

JESUS AT THE CENTER OF THE KINGDOM

LOVE MY ENEMIES

August 11, 2024

DIGGING DEEPER

Use this guide by yourself or with friends as you seek to know God.
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"But I say, love your enemies! ..."

Matthew 5:44a (NLT)

Insight: The scribes and Pharisees had taken the words of Leviticus 19:18 beyond what God had commanded. They said you should hate your enemy in addition to loving your neighbor. In Matthew 5:43-48, Jesus rebukes this teaching, showing us the right way to treat those we love and others. He calls us to live counter to how the world wants us to treat others.

Read Matthew 5:43-48.

1. What's your initial reaction to this passage?
2. How did Jesus' life exemplify the phrase *love your enemies*?
3. In what ways do you show love to others? What other ways can you do this?
4. What does it mean to truly love our enemies?
5. How difficult is it for you to love your neighbors? Your enemies? Those who persecute you?
6. Are there specific people or a particular group you struggle to love? What can you do to grow in your love for them?
7. How does God treat evil and good people the same?
8. What is your usual reaction when approached by someone you struggle to love?
9. What's the connection between praying for our enemies and living as true children of the Father?
10. What does it mean that God *gives His sunlight to both the evil and the good*? How does this concept enable us to love our enemies?
11. What point is Jesus trying to make in vs. 46-47?
12. What do you think Jesus means when He says that *we are to be perfect*?
13. According to this passage, what results from loving our enemies?
14. How have the passages from the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5 changed your views of living like Christ? What changes have you made as a result? Where do you still need to grow?
15. Spend time with the Father, asking Him what He wants you to know from this passage. Listen for His response and write down what you hear.

Love even for enemies is the key to the solution of the problems of our world.
Martin Luther King Jr.