire-fighting that was taken on by US settlers in the 19th century. They attempted to guard against grass or forest fires by deliberately raising small controllable fires, which they called 'back-fires', to remove any flammable material in advance of a larger fire and so deprive it of fuel. This literal 'fighting fire with fire' was often successful, although the settlers' lack of effective fire control equipment meant that their own fires occasionally got out of control and made matters worse rather than better.* Ref: [www.phrases.org.uk](http://www.phrases.org.uk)

Also, when there is a fire that is running out of control, one way they fight the fire is by setting other fires further away. The reason they do this is, once the fire reaches where they have already burned the area, the fire cannot spread, because there is no fuel for it to keep going.

Being from Southern California I know they have a lot of fires each summer. One of the biggest fires in California history has happened this year which has burned close to 300,000 acres already.

That's all great information about fires and how we fight them, and there is wisdom in thinking that way about fighting fires. Unfortunately, people have taken the same term and used it to fight spiritual battles. Even as a very young Christian in the early 80's when Christian rock music was making the scene and was very popular, I even used to use the term, “fight fire with fire” when questioned about Christian rock music and how it sounded like the world's music. In my ignorance I used the incorrect term for what was going on with Christian music. It never was about fighting fire with fire, because that would be the opposite of what the bible teaches as we read in today's devotional verse.

† *Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

When you are going through a tough time, are you seeking your horoscope for answers, or maybe you are calling the psychic hotline to get answers. Remember Jesus said:

† *So He called them to Himself and said to them in parables: "How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but has an end." Mark 3:23-26*

Simply Jesus is saying you don't fight fire with fire when it comes to spiritual things. So how do we overcome evil? It seems a lot of people think that picketing is the answer, or posting bad things about others on social media. But the bible teaches the opposite, instead of picketing and being hateful towards them we are to *overcome evil with good*.

Even Jesus said: *"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you."* **Matthew 5:43-44**

Instead of picketing against something (I never read in the bible where anyone picketed) or posting bad things about them on social media, or even bad mouthing them to others, why not do what Jesus said to do (*love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.*), and see if you get better results.

If you keep trying to fight fire with fire, you will get burned. But if you use the water of the word, it will quite those who are your enemies, and you never know, they could end up becoming your best friend.