

Love Your Enemies

Luke 6:27-36 New American Standard Bible

²⁷ “But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who are abusive to you. ²⁹ Whoever hits you on the cheek, offer him the other also; and whoever takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic from him either. ³⁰ Give to everyone who asks of you, and whoever takes away what is yours, do not demand it back. ³¹ Treat people the same way you want them to treat you. ³² If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³ And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴ And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners in order to receive back the same amount. ³⁵ But love your enemies and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil people. ³⁶ Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

Introduction

- Group discussion on “Love Your Enemy (3 Minutes).”
- Have you ever wished that God would completely wipe off all the jerks including your own enemies from the face of the earth? If you have, today’s sermon is for you. This morning we are going to think about loving and blessing our enemies: why, how, and the reward thereof.

Content

- There are two types of people in the world, Jesus says in today’s text. ‘Sinners’ and ‘Children of the Most High.’
- “Sinners”: they may believe in God but do not follow God’s rules. Rather, they live by their own rules.
- “Children of the Most High”: they obey and live by God’s rules.
- Jesus identifies two ways that people deal with their personal enemies (jerks).
- First, **revenge** that includes curse, hate, insult. Next, **love** that includes overcome evil with good, bless, and pray.

Who’s My Enemy?

- Here's my definition of enemy: *anyone in your personal life who gives you a headache/stomachache, makes your life difficult, unpleasant, and even miserable either temporarily or permanently.*
- Create a Blacklist in your mind (later we will turn it into a Blessing-list).

Why Blessing?

- Why do we ought to love and bless our enemies?
- For three reasons:
- First, because the *Golden Rule* dictates us to do so. *Treat people the same way you want them to treat you* (v. 31). Remember: the context of the Golden Rule is "love your enemy." In other words, we not only practice this rule with loved ones, but also with our enemies. Furthermore, don't wait until your enemies start loving you first [it may never happen]. Instead, take initiative in loving them first and then you will see a miracle of God.
- Second, because we are *God's children*. It is a right thing to do for the children of God.
- Third, for our *own good*. Blessing and love help our well-being. Curse and hate hurt us. Let me unpack them for you.

Who Am I? Love your enemy begins with the understanding of who we are in Christ.

- Who are you? You are a child of the Most High, Jesus says. Do we not love to say that we are children of God? We do. If so, Jesus says, live it out as you mean it. Act like you are indeed His child. Not just in words. But, in action.
- God says that we are His children. We are born into His family. We are born of God. We are born from above. God is our Father in Heaven. We are His children. We are the citizens of Heaven.
- As children in the household of God, we live by His rules and His truth. Being part of God's family, we naturally imitate God our Heavenly Father in our words and deeds. E.g. A boy perfectly imitates his father the smoker. When we love God, we will keep His Word. E.g. We cannot claim that we are His children unless we keep His commands (Ezekiel 11:20). We are called to live out our faith in God by keeping His commandments.
- Listen to Jesus: If we are no different from the "sinners" in the world in this business of loving others, that is, if we only are nice to those who are good to us, and mean to those who hate us, "what credit that is to you?" (v. 32, 33, 34). That is, all the people in the world do that. He is asking what's the difference between the world and us.
- Be different, Jesus commands. How much? We ask. As the sky is far from the ground, so you shall be different from the world, Jesus replies. Be like God. Be ye

perfect as your heavenly Father is (Matthew 5:48). His compassions never fail (E.g. His grace is like water coming from hydrant). He is gracious to the ungrateful and the wicked, so Jesus commands, be gracious and merciful to your enemies.

- We are to be merciful and compassionate to our enemies, because our God is merciful and compassionate to them. We do good to our enemies without expecting to be paid back because God says so. We bless and pray for our enemies because it pleases the Lord.
- What about justice and revenge? Rest assured that God will repay to everyone according to what they have done (Romans 2:6), either good or bad. He will repay with affliction those who afflict you (2 Thessalonians 1:6). When it comes down to justice and revenge, we put them in the hands of God, because vengeance is His, not ours (Romans 12:9).

How to Bless? The next question is how we bless our enemies. First,

- Love: do not rely on your feelings, rather use your “will power” to obey God’s will. Say not “I will try” but “I am going to do it.”
- Overcome evil with good: Are your enemies thirsty? Give them water. Are they hungry? Give them food.
- Bless: Each time bitterness springs up in your heart, bless the enemy in Jesus’ name. The rule of blessings: it comes back to you if the enemy doesn’t deserve your blessing/curse (Matthew 10:13).
- Pray: Sincerely pray for the enemy, not against him/her (Matthew 5:44).

What’s the Reward?

- Jesus promises: if you love your enemy, your reward will be great (v. 35). So, what kind of reward will you get from God?
- First, you shall be called a child of the Most High. It is truly our privilege. It is an eternal Blessing that our names are recorded in the book of life. That’s not the case for anyone in the world. Some folks are called in the Bible ‘children of the devil (John 8:44).’ You are a child of light and a citizen of God’s Kingdom. By loving the enemy, you declare to the world that you are a child of the Most High.
- Next, loving and blessing your enemy is essentially good for your health: physical, emotional, and spiritual (it takes bitterness out of us). It also breaks the cycle of evil, unnerves the enemy, and makes room for God’s justice and mercy [heaping burning coals on the enemy’s head: Romans 12:20].

Conclusion

- When Jesus commands us to keep the Golden Rule in hostile relationships, He knows what He is asking of us. Some of us may still think that this kind of love is crazy and impossible to practice. We may even cringe with the thought that if we literally follow His command, we may end up opening ourselves up for more hurts.
- Jesus' answer to those worries is NO. Absolute NO.
- How would you deal with your enemies? Love or hate? Bless or curse? It's up to you. Either you can choose the worldly way and remain in darkness and bitterness. Or you can choose Jesus' way and prove that Jesus is right and live healthy.
- I have tried His way and it worked and it still does every time. Was it easy? No, however, it was possible when I obeyed His command not relying on my feelings. The Lord also rewarded me with an unthinkable blessing: He turned my worst enemy into a best friend. The same God will show His perfect ways to those who obey His word.
- Love your enemies, do good to them, expect nothing in return, bless them, and pray for them. Do not curse, hate, or insult them back. Be different from the world. Be God's child. Be imitators of God. Be merciful as He is. Love your enemies.

Action Point: Remember your blacklist? Turn that list to a blessing list and start blessing your enemies every day and pray for them throughout this week. You will see the change in you.

- Amen.