

**DON'T
GIVE
THE ENEMY
A SEAT
AT YOUR
TABLE**

IT'S TIME TO WIN THE BATTLE OF YOUR MIND . . .

**LOUIE
GIGLIO**

PRAISE FOR *DON'T GIVE THE ENEMY A SEAT AT YOUR TABLE*

Louie writes with hope and speaks freedom to our weary hearts that need the victory available to us through Jesus. This book is **a treasure you'll return to again and again**. I can't wait for you to read it and see your life transformed!

LYSA TERKEURST

#1 *NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLING AUTHOR AND PRESIDENT OF PROVERBS 31
MINISTRIES

All of us know what it's like to feel trapped in endless loops of self-defeating thoughts and the frustration of not knowing how to interrupt the circuit on them. This wise and practical book provides the guidance we need to **break free from the tyranny of negative thinking** and reclaim joy. Highly recommended!

IAN MORGAN CRON

AUTHOR OF *THE ROAD BACK TO YOU*

Louie Giglio is a prophetic gift for our time. And Psalm 23 is a resounding truth for all time. Put them together and you have **a clarion call to attune our mindstream** to life in the kingdom. As someone who starts every morning by praying Psalm 23, this book struck a deep chord in my heart.

JOHN MARK COMER

PASTOR OF VISION & TEACHING AT BRIDGETOWN CHURCH AND AUTHOR OF *THE RUTHLESS ELIMINATION OF HURRY*

Louie's new book, *Don't Give the Enemy a Seat at Your Table*, is **for anyone who's been letting the enemy occupy space** in their mind. Whether it's anger, loneliness, insecurity, or shame, it's time to kick the enemy out of your mind and take back your seat at the table.

STEVEN FURTICK

PASTOR OF ELEVATION CHURCH AND *NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLING AUTHOR

If you are wrestling with discouraging thoughts, pastor Louie Giglio's book, *Don't Give the Enemy a Seat at Your Table*, will help you **discover**

the biblical truths that will help free your mind so you can live the life God intended you to live.

CRAIG GROESCHEL
PASTOR OF LIFE.CHURCH AND *NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLING AUTHOR

The greatest war of our lives centers around the battle of the mind. I am grateful for work like this that **floods our spiritual artillery with gospel ammunition**. Thank you, Louie G (that's the rap name I gave him), for giving us the kind of depth and accessibility we need to hold the line for the glory of God in the war zone of our minds.

KB
ARTIST

In the banquet of your heart there are two seats—one for you and the other for Jesus—and three is a crowd. That is the paradigm-shifting message of this important book, *Don't Give the Enemy a Seat at Your Table*. To the extent that you allow the devil to tag along and be a third wheel in your thought life, you will be derailed from your destiny. Let Louie show you how to **tell the enemy, "Seats taken," and you will watch your life change**.

LEVI AND JENNIE LUSKO
LEAD PASTORS OF FRESH LIFE CHURCH AND BESTSELLING AUTHORS

I'm confident that *Don't Give the Enemy a Seat at Your Table* will **not only clarify your faith but strengthen it**. Jesus has already won the greatest victory—now it's our turn to fight to think rightly and fix our eyes on our Good Shepherd.

TIM TEBOW
PROFESSIONAL ATHLETE AND SEC NATION COMMENTATOR, AUTHOR, KEYNOTE SPEAKER, AND PHILANTHROPIST

Don't Give the Enemy a Seat at Your Table is a gift! This wonderful book shows us how to access and exercise the resources we have in Christ so that we can **restore peace and rest to our minds**.

DR. CRAWFORD W. LORITTS, JR.
AUTHOR, SPEAKER, RADIO HOST, AND SENIOR PASTOR OF FELLOWSHIP BIBLE CHURCH

Don't Give the Enemy a Seat at Your Table is a **reflection and outpouring of fire-forged resolve and wisdom**, accompanied by the grace-gift of the tools Louie has been able to so practically articulate.

BROOKE AND SCOTT LIGERTWOOD

Don't Give the Enemy a Seat at Your Table reminds us of the identity that we have in Christ—that every battle He has won we have won also! Louie **shows us how God invites us into relationship** with Him and gives us a seat at His table, all the while winning the battle of your mind.

