

## **Title: The Master's Mighty Message – Part 4**

Text: Luke 6:27-28

Date: December 21, 2025

Proverbs 3:14 tells us that *"what we gain from wisdom is better than silver, and what we profit from understanding is better than gold."* And so, if you have your Bible with you this morning, and I hope you do, please turn to Luke 6. We're going to begin looking at verses 27-28 this morning, which is a passage that is not only providentially next in our ongoing study of the gospel of Luke, but also one that is unbelievably appropriate to look at and be reminded of on this day, the Sunday before Christmas. I would like to say I planned it that way, but I didn't.

See here in Luke 6, if you remember, Jesus is giving his first full length sermon in the gospel of Luke, and in this sermon, Jesus is communicating to the curious crowds that have started to gather around him. He's starting to communicate the dramatic change and transformation that he alone can produce in the human heart when they draw near to him in faith. See up until this point in the gospel of Luke, Jesus has systematically demonstrated his power over all things, over Satan and his minions, over illness, over nature and creation, over forgiveness and over the law.

Well, here in this first extended gospel presentation from Christ, Jesus, he demonstrates and declares his power and compassion over his people. As he shows us here in verses 20-49, how he imparts the blessed gifts of a yearning hope, a radical love and a desperate dependency upon all those who draw near to him in faith. This morning, we're going to start unwrapping that second gift that Jesus imparts to those who trust in him, and that is the gift of radical love, radical love. How fitting for Christmas as we celebrate the incarnation, the moment when he who is love himself appeared by taking on human flesh, just like one of us.

This morning, we're going to remember this love and be challenged by Christ to reflect it this holiday season. The very love that is displayed in the manger, the love that caused Christ to descend from heaven, the love that caused him to be born of a virgin, to take on humanity, to dwell among sinners, the love that eventually caused him to go and to die on the cross for his enemies. That radical type of Christ-like love is imparted to all those who find new life in him. As Jesus says later in John 13:35, *"By this all people will know that you are my disciples, when you have,"* what, *"love for one another."* And that is what we're going to look at this morning, verses 27-28.

The four reflections of radical love that ought to be seen in every follower of Jesus Christ. Four reflections of the radical divine love that first dawned in Bethlehem all those years ago, was displayed in Christ's life, and then was manifested in absolute completeness at the cross. And so, with that in mind, if you're able, please stand with me out of readiness and respect for the word of God as I get to read our passage before us today.

A short passage from Luke 6:27-28. Luke, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, writes these words for us this morning,

*"But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you."*

This is the word of God who gives us endurance according to his word.

Let's pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you so much for the joy we have this morning to celebrate the birth of Christ together as a church and what it means for us. And Father, as we celebrate the gift of Christ today as your people, help us to remember that this gift that we have received is not to stay with ourselves, but it is to be passed on. Father, we who were once far off, alienated from you and your blessed eternal life, we have been brought near by the blood of Jesus Christ who came in love for us. And Father, I pray that you would equip us as a church to share that gift with others this season by reflecting the very love of Christ which we have received. Help us to remember that love once again afresh today, Father, so that we would show it with determined zeal this week as we meet with many people and have an opportunity to show and to demonstrate the greatest gift of all.

Give us grace, Father, to understand these words today for your glory in Jesus' name, amen.

You may be seated.

So, after Jesus describes the yearning hope that he imparts to all those who draw near to him in faith, he then unwraps for us the second gift that he gives, and that is the gift of radical love, radical love. And Jesus begins to unwrap this description of radical love by first communicating to us in verses 27-28, which we're going to look at this morning, the reflections of this radical love. And there are four that we'll consider, four reflections of radical love that find their source in the very heart and coming of Jesus Christ.

And the first reflection of radical love that we see laid out for us is contained in verses 27-28. Jesus says, *"but I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you."* Now, first of all, I want you to notice here something. Who is Jesus talking to when it comes to this crowd before him? He is talking to those who, what? Hear, who hear, as he says at the beginning of verse 27, *"but I say to you who hear."* Now, obviously everyone in that crowd was already listening to Jesus physically, so Jesus isn't talking about that. No, what Jesus is doing is making a distinction between all of the people that he sees in front of him, and he's specifically addressing those here who can hear him spiritually.

Remember, Jesus in verses 24-26, if you remember, has just been addressing people in the crowd who do not take spiritual matters seriously, who laugh at eternal realities and who think that they do not need to hear, let alone receive anything from God. Well, after warning those types of people, back in verses 24-26,

here in verse 27, Jesus now pivots his focus to these types of people, to people who can hear him, who are ready and able to listen to his message spiritually. Jesus is addressing his true disciples here, and according to Jesus, those who are his true disciples are those who are able to do what most fundamentally? Who can hear. As Jesus says in John 10:27, *"My sheep," do what, "hear my voice, and they follow me."* True disciples of Jesus Christ are those who hear, recognize, and appreciate the word of God for what it is when it is delivered, the word of God.

