

“Love Your Enemies”

(Matthew 5:43-48)

The commandment to love our enemies is probably the most difficult commandment in the Bible. Can you think of anything harder to do than to show love towards someone who had hurt you deeply in your life?

The Jews of Jesus' day certainly felt this was a difficult commandment. They actually tried to distort and twist what God said about this issue (Matthew 5:34; Deuteronomy 19:15-21). Why is it so important that we obey this very difficult commandment?

- **The Lord commands us to.**

- Matthew 5:44 is a commandment from the King. Similar instructions are also given by Paul in Romans 12:14-21.
 - Contrary to what many suggest, the New Covenant is more than a “love letter.”
 - It also contains God's law for us today (James 1:22-25).
- Many of God's commandments are not that hard to obey (ex: love your wife; don't murder; don't steal). Others are much more difficult to obey (ex: love your enemies).
 - The easy thing to do is to seek vengeance against enemies.
 - The easy thing to do is to treat enemies like they treat us.
- Regardless of how difficult loving our enemies may be, we must do it because the Lord demands it.

- **We are called to a higher standard.**

- We are called to be different than the world (Matthew 5:46-47).
 - Even heathens do good to those who do good to them!
 - Jesus has called us to be better than the world.
- We are not to get even with our enemies.
 - We are to feed them when they are hungry.
 - We are to pray for them when they are sick.
 - We are to study the gospel with them and help them go to heaven.

- **We are called to be imitators of God.**

- We are called to love like God.
 - Loving our enemies will make us “sons” of the Father (Matthew 5:45).
 - Loving our enemies will make us “perfect” (Matthew 5:48).
- The Lord isn't asking us to do anything that He didn't do first (Ephesians 5:1-2).
 - Jesus sought the good of His enemies (Luke 23:34).
 - Jesus sought our good when He died on the cross (Romans 5:6-10). We need to always remember this whenever we start struggling to love our enemies!

Conclusion: No commandment should be difficult for us to obey when we truly commit ourselves to Jesus!

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