

Love Your Enemies; Matthew 5:43-48

I. You Have Heard

- A. There is a difference between what we have heard and what is true and correct.
- B. Love your neighbor, hate your enemy
- C. Leviticus 19:17–18; 17 “You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but you shall reason frankly with your neighbor, lest you incur sin because of him. 18 You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.
- D. God never said “hate your enemy”
- E. Jesus knew that the Pharisees’ teachings were not God’s
- F. “But I say” is the same as God saying it

II. Neighbor

- A. Who/What is a neighbor
- B. The Old Covenant idea of a neighbor
 - 1. Any person who lives near another
 - 2. A person you know well and regard with affection and trust
 - 3. Any countryman, but especially local friends and acquaintances
 - 4. Leviticus 19:9–14; 9 “When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, neither shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. 10 And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the Lord your God. 11 “You shall not steal; you shall not deal falsely; you shall not lie to one another. 12 You shall not swear by my name falsely, and so profane the name of your God: I am the Lord. 13 “You shall not oppress your neighbor or rob him. The wages of a hired worker shall not remain with you all night until the morning. 14 You shall not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind, but you shall fear your God: I am the Lord.
 - 5. Under the Old Covenant there was a difference between a neighbor and a sojourner
 - 6. But they were still treated the same
- C. The New Covenant idea of a neighbor
 - 1. Luke 10:25-37
- D. This distinction is only important so we can begin to understand that the ideas Jesus presents on the Sermon on the Mount are not new ideas
- E. God always wanted His people to treat everyone with kindness and generosity, even their enemies

III. Enemy

- A. Hebrew - an armed adversary; especially a member of an opposing military force; a personal enemy
- B. Greek - a person who hates another and wishes him injury
- C. Jesus confirms the idea that we have enemies, “But I say love your enemies...”
- D. The idea of our “enemies” extends from people right here in Plainview that would seek to do you harm to the foreign armies of countries hostile to either America or Christians
- E. But our task is to present God’s love to them
 - 1. Romans 12:20; 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.”
 - 2. Presenting God’s love to them does not mean approving, or even tolerating their conduct

3. Someone once asked me how I could reconcile being a Christian and also being a member of the US military where I might have to kill someone
 4. John 2:13–17; 13 The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14 In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. 15 And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. 16 And he told those who sold the pigeons, “Take these things away; do not make my Father’s house a house of trade.” 17 His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for your house will consume me.”
 5. These are not the actions of a pacifist
 6. Luke places this event towards the end of His ministry, after He rode into Jerusalem to the cries of “Hosanna”
 7. Romans 12:17–18; 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.
- F. How do you show love to your enemies? Hot coals on their head?
- G. Jesus says to pray for them
1. I don’t think he means, “I pray they get whats coming to them!”
 2. We often pray for “soft hearts” to hear what God is saying through His word and through us
 3. We often pray for something or someone to reach them
 4. Proverbs 24:17–18; 17 Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and let not your heart be glad when he stumbles, 18 lest the Lord see it and be displeased, and turn away his anger from him.
 5. Proverbs 25:21–22; 21 If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat, and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink, 22 for you will heap burning coals on his head, and the Lord will reward you.
 6. Leviticus 16:12–13; 12 And he shall take a censer full of coals of fire from the altar before the Lord, and two handfuls of sweet incense beaten small, and he shall bring it inside the veil 13 and put the incense on the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is over the testimony, so that he does not die.
 7. "Heaping coals of fire upon the head of an enemy" is a metaphor referring to the pangs of conscience that an enemy will experience upon receiving such undeserved treatment." Coffman
 8. Acts 7:60; And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” And when he had said this, he fell asleep.
- H. Our enemy’s needs (love) over ours is how we love them; selfless, sacrificial love
- IV. Sons
- A. “So that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven”
 - B. This sacrificial love is the mark of a Christian
 - C. The Samaritan gave of himself for a man who professed to be his enemy
 - D. Luke 10:36–37; 36 Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?” 37 He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” And Jesus said to him, “You go, and do likewise.”
 - E. Our love for and enemies (in this text) is linked to be sons of God

F. 1 Peter 2:9; But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

V. Love Your Enemies

A. Love your neighbor

B. Love your enemies

C. Ephesians 4:31–5:2; 31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. 32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. 1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. 2 And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.