Paul himself states this very same thing over in 1 Thessalonians 2:13, when he says that he knew that he had confidence that those Thessalonian believers were saved, because he says, *"when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers."* True disciples of Jesus are those who hear and recognize the word of God as the word of God, who understand it to be clear, inerrant, sufficient, and absolute in its divine authority. And so, Jesus is limiting these words to what he's about to say to those who hear, to true, genuine, transformed believers, and you have to ask, why? Why is Jesus doing this? I mean, after all, what the whole world needs now is love, sweet love, right? So why doesn't Jesus just command this of everyone? Why is he limiting these words and instructions to only believers? And the sobering answer is, because only believers have the ability to do what Jesus is about to command.

I mean, just look at what he says here. He says, *"Love your"* what, *"enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you."* That type of love, if we're to be honest, is absolutely impossible, apart from the Holy Spirit of God dwelling within you. Only believers can show a divine love like this, because only believers understand and have received a love like this. As Romans 5:5 says, *"God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us."* As believers in Jesus Christ, God's love has not only been shown to us in Jesus, it has been given to us through the Holy Spirit. And so, Jesus directs these instructions to us, and that ought to cause us, who have trusted in Jesus Christ, to sit up and take notice.

Because listen, the only way that the unredeemed world is ever going to see the type of love that loves bitter enemies, that does good to haters, that blesses curses, that prays for those who mistreat others, the only way the world is ever going to see a love like that is if they see it through you and me. Because you and I are the only people on planet Earth who have been supernaturally empowered by the Holy Spirit of God through faith in Jesus Christ to show this type of love. We are the only ones who have been able to do it. *"O he who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to us."* The only way the world will ever come to see the love of God in Christ is if the world first sees the love of God in you. And so, Jesus says to us today, to those of us who by God's grace understand and have received God's gift of love in Christ, Jesus says to those of us who can hear that we must reflect what we have received.

We must reflect what we've received in Christ. And we do that as believers by loving others with totality, with actuality, with generosity, and with integrity, just as God in Christ has loved us. So, the first way to reflect what we have received is the first love with totality. Jesus turns to those who can hear in this great first gospel message and he says, love, love your enemies. With that one phrase, Jesus nails down the

boundary of the love that we are supposed to show to others as followers of Jesus Christ. And what is the boundary for Christian love? Answer, there is none.

The love of Christ's disciples is to be boundless, encompassing every individual that we might ever interact with without exclusion. And if we were to be honest, many of us know this intellectually, right? You're sitting here this morning saying, yeah, I got this pastor, right? We're all familiar with the two greatest commandments that Jesus recites over in Matthew 22:37-40, right? To *"love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul, mind, and strength.... and to love your neighbor as yourself."* But oh, how we love to put boundaries on the love of God. Just like the young lawyer will do later on in Luke, in Luke chapter 10:29, when he turns to Jesus and he says in response to those commandments, okay, but *"who exactly is my neighbor?"* Because if I can determine who's my neighbor and who's not, then I can figure out who I don't have to love. And so how about it, Jesus? What are the boundaries of the love that I have to show as a follower, as someone who reflects your love? And if you remember, Jesus responds in Luke 10 with the parable of the good Samaritan and teaches us there very clearly that your neighbor is whoever is lying in front of you needing your help, even if that person is your enemy. No one is to be outside the expressions of your love as a believer. You are to reflect Christ's love towards everyone, even towards your enemies.

Now you have to ask this, why? Because that is exactly the type of love that God has shown you in Christ Jesus, a love with totality. And the account of Jesus Christ's birth teaches us this very thing. Remember, what did the angel announce at Christ's birth back in Luke 2:10? He said, *"Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for,"* who, *"all the people."* The love that was demonstrated by God at Christ's birth is extended to all people. And as the most famous verse in all the world says, *"for God so loved the world that he,"* did what, *"gave his only begotten son."* This whole holiday that we're celebrating called Christmas is a celebration of God demonstrating a boundless love to the whole world through the sending of his son to earth. And did God send his son into a world that was filled with friends? No, God sent his son into a world that was filled with enemies. Enemies filled with so much hatred towards him that in the first few years of his life, they killed off an entire town's infants in an attempt to murder the Christ child and forced his whole family to flee to Egypt for safety. This is the welcome that Christ received when he came to earth.

