Following the God Who Loves His Enemies May 7, 2023

*Luke 6:27-36 Series: Through Jesus’ Eyes*

Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend. – Martin Luther King, Jr

Intro: Love on the morning commute

1. Jesus calls us to love the people we don’t like
2. Jesus’ first command to His disciples

v. 27 *Love your enemies*

1. You know the people you don’t care for

vv. 27-28 *those who hate you … curse you … abuse you*

v. 29 *one who strikes you on the cheek*

v. 29 *one who takes away your cloak*

v. 30 *everyone who begs from you*

1. Be practical with your love

v. 27 *do good to those who hate you*

v. 28 *bless those who curse you*

v. 28 *pray for those who abuse you*

v. 29 *offer the other [cheek] also*

v. 29 *do not withhold your tunic*

v. 30 *give to everyone who begs from you*

v. 30 *do not demand [what people have taken] back*

1. Understand what Jesus is not saying

Acts 16:37 *Paul said to them, “They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens, and have thrown us into prison; and do they now throw us out secretly? No! Let them come themselves and take us out.”*

2 Thess. 3:10 *If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat* …

* Loving our enemies doesn’t seem to get the focus in the church that Jesus gave it. Why do you think that is?
* What are some practical ways you have shown love or feel you ought to show love to people you don’t like?
* When the Jews formed a mob to attack Paul and Silas (Acts 17:5), they fled the city (Acts 17:10), even though Jesus taught them to “turn the other cheek.” Why?

1. Jesus rewards us for loving the people we don’t like
2. It’s not particularly Christian to love people that we like

v. 32 *even sinners love those who love them*

v. 33 *even sinners do [good to those who do good to them]*

v. 34 *sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount*

1. There’s no bonus for loving the people that we like

v. 32 *If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you?*

v. 33 *And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you?*

v. 34 *And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you?*

1. Jesus rewards us for the love that we show to people we don’t like

v. 35 *But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great …*

1 Peter 3:9 *Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing.*

* What motivates godless people to love people who love them?
* Why do we think it’s noble to love people who love us back?
* Why does Jesus only reward love that is shown to people who can’t love us back?

1. Jesus loves you when there’s nothing to like about you
2. When we love people we don’t like, we reflect the love of God

v. 35 *But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and … you will be sons of the Most High …*

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.*

1. Ask yourself WDJD (What Did Jesus Do?) not just WWJD (What Would Jesus Do?)

v. 35 *he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil*

v. 36 *Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.*

Romans 5:8 *God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

Matthew 26:67 *Then they spit in his face and struck him. And some slapped him …*

Isaiah 50:6 *I gave my back to those who strike, and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard; I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting.*

* How does love for people we don’t like reflect God’s love to people?
* When we received Jesus’ gift of eternal life, in what sense were we more like His enemies than His friends?
* What are some of the ways that Jesus illustrates the love for enemies that He calls us to?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study Hebrews 1:5-14

Notes