

## The Sermon on the Mount - Love Your Enemies

Matthew 5:38-48

December 13, 2015

*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, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.*

**Matthew 5:44-45**

Some terms first to be understood:

### What is an enemy?

Greek Word – *Echthros*: hated, hateful, hostile and opposing another.

English definition: a person who is actively opposed or hostile to someone or something, or ideology. (Opponent, adversary, foe, combatant)

### Who is my enemy?

Any person or group of people that we hate or that hate us, that we are hostile to or are hostile to us or we despise or they despise us!

One opposes you

Spitefully uses you

The person who takes you to court

The person who harms you

Curses you, hates you

Persecutes you

### What is “love?”

In verse 44 the word love is the word “agapao” and where we get our word “agape” from. Agape love is the active love of God for his Son and his people, and the active love his people are to have for God, each other, and even enemies.

Based on these definitions all of us here this morning could say that we have “enemies.” Can you think of some right now?

**What does God tell us we are to do with our enemy? Love them, bless them, do good to them and pray for them!**

Immediately when you hear this you may put up your guard, tune out or dismiss it.

Did God mean what He said when He told us to love our enemies? Was it true? Was He giving us instruction that He desires for us to keep?

**When we hear God’s Words to “love our enemies” we often would rather avoid this command, but we can’t; it comes from God and we are told to. Often times, though, instead of loving our enemy we fill it with:**

For some, instead of “loving our enemies” we have picked up one or some of the above and have made it our identity.

We have already decided we can't and we won't love our enemies. For example:

A parent who wounded us  
A family member did us wrong  
A friend turned their back on us  
One who did something to our spouse or our kids  
Someone who treated us wrongly and now is "living large"  
Someone who won't give us the time of day, and we don't know why  
Someone who we tried to make things right, but they won't hear us out  
Someone who desires our downfall, demise and even death

*The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. 2 Peter 3:9*

*"Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways," says the Lord GOD. "Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies," says the Lord GOD. "Therefore turn and live!"* **Ezekiel 18:30-32**

You and I can't do this! We can't love our enemies by ourself. We can't love them on our own, it's impossible.

*Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"* **Mark 9:24**

*Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."* **Matthew 16:24**

In Jesus Christ, we can't say, "this is just who I am" or "this is just the way it is." We have been made free in Jesus. He is all we need.

Prayer Focus:

We will confess our need for God to cleanse our heart.

We will lay down all bitterness, anger, hate, malice, what has been done to us, envy, anger, hate etc. and ask God to fill it with His heart.

We would realize we need to spend with time with Jesus on a regular basis.

If we want God to have our heart we **must** love our enemies.