In love, God sent his son into a world that was filled with enemies. Filled with people who rebelled, despised, grieved, and ignored their creator each and every day. God the son came in love for that type of world. As Romans 5:10 says, Christ came, and he lived, and he died while we were enemies. *"He came into his own,"* as John 1:11 says, *"and his own received him not."* But he came anyway, and you have to say why, because of love. And this is the gift of Christmas, is it is a love of totality. The love of God that is seen in Christmas is a love without boundaries, a love with totality, a love that is expressed even towards one's enemies. As 1 John 4:10 says, *"In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and,"* did what, *"sent his Son to be the propitiation, the pleasing sacrifice for our sins."* This Christmas, I want you to remember that God has demonstrated a love for us without boundaries through the sending of his son to earth to be the pleasing sacrifice for our acts of sin and enmity against God. Christ's love reached to us who were enemies, and therefore we are to reflect what we have received. We are to love with totality.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we cannot isolate ourselves to the few little people who fit within our comfort zone, to those who have treated me right and say, well, these are the ones that I'm supposed to love, but anyone who fits outside this circle, I don't have to show love to them at all. No, Christ says God loves you when you were an enemy, therefore you are to love others when they are an enemy as well. But you might say you don't understand what so-and-so said to me. No, I don't. But Jesus says, love your enemies. But you don't understand how so-and-so treated me. No, I don't, but Jesus says, love your enemies. Now someone might say, but how? I mean, I could never have feelings of affection towards anyone who has treated me like this. Well, Jesus isn't asking you to exercise your feelings here. He's actually asking you to exercise your will.

See, the word love here is agape. It's the type of love that is rooted in the will. It's the type of love that chooses to love without one's actual merit or worth. And this is the way that God has loved us.

Deuteronomy 7:7 says that *"God sets his love on us,"* often in spite of who we are, and that's the way that we are to love others also. Jesus is saying here, the love that was seen from me when I first came into this world, a willful demonstration of love towards all mankind, reflect that same type of willful love to a watching world that sets themselves in enmity against me even today, though there be nothing lovable about them at all, set your love on them nonetheless, for so I have loved you. Love with totality. Love your enemies. The gift that you have received, pass it on this Christmas.

And I just have to point out that Jesus doesn't say here, love the enemies of others. Just, I have to say that. No. He says, love your enemies, right? The people that have done you wrong. See, it's very easy in our interconnected, social internet world to hear about things like radical Muslims slaughtering Christians or radical politicians imprisoning Christians overseas and think, that's awful. But you know what I'm going to do? I'm going to love them. I'm going to pray for them. I'm going to love my enemies and all that.

Well, listen, that's all very good, but that's not what Jesus is talking about here. See, anyone can do that, but what Jesus is talking about is loving the enemies of you. It's so easy to love imaginary enemies. It's so hard to actually demonstrate and set love on the people that you see and know who have mistreated you and wronged you. He's talking about loving the enemies of you. It's easy to love the enemies of others. It's harder to love the enemies of you. The enemies you know. The enemies that you face Monday through Friday.

The enemies that directly affect your life. The student who mocks you in class because of your commitment to Christ. The coworker who scorns you because they know you don't endorse their lifestyle. The individual who maligns you and lies about you to others because you showed concern for their soul and desire to lead them to repentance and surrender to Christ. In the context of verse 22 that Jesus just talked about, it's the one who hates you and excludes you and reviles you and spurned your name as evil on account of the son of man. It's a little harder to demonstrate love towards that type of enemy, isn't it? And yet that is exactly the type of divine love that Jesus has shown to you and that Jesus wants us to show to others as his disciples. Love everyone, even the person who is wrongfully hated, excluded, reviled, and lied about you to others. Love even that person, love with totality.

Now this is convicting, isn't it? And I've just gone through one phrase of what Jesus has said. And we haven't even defined what love is yet, which is exactly where Jesus goes next. See, some of us might be tempted to listen to this call to love our enemies and think, well, I think I'm doing a pretty good job. When someone does something wrong against me, I don't return the favor. When I'm reviled, I don't revile in return. I've never done anyone any harm. Well, Jesus is about to show us next that in our call to reflect his radical love to others this holiday season, the issue is not whether you've never done your enemies any harm, the issue is have you ever done your enemies any good? Look at the end of verse 27. After Jesus calls on us to love with totality, he then tells us to love with actuality. He says, *"Love your enemies."* And how does Jesus define love here? He says, *"do good to those who hate you."* And this is what makes this love so different. And this is what makes this love so supernatural.