CHRISTIAN AND SADIE HUFF

Don't Give the Enemy a Seat at Your Table is a **world-changing, paradigm-shifting message** straight from Scripture.

EARL MCCLELLAN

PASTOR OF SHORELINE CITY CHURCH

Don't Give the Enemy a Seat at Your Table will equip you with practical tools to **align your thoughts with God's truth** so that you can fulfill your God-given purpose with passion and joy.

CHRISTINE CAINE

BESTSELLING AUTHOR AND FOUNDER OF A21 AND PROPEL WOMEN

Don't Give the Enemy a Seat at Your Table is **undoubtedly a “now” word for this season, full of truth and encouragement** to help you take back every inch of ground the enemy has stolen from you and fully step into the peace, freedom, and victory Jesus died to give you.

CODY CARNES AND KARI JOBE CARNES

GRAMMY-NOMINATED WORSHIP ARTISTS

There are few voices in Christendom who are able to **speak so pointedly to the realities** of the spiritual life. These pages are not just inspiration; they are preparation to do battle with darkness!

JOHN LINDELL

LEAD PASTOR OF JAMES RIVER CHURCH AND AUTHOR OF *SOUL SET FREE*

Don't Give the Enemy a Seat at Your Table is a **triumphant guide** to finding the transformational hope sought by every hurting heart.

KATHERINE AND JAY WOLF

BESTSELLING AUTHORS OF *SUFFER STRONG* AND *HOPE HEALS*

ALSO BY LOUIE GIGLIO

Never Too Far

Not Forsaken

Goliath Must Fall

The Comeback

Waiting Here for You

Indescribable

I Am Not But I Know I Am

The Air I Breathe

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Goliath Must Fall for Young Readers

How Great Is Our God: 100 Indescribable

Devotions About God & Science

Indescribable: 100 Devotions About God & Science

Indescribable for Little Ones

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**LOUIE
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 **passionpublishing**


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Don't Give the Enemy a Seat at Your Table

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*Be grateful for the storms in life.
They reveal who your true friends are.
To the friend who sent the text that has
become the title of this book—
thank you for allowing God to use you to change my life.*

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ONE

NINE WORDS THAT WILL CHANGE YOUR LIFE

I felt attacked. Misrepresented. Abandoned. Wounded.

Shelley and I were in the midst of a massive storm—one of the toughest seasons we’ve ever faced as leaders. Darts were flying at me from every direction. My heart was heavy and conflicted.

The moment we had decided years ago to plant a local church, a friend was chillingly clear in his assessment of the journey we were embarking on: *It will be the hardest thing you’ve ever done.*

At the time, I brushed those words aside. *We’ve done some pretty difficult things*, I thought. But now, his words echoed in my mind. He was right. Building a kingdom family called the “local church” out of a tribe of mostly strangers was exposing my optimism (I thought we’d never have insider struggles like every other church), and, even at fifty years of age, I was facing challenges that were testing the limits of my experience.

Now the insider struggles were real. Intense. Personal. Bitterness and frustration worked overtime to get a foothold in my spirit. More than once I wondered if it was worth it and wanted to pack it in and quit.

One evening, a few months into that tumultuous stretch, I found myself at the top of our driveway furiously working away on a text message to a friend I could trust. Earlier in the afternoon I had found out about something that vindicated my case. I’ve always believed in the saying *You don’t have to tell your side of the story; time will.* On this day it felt like time was telling the world that I was right, and obviously I wasn’t going to sit on good news. I wanted other people to know I was right too. So I reached out to someone who had stood with me in the struggle, someone who had taken a few shots on my behalf.

Wow . . . what a text it was. A lengthy masterpiece of angst and vindication, the tone of which went something like this: *You’re not gonna believe what just happened. I’m not saying I was right, but hey, it is what it*

is! Can you believe it? I mean, if you give things enough time, you'll see people's true colors, right? I mean, finally . . . blah, blah, blah.

I pressed send and waited. Literally. I just stared at the screen, looking for support to arrive. I wanted a reply that resounded with a hearty, *Hey, Louie, I've got your back! I knew you were right all along!* I wanted a shoulder to cry on. A celebratory high five or fist bump (*not* the emoji kind). I needed actual words in return, and lots of them.

A moment passed. Another. I waited.

—

Let's pause for a moment and let the focus swing to *your* story.

