

True Love

Loving the Unloveables

A woman suggested to Abraham Lincoln that he should completely destroy his enemies and he responded, "Madam, do I not destroy my enemies when I make them my friends?" An excellent response in pretty much everybody's opinion ... with one caveat. Not every enemy is willing to become a friend. When Jesus gave the command to love our enemies, he was making a presumption that we would have enemies. But what does it look like to love an enemy? Just how far are we expected to take that?

Matthew 5:43-48

1. An enemy is someone who _____.
2. Loving your enemy begins with positive _____.
3. How to Practically Love Your Enemy

_____ your enemy. (including the empower)

Be _____ to your enemy when they're in positions of authority.

Do no _____ to your enemy.

Offer Christian _____ to your enemy.

_____ for your enemy.

My Count Me In! Commitments

- I'll be here next Sunday
- I'll invite a friend (You're So Worth It! Sunday)
- I'll be here next Sunday
- I will identify my enemies
- I will pray ... by name and positively ... for my enemies
- I will be respectful and honoring is ALL of my social media interactions

Additional Notes

Digging Deeper, Going Further

True Love: Loving the Unlovables

Scripture: Matthew 5:43–48

Introduction: The definition of an enemy has changed over the years. Once upon a time an enemy was someone who was actively persecuting you. A nation. A dictator. Someone who was out to get you. But today, our enemies are those who voted for the “other” candidate. Those who don’t believe like us. Those who have a different perspective or orientation than us. And how do we treat our enemies? At best, we turn our heads and pretend we don’t see. But too often, we treat them with the contempt we’ve convinced ourselves they deserve ... and some do it in the name of the Lord.

1. Read Matthew 5:38–42. What does Jesus say the response should be when those in authority or with power overextend their reach? NOTE: In Matthew 14:1–13, when Jesus believed he might be in danger from his enemy, he retreated in order to remain safe (until his time had come to surrender his life). The point of Jesus’ diatribe was about response to your enemies, not to put yourself in danger.
2. Read Matthew 5:43–48. Where do you suppose people heard the saying “Love your neighbor and hate your enemy”?
3. Dr. Bill said we live in a divided nation. What are some of the ways you see our nation divided? Why do you think we’ve become so splintered?
4. In verses 44–45 that those who are obedient to God are considered God’s children, whereas the wicked are not. Why do you think God sends blessings on both?
5. Read 1 Peter 2:17. Why do you think Peter (and other New Testament writers) insisted that Christians should “honor” the emperor ... and other enemies who were in positions of power?
6. What do you think the response of non-Christians are to the social media posts written by “Christians” who disrespect and dishonor those who don’t agree with them politically, theologically, etc.?
7. How will you show honor or respect to your enemies this week?

Next Week: True Love – You’re SO Worth It!
Who will you be inviting to worship with you this week?