

Love Your Enemies, Be Perfect

Matthew 5:43-48

Q: What does it mean to love someone? Love can mean telling someone they are wrong. It can mean showing affection physically. It can mean protection. It essentially means to do what is in the best interest of the other person. Being thoughtful and meeting or even anticipating need. Love is active, it pursues.

Examples given: The anticipation and offer of help to a neighbor who has made it their business to be an enemy or show disdain for you. These deeds must be done in obedience to God, not merely from our own heart. They must come from a genuine heart that truly wants their good, not a proud attempt to be the better person.

Q: What is the goal of that love? To love as God loves, giving freely, typically receiving nothing in return for what He gives. How much of humanity really gives back to God in a real measure that meets anything near the standard with which He gives?

Q: These commands, what are their individual goals?

Bless - speak love. Matthew 12:34 says from out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. True love spoken is from the heart, not empty words. In order to this for an enemy we need to godly love. No man naturally has this love for enemies.

Do good - actively seek their best, even to no reward. Expect nothing but aim for their best

Pray - plead to God on their behalf for their good. Intercede for them that the best would come to them. This doesn't mean "fix them so my life will be better," it means draw them closer to Him that they may experience Him in greater fullness. Christ plead for us in the garden & even from the Cross.

Q: Christ died for our sins. What other provisions has God made for us? Rain on my lawn, sun on my field, earth that yields food, eyesight, hearing, taste. If these things were withheld we count them odd, a negative in our life. We expect them and feel we've been denied a right. We'd fix it if we could. We don't count them a blessing or thank God for these things.

Q: What does God say of this in Romans 2:5 and how is that supposed to work? If we realized how good He was and how ungrateful we were then we'd be convicted. Since we take every goodness for granted, rather than be drawn to repentance we curse Him for grace not given. (Ch 20:1-15)

Q: Why is it such a negative to thing to be like the tax collectors or Gentiles? Is that an insult to be like the world? John 14:16-17 If God lives in us, we live supernaturally different. If there is no evidence of that we have denied the power of God (2 Timothy 3:1-5)

Q: Be perfect? Affirming the law we are called to press toward holiness. Philippians 2:12, Phil 3:12-15, Hebrews 12:14, 2 Peter 1:2-11