Have you ever sent a text like that?

You don't need to be planting a church to be in a hard place. Everybody experiences tense circumstances where your mind is heavy and you feel like you're under attack. Times when you want to swing big and fight back or you want to give up. What do you do?

How do you win the battle of your mind?

THE TEXT THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING

When you're in a hard stretch filled with conflict and confusion, if you could just get your thoughts in order you could probably figure out a way to proceed, but keeping a clear head is more difficult than it sounds.

Maybe you're on the wrong side of someone else's harmful actions or hurtful words. Maybe the conflict comes from within. You feel abandoned. Falsely attacked. Hurt. Defeated. Tempted. Lost. Your mood is low. Your mind is stressed. You're weary from the endless conversations you're having inside your head with friends, coworkers, family members, accusers. Conversations where you're always vindicated and their faults are exposed.

It's easy at those times for fear or despair to set in. You find yourself constantly looking over your shoulder, wondering if someone's out to get you. You struggle with your emotions. You snap in anger. You break down in tears. It's not uncommon to give in to those dark thoughts, especially when you're staring at the ceiling at two in the morning, desperately trying to take control of the narrative and manage the outcome. You feel like your back is against the wall, and paranoia can become your

unshakable companion. You keep your defenses high.

And you seek allies. You look for someone—anyone—who sees things your way. You gravitate toward anyone who will hear your side of the story and commiserate with you. That’s the position I was in standing outside my house fixated on that little circle spinning around on my phone, indicating a reply to my text was on the way.

Remember, I needed my friend’s reply to be commensurate with the effort that went into my message. I was anxious for something beefy and bold. Lots of affirmation and solidarity. Lots of words.

And then it arrived. A one-sentence reply. Nine words to be exact. In dismay I blurted, “You’ve got to be kidding!” But when I leaned in and focused on the message, those nine words changed my life. The message read:

Don’t give the Enemy a seat at your table.

I pushed aside my annoyance and let the message sink in. Quickly I saw that my friend had nailed it. I had allowed my adversary—the Devil—to influence the conversation inside my mind.

My struggle wasn’t about fighting with people. People were involved, but the battle I was facing was against principalities and powers of darkness (Ephesians 6:12). My heavenly Father wasn’t making me afraid or paranoid. My Shepherd wasn’t putting thoughts of despair in my mind. The harmful thoughts were coming from someone else.

The Enemy had taken a seat at my table, and I was allowing myself to listen to a killer. Right there in my driveway, I determined to take back my table. The Devil would have to flee.

In the days that followed, my mind was riveted on those nine words. As negative thoughts would enter my mind, I’d say to myself, *Don’t give the Enemy a seat. Don’t entertain his ideas. These thoughts are not from a good and trustworthy Shepherd. Move on.*

Soon after, I was led to study Psalm 23—a text that has comforted and steadied God’s people through the ages as they have navigated troubled waters. Now I was seeing it through fresh eyes. Especially the line that reads, “You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies” (v. 5).

**THE ENEMY HAD TAKEN
A SEAT AT MY TABLE,**

AND I WAS ALLOWING MYSELF TO LISTEN TO A KILLER.

I could see myself sitting at a table, with the Good Shepherd across from me. He had led me through dark valleys to reach the table, and I didn't need to be afraid, even though the fiery trials weren't all resolved. My place at the table didn't mean that my enemies would be removed from the equation. In fact, the table was set right in the middle of my enemies. That captivated my imagination and held my attention.

I didn't need to vindicate myself. I didn't need to clear my name. I didn't need to control this equation or work overtime to improve it. My task was to concentrate on the Good Shepherd, the One who owned the table.

My invitation was to put my trust in the One who prompted me to lie down in green pastures, the One who led me beside quiet waters and restored my soul. The Good Shepherd was guiding me along the right paths for His name's sake. Dark valleys and hard times were part of those paths, yet He would be with me and see me through every threatening night. The Good Shepherd would anoint my life with His favor and my cup would overflow. My promise—goodness, mercy, and love—would escort me every single day of my life.

My destiny was set. I didn't need to be afraid. The Shepherd was at the table, and He would see to it that I was going to dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Day after day I sat with the truth of Psalm 23, letting it burrow its way into my soul. From 1 Peter 5:8, I knew that a major tactic of the Devil was to prowl around my life. So maybe I couldn't stop the Devil from prowling around my table, but in Jesus' name I definitely did have the choice whether I allowed the Enemy to sit down.

