

An Uncommon Love

August 22nd, 2021

Prayer

Luke 6:27-36 (ESV)

“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 abuse you. ²⁹ To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. ³⁰ Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. ³¹ And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them. ³² “If you love those who love you, what benefit 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 benefit 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, to get 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 is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. ³⁶ Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.

Jesus is calling us to an uncommon type of love. The natural reaction to personal wrongs is to get even. But Jesus desires for us to reflect a holier type of love.

Luke 6:27-36 (ESV)

“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 abuse you.

What are the obstacles to obey the Lord here?

What is necessary to share Jesus' example here?

Romans 12:9-21 (ESV)

Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. ¹⁰ Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. ¹¹ Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. ¹² Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. ¹³ Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. ¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. ¹⁷ Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. ¹⁸ If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ¹⁹ Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” ²⁰ To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

1 Peter 2:19-24 (ESV)

For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly.²⁰ For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God.²¹ For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.²² He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.²³ When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but **continued** entrusting himself to him who **judges justly**.²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

Illus: Rev. Charles W. Lanham

Jesus did not ask people to react this way in order to earn God's favor. He was pointing us to the power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish what would otherwise be impossible.

Jesus communicated that love must **not** be discriminating. The challenge is not to determine whether they deserve it or not, that is not the qualifier. Where would we be if God loved us that way?

Obedience – is submitting to an action whether we agree with it or not.

Loving our enemies means serving in their best interests. Pray for them and find ways to help them.

Jesus loved the whole world, even though the world was in rebellion against Him. Jesus asks believers to follow His example by loving their enemies.

Do you think that Jesus wrestled with loving His enemies in His humanity?

We have all experienced God love and grace. He loved us even while we were sinful and rebellious. He sent His Son to die for us, not because we deserved it, but only because of His love.

Matthew 5:43-46 (ESV)

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’⁴⁴ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,⁴⁵ so that you may be sons of your Father who is 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.⁴⁶ For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

We who were once enemies of God and have been adopted into His family should understand what it means to love our enemies. But only with the Spirit's help can we bless those who hate us and pray for those who abuse us. When we are hated, cursed, and abused, we are to respond with love.

Luke 6:29-30 (ESV)

To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either.³⁰ Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back.

The act of praying for enemies, even loving them, might seem simple enough. But what about responding in love, how can anyone do that?

The attitude is not so much to offer to be hit again as it is to offer forgiveness. The point is not so much being passive when being robbed, as it is being compassionate for another's need. If someone needs to steal a coat, then perhaps that person also needs your shirt.

Believers are citizens of a different kingdom and don't need to retaliate, hold a grudge, or hang on to possessions.

We are set free to forgive and give.

Luke 6:31 (ESV)

And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.

Confucius said, "What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others."

Rabbi Hillel said, "Whatever angers you when you suffer it at the hands of others, do not do it to others, this is the whole law."

Jesus stated this in a positive manner, making it even more powerful. While it may be possible to not do evil to others, it is much more difficult to take the initiative to actually love. This is the key to the fellowship that Jesus wants.

Luke 6:32-34 (ESV)

"If you love those who love you, what benefit 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 benefit 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, to get back the same amount.

Luke 6:35 (ESV)

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 is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.

Our lives should reflect the attitude of the Lord! Believers respond this way not so that we can be the church but because we are the church.

You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving.

Amy Carmichael

Luke 6:36 (ESV)

Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.

To be merciful means to refuse to inflict just vengeance, as well as to show compassion.