

Love Your Enemies

Matthew 5:43-48; Luke 6:27,32,35; Romans 12:17-21

Faith Portal Church

ADULT

Unit 4 Lesson 4

Supplemental Texts

Luke 6:27-38; 1 Sam 24

Focus Verse

“But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.” – Luke 6:35

Introduction

Another teaching of our Lord in the Sermon on the Mount entails LOVE. While love should be shown to all people, but Jesus here stressed showing love to our enemies. Naturally, loving our enemies is hard to do, and all people, especially Christians, have enemies. These enemies do evil against Christians, who in turn are instructed to love them despite their evil deeds.

Deeper Look

Love Your Enemies – Matt 5:43-48; Luke 6:27,32,35

God gave the Jews the law to love their neighbors (Lev 19:18). The addition “and hate thine enemy” was a misleading inference from the law by the Jews, as it is not found in the law or the prophets. Here, Christ elucidated that love is not restricted to those we love but extended also to those who hate us. Instead of repaying evil for the evil we receive, we repay with good (Rom 12:21), as Jesus did on the cross. This is how we can be identified with our heavenly Father. We have a holy challenge from the Lord to endeavor to be different from the unbelievers. If we find ourselves unable to do more loving deeds than the unbelievers do for those they love, then we are not reflecting more of God to the world. How can we be perfect like God? The answer is by striving to attain to this level of love Jesus Christ prescribed to us.

Do Not Repay Evil For Evil – Rom 12:17-21

Our text in Roman 12 instructs us not to render evil for evil, and to be mindful of conducting ourselves honorably. We must do our part to be at peace with everyone, including our enemies, as much as it depends on us. “If it be possible” (v. 18) means that it might not always be doable, and we need to understand that. We should not seek revenge on those who cause us injury, but to allow God to be the Judge (Deut 32:35). However, this verse does not say we should not seek justice in certain injuries in the court system. Our enemies must be loved and shown kindness (Prov 25:21-22), because, by this, his conscience may be pricked and be led to repentance.

Questions

1. To the Jews of Jesus' time, who was considered a neighbor? Who was considered an enemy? Did the Lord ever instruct them to hate their enemies? See Exo 22:21; 23:9; Lev 19:33; Deut 10:18-19; 24:17; 27:19.
2. How would we identify an enemy? How natural is it for us to pray for our enemy? Why does Jesus instruct us to love our enemies despite the way they treat us?
3. What challenge did Jesus present to His hearers when He referred to the publicans, the tax collectors, who were not looked upon favorably? How does this challenge apply to us today?
4. Jesus enjoins you to give to your enemies without expecting anything in return. See Luke 6:35. What is the importance of this principle to you? What is the benefit of living by the principle?
5. Do not pay anyone back evil for evil. Why are we instructed against paying back evil for evil? What could cause us to desire to pay back evil for evil?
6. The requirement to live peaceably with all people does not come ease for us. How can we be intentional about it?
7. What does the Bible mean by "For in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head"? See Rom 12:20.

Personal Meditation

If there is one thing pleasing to see happen to our enemies, it would be to see them suffer for the injuries they have caused us. Human nature is to see them punished. If you feel this way, you are not walking in the Spirit of Christ. What we should not miss is that God loves us so much that He will not allow our enemies to go scot-free. However, He loves our enemies—Jesus died for them, also. As we extend kindness to them and withdraw from exulting when God avenges (Prov 24:17-18), we become more like our Savior Jesus Christ, Who is our Great Example.

“For in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head” denotes some painful experience the enemy will have as a result of our kindness. The enemy will feel some shame and remorse, conviction for evil done, and be inclined to repent. This is achievable when we wholeheartedly embrace the will of God in our life. Truly, it does not come easy, but it is what we are enjoined to do. We must allow the love of God in our hearts, and we must pray for our enemies. Jesus did it (Luke 23:34), Stephen did (Acts 7:60), many more Saints did (Heb 12:1), and we can, too!

DAILY STUDY

Monday	Matt 5:43-45
Tuesday	Matt 5:46-48
Wednesday	Luke 6:27-30
Thursday	Luke 6:31-35
Friday	Luke 6:36-38
Saturday	Rom 12:17-21



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