God's Word was transforming my thinking and having a powerful impact on my state of mind and peace of heart. *Don't give the Enemy a seat at your table* was quickly becoming more than a helpful quote. These nine words were becoming a weapon that was setting me free.

MOMENTUM GATHERS

A few weeks later, I was leading a morning Bible study for the coaches of a professional sports team. The team's season had been characterized by struggle and defeat, and the mood in the room felt low. Their critics were circling. I would guess there was a measure of internal suspicion and strife. I could see the angst and despair on their faces. The coaches were in a similar place to where I'd been the night I first texted my friend.

Midway through my message I felt a nudge from the Spirit to pivot my talk toward what God was teaching me through Psalm 23 and what I'd been learning about the table God prepares in the presence of our enemies. I described to them how I'd sent my friend a lengthy "woe is me, back me up" text and what he had replied to me.

When I uttered the phrase *Don't give the Enemy a seat at your table*, the atmosphere in the room shifted. The expression on many of the coaches' faces changed. Later I heard from several of them that those nine words landed just as powerfully for them as they had for me.

That same day I headed back to Passion for our scheduled all-team meeting. As I returned to Atlanta I called and asked for a table to be set up in the middle of the room with basic snacks and water glasses on it. I expanded on what I had shared that morning with the coaches and morphed the message into a visual experience, where I sat at a table with food on it and spoke on the promise of Psalm 23.

Again, the message landed with power. So much so that we fleshed it out into a full talk that I shared with our church the following Sunday. The food was a bit more sumptuous this time and the place settings a tad fancier. We had bountiful fruit and cheese plates. Cold cuts. Bread. Dessert.

Bam! Those nine words hit home . . . deeply, profoundly. A mom of three who was in the midst of a contentious separation told me those words were exactly what she needed to hear. A college student wrestling with thoughts of suicide echoed her response. It was clear I wasn't the only one struggling, and the message wasn't just for me. It was meant to be shared with as many people as possible.

In time I had the privilege of sharing the message around the world, and the experience became refreshingly interactive for me as a communicator. I would start the message onstage but soon end up at the table, which had been situated beforehand in the midst of the people. At some point I'd pass food down the rows, encouraging people to enjoy a croissant or brownie or carrot stick and then pass the tray of food on to their neighbors. Delectable-looking desserts always got the biggest cheer.

But it wasn't about a potentially gimmicky illustration. The landslide

of power was the realization that the King of the universe is inviting you and me to sit with Him at His table. Those nine words were memorable, but even more, they were packed with proven power. The story they conveyed was freeing and had instant application.

It's the story of a Good Shepherd who sees you and walks with you through the valley. It's about God setting a table of nourishment and refreshment in the midst of trouble. This message lets you see how you don't need to let the thoughts in your head run wild. These nine words are ultimately a message of victory.

TAKE BACK THE TABLE PREPARED FOR YOU

That's why I've written this book. I want to help you see that you have power, through Jesus Christ, to take authority over who sits at your table—over who influences your thinking. You can take back your freedom and control your thoughts and emotions. You don't need to be trapped by fear, despair, or rage. Your mind doesn't have to be stressed. You don't need to wrestle anymore with harmful thoughts. You are invited to an intimate relationship with the Almighty. The table He's prepared for you is one of peace, clarity, and abundance. You don't have to give the Enemy a seat at your table.

To be clear, the nine words that arrived on my phone screen are what God used to set in motion the chain of events that led to this book. Yet the potential that waits for you in these pages is rooted in something far greater than a text message from a friend. The promise of this book is anchored in a message from your Creator. His words to you in Scripture are alive and powerful. His words can break the strongholds that have held you captive for years. They can help you think clearly again. His words will give you brand-new sight.

In the pages to come, we'll crack open Psalm 23 in a fresh way. And we'll particularly highlight verse 5: "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies." I'll address the lies the Enemy feeds you as he weasels his way into a seat at the table that's intended for you and your King. I'll outline ways to defeat those lies and help you find victory, peace, and security in the midst of any challenging circumstance or situation. And I'll give you practical, helpful encouragement to stand firm

in Jesus and take control of your thoughts and fears.

