

# Love Like Your Father

## Matthew 5:43-48

### Sermon Handout

Christians, we are called as ambassadors to emulate Christ who laid down his life for us. We are called to be like our Father in heaven as this text teaches as we live in the kingdoms of this world as those who live as citizens of another and far more lasting kingdom under a King who is unlike any other king in this realm: King Jesus.

“My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom of this world, my servants would have been fighting that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from this world.” (John 18:36)

We belong to another kingdom and that kingdom lives with a higher power and authority – the Lord Jesus Christ.

The power in our kingdom is not military but greater – the Holy Spirit. The pattern is not retaliatory but a message of reconciliation with God.

#### **I. The Highest Authority In our Lives is Jesus (Matthew 5:43-48)**

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ **But I say to you**, ‘Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven.’”

In the sermon on the Mount, Jesus is unequivocal that he has the authority above all other voices even religious voices. **Jesus even has more authority than Moses.**

“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ **But I say to you** that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire. So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go.

First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. **Truly, I say to you**, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.” (Matthew 5:21-26)

This is one of the clearest truths that the New Testament is driving home to us – All authority and power belongs to Jesus. He is the highest authority in heaven and on earth.

“And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. And Peter said to Jesus, ‘Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.’ **He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, ‘This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.’** When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, ‘Rise, and have no fear.’ And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.” (Matthew 17:1-8)

“Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, **but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.** He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, <sup>4</sup>having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.” (Hebrews 1:1-4)

“Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through

faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.” (Galatians 3:23-29)

Matthew 28:18

“And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”

**What we need to see here is that Jesus is asserting himself in the Sermon on the Mount as the one who is greater than Moses. He is not just another expositor or interpreter of the law. Jesus is the greater Law giver who brings the message of the gospel over against the Law of Moses. His law is eternal. Moses’ law was for a season. It didn’t exist before Sinai and it is fulfilled and surpassed in the law of Christ.**

“We must see that Moses is finished as a lawgiver just as Aaron is finished as a priest. Aaron was replaced with a new high priest who is greater and better (Heb. 6:20-8:6). **Moses has been replaced with a new lawgiver who is greater and better. The covenant of law that God gave through Moses has been replaced with a new covenant that is greater and better, simply because the old one was obsolete (Heb. 8:6-13).**”

— John G. Reisinger, [But I Say Unto You](#)

“A new lawgiver has superceded and gone far beyond what Moses and his law could ever do. We refuse to belittle Moses in order to establish Christ. However, we also refuse to demean Christ by making him an equal moral authority with Moses. We do not believe that Christ came merely to interpret and approve Moses. Christ has given us new laws based entirely on grace. Christ is the new lawgiver over the true house of God.”

— John G. Reisinger, [But I Say Unto You](#)

- Jesus must have the first say in your life.
- Jesus must have the fullest say in your life.
- Jesus must have the final say in your life.

## II. The Highest Ambition in Our Lives is to Glorify Our Heavenly Father.

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?” (Matthew 5:43-47)

Grant Osborne: “If one loves only friends, they are no different than the pagans. To love one’s enemies is to be truly a child of God and to have a heavenly rather than earthly perspective.”

“To return evil for good is devilish; to return good for good is human; to return good for evil is divine.” Alfred Plummer

**Our job is not to get results. Our calling is to glorify God.**

*“For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.” (Matthew 5:45)*

**God Has the Authority:** It’s his sun and he lets it shine on both the evil and the good.

**God has the Power:** He is sovereign over rain which is life-giving in the wilderness. God gives showers of life-giving mercy to those who don’t deserve life.

What if God did not do this to the evil as well as the good? What if God did not do this to the just and the unjust? We would all be doomed.

We are recipients of God's undeserved mercy. He loved us while we were yet sinners.

**Our calling is to glorify God to the max and the best way to glorify God is to love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.**

John 17:1-2 "When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; **glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.**"

John Piper: "It was the Father's righteous allegiance to his own name that made recompense for sin necessary. So when the Son willingly took the suffering of that recompense on himself, every footfall on the way to Calvary echoed through the universe this message: *The glory of God is of infinite value! The Glory of God is on infinite value!*

Piper adds: "When Jesus died, he glorified the Father's name and saved his Father's people. And since the Father has overflowing pleasure in the honor of his name, and since he delights with unbounded joy in the election of a sinful people for himself, how then shall he not delight in the bruising of his Son by which these two magnificent divine joys are reconciled and made one!"

**Your Secondary Ambition: To not do merely what the world does.**

"For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?"

The question that we should continually be asking in an unjust world is how did Jesus' glorify the Father and how do we fulfill our calling to do the same? He did it by laying down his life for sinners like us.

### **III. The Primary Focus in our Lives is Our Own Sanctification.**

“Be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect.” (Matthew 5:48)

The only place for violence is against your own sin.

John Owen: Be killing sin or sin will be killing you.

**The goal is to seek the progressive transformation of our hearts that loving our enemies affords us. The goal is to become perfect as our Heavenly Father is perfect.**

“Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, **love one another earnestly from a pure heart**, since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God.” (1 Peter 1:22-23)

“Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.’ 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. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” (Romans 12:9-21)

**John 3:16-17** “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

### **Matthew 26:40-41**

“And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, ‘So, could you not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.’”

The challenge for all of us is to recognize that this kind of love is supernatural and we need to abide in Christ and to depend upon Christ.

Loving our enemies is the charge that Christ has given us.

Loving our enemies is the example that the Father has given directly to us.

Loving our enemies is what the Holy Spirit produces in us to the glory and praise of God.