



THE GOSPEL OF  
MATTHEW



# Loving Your Enemies

Matthew 5:43–48



## Matthew 5:43–48

<sup>43</sup> “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ <sup>44</sup> But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, <sup>45</sup> 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. <sup>46</sup> For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? <sup>47</sup> And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? <sup>48</sup> You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”



## Matthew 5:20

Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.



## 1. See everyone as your “neighbor” (5:43)

<sup>43</sup> “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’”



## Leviticus 19:18

...you shall love your neighbor as yourself.



## Deuteronomy 22:1, 4

<sup>1</sup> If you see your brother Israelite's ox or sheep straying, do not ignore it; make sure you return it to your brother...

<sup>4</sup> If you see your brother's donkey or ox fallen down on the road, do not ignore it; help him lift it up.



## Exodus 23:4–5

<sup>4</sup> If you come across your enemy's stray ox or donkey, you must return it to him. <sup>5</sup> If you see the donkey of someone who hates you lying helpless under its load, and you want to refrain from helping it, you must help with it.



## 2. Choose to bless your “enemy” (5:44)

<sup>44</sup> “But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you...”



Typical person's "love"	Good Samaritan's love
my people	any person
insider	outsider
same culture	different culture
healthy and easy	hurting and needy
safe situation	dangerous situation
religiously clean	religiously dirty
convenient	inconvenient
little sacrifice	great sacrifice
near home	far from home
prior relationship	no prior relationship
future relationship	no future relationship
no follow up	follow up
reward likely	no reward



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- ❖ Greeting instead of ignoring
- ❖ Gentle words instead of bitter words
- ❖ Helping instead of hurting
- ❖ Praying instead of stewing
- ❖ Wanting the best instead of wishing the worst



To return evil for good is the devil's way;  
to return good for good is man's way;  
to return good for evil is God's way.

— A. M. Hunter



### 3. Learn from our Father's example (5:45)

<sup>45</sup> “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.”



## Ephesians 5:1–2

<sup>1</sup> Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.

<sup>2</sup> And walk in love...



## Luke 6:35

“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.”



## Psalm 145:9

The LORD is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made.



## 4. Stop settling for mediocrity (5:46–47)

<sup>46</sup> For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? <sup>47</sup> And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?



## 5. *Aspire to the fullness of God (5:48)*

<sup>48</sup> You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.



## Leviticus 19:2

“You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.”



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