The Devil wants nothing more than to crush you. He wants to steal from you everything you value. He wants to kill everything in your life that's good. Ultimately, he wants to destroy you. If he can claim the victory over your mind, he can eventually claim the victory over your life.

But the message of Psalm 23 is that the Good Shepherd prepares a table for you. It's a table for two, and the Devil is not invited to sit. This book offers an all-encompassing message that can be applied to any number of hard situations. It will help you find encouragement, hope, and strength in the midst of your valley. You don't need to listen to the voices of fear, rage, lust, insecurity, anxiety, despair, temptation, or defeat.

I'm in this battle with you. I preach this same message to myself again and again, and I am confident that our Good Shepherd will be glorified as He leads us to win the fight for our minds. So let's go there together. Me and you. It's time to take back what the Enemy has stolen. Let's turn the page to take a closer look at what the Good Shepherd's table is all about.

TWO

THE TWENTY-THIRD PSALM—REMIX

Our good friends Jay and Katherine Wolf met years ago as freshmen at Samford University and soon fell in love. He was heading for a career in law. She was literally crowned Miss Samford—smart, beautiful, and confident.

In 2004, newly graduated, they married and vowed to love each other in sickness and health. They soon moved from Atlanta to Malibu, California, where Jay entered law school at Pepperdine University and Katherine pursued a career in acting and modeling. For a couple of years everything went smoothly. In 2007, they had their first child, a boy. All was going well.

One afternoon six months after Katherine had given birth, she felt dizzy and sick to her stomach. Her hands, arms, and legs went numb. She walked into the living room to turn down the TV. She wobbled once, twice, and then suddenly collapsed. Jay was home and called 911. Katherine was rushed to the hospital and diagnosed with a massive brain stem stroke. She wasn't expected to live. To save her life, more than half of her cerebellum was removed. The surgery took more than sixteen hours. Katherine was twenty-six.

Miraculously, Katherine survived the sudden ordeal, yet the story of their “new normal” was only beginning. For two months, Katherine lay unconscious. For forty days she stayed in intensive care. She had to relearn how to talk and eat. It took eighteen months to walk again. Years of rehabilitation and recovery followed, along with ten more surgeries. Katherine's body would never fully heal from the stroke.

Today, Katherine lives with long-term limitations. She is partially deaf and can't swallow normally or see well. Part of her face shows the effects of paralysis. Her speech is slurred. Mostly she uses a wheelchair to get around. Yet Katherine and Jay exude a remarkable kind of faith. It's a faith deeply rooted in the confidence that there's purpose in pain. As a result, they are a huge force for the kingdom of God. Through their books and

messages, they bring much hope to suffering people everywhere.¹

Few of us have been through the depth of what Katherine and Jay have experienced. But all of us have experienced a life less than perfect. When it comes to not giving the Enemy a seat at your table, we have to start by wrapping our minds around this difficult truth: life is hard, yet Jesus invites us to follow Him anyway.

AN “EVEN THOUGH . . . I WILL” FAITH

On page after page in Scripture, we find people in situations where life has closed in on them. It might seem logical for them to chuck their faith. We wouldn't be surprised if they turned away from God in the midst of difficulty, or if they leaned toward their favorite addiction in an attempt to feel better. Unfortunately, that's what too many people do when the going gets tough.

See, when life turns hard for us, we're almost always tempted to welcome the Enemy at our table. But when we realize that Jesus invites us to follow Him *even though* life is hard, we discover the foundational truth for winning the battle for our minds.

This is the depth of faith we see throughout the Bible. Three Hebrew young men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, worshipped God in an era when King Nebuchadnezzar had commanded everybody to worship only a huge, gold statue of himself. The goal of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego was to be obedient to God's call on their lives. When the music played (the signal for everybody to fall down and worship the golden statue), Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego remained standing. Because of their righteous actions, they wound up being thrown into a raging fire. What was God thinking? Surely that made no sense. They didn't do anything wrong. Shouldn't they be rewarded for their righteous living? Wasn't God for them and not against them?

The faith of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego didn't deflate. Instead, their faith inflated. Even on the edge of a fiery furnace, they were able to say to the king, “If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty's hand. But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up” (Daniel 3:17–18). Rescued out of their circumstances or