It is a love that goes beyond not doing anything bad and actually involves doing something good to those who hate you. And this is a love that again, find itself in the very heart of God himself. As Jesus says in Matthew 5:45, *"he makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good and he sends his rain on the just and on the unjust."* He demonstrates love with totality and love with actuality. He loves with not just words; he loves with actions. And God showed his love in no greater way than in sending his son, Jesus Christ, to earth. This is a love that we celebrate for ourselves this Christmas season.

And Jesus is saying, reflect it to others. As 1 John 4:9 says, *"In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him."* And when Christ was on earth, he carried out and continued on in that love with actuality. He didn't just say to the crowds, go in peace, be warmed, and filled as he walked around. Jesus actually gave them what they needed. And as Luke says here, he did good to those who hated him. And even though you may not have recognized this, I want you to know you've already seen a great example of it so far in the gospel of Luke.

See, what's interesting is later on, as we come later on to the gospel of Luke in Luke 10:15, Jesus is going to state there in the future that the people that were living in and around Capernaum, that is the very people he is preaching to right here in Luke 6. He's going to say in Luke 10:15 that they were worse off spiritually than those who lived in Sodom and Gomorrah because they saw so much from the hand of Jesus and yet still did not believe. They demonstrated, the people of Capernaum demonstrated a level of apathy, unbelief, and hatred towards God and towards Christ that is almost unparalleled in all human history. And yet Capernaum is the very city that we read back in chapter 4 where Jesus stayed up all night healing absolutely everyone in that town. I want you to think about that.

Jesus exercised divine omnipotent power all night long for people who were worse off than those who lived in Sodom and Gomorrah. He loved them with actuality. Capernaum is the very city that we've been living in over the last three chapters of our study where Jesus demonstrated his power on behalf of Simon Peter's good, on behalf of the lepers good, on behalf of the paralytics good, on behalf of Matthew's good, on behalf of the man with the withered hands good, and on behalf of this crowds good. Jesus in his first coming to earth did good to those who hate him. And we are to do the same. By the way, that word good in the Greek means to do something that is inherently good, not just superficially or perceptually good.



See, sometimes we might do something not for that person's actual benefit, but just to appease them or to get them out of our hair for a little while. And Jesus says here, no, you are to do what is inherently good, what is ultimately good, what is eternally good for that person who is hating you. And that which is ultimate good for them is that which is redeeming, it is that which points them to the greatest good, Jesus Christ himself, by your words and by your actions. You love your enemies by actually treating them and speaking to them and acting towards them as God has commanded you.

See, we're not loving our enemies this holiday season if you say, well, he stays on that side of the office building, and I stay on this side of the office building, and then we'll be good. No, how is that leading them to eternal life? How is that doing them any eternal good? How is that reflecting the love that actively reached out to you in the person of Jesus Christ? Romans 12:17-21 says this, *"Repay no one evil for evil.... 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 heat burning coals on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."* It's not enough to simply say I love my enemy because I've never done him any harm. The question you have to ask yourself is am I loving my enemy by actively doing them some good? We are to love our enemies with actuality.

As 1 John 3:18 says, *"Little children, let us not love in word or in talk but in deed and in truth."* Jesus demonstrated this in John 13, by the way, if you remember this story. Jesus and his disciples were in the upper room, and Jesus knows that Judas is about to betray him and hand him over to be crucified. And what does Jesus do? He washes Judas' feet, and then he gives him a gesture of friendship by handing to him a morsel of dipped bread. Jesus loved his enemy by reaching out to Judas. God loved his enemies by reaching out to you, and you are to love your enemies by reaching out to them also, by reflecting what you have received, and by purposely doing them some real good for the purpose that they might be saved. This is what it means to receive the love of Christmas. It means to reflect it to others.

As we are meeting for our different holiday celebrations this week, we are going to be around and among many, many, many different individuals, some in public, some in private, some that are very distant related, some that are very closely related, some that are your friends, some that are acting as enemies. How are you to show the love of Christ to them this year? You are to love them with totality, and you are to love them with actuality.

And third, love them with generosity. Beginning of verse 28, Jesus says, *"bless those who curse you."* You see, you're to love your enemies not only by doing every possible good to them, but also by desiring every possible good as well. This means that we're not supposed to have any ill will or any ill intentions towards any person. And this can happen sometimes, can it? If we're honest, someone does something wrong towards us, and even if outwardly we might respond with kindness and cordiality and be very friendly and smiley on the surface, right? Sometimes inwardly we're hating their guts and we're muttering to ourselves, boy, I cannot wait till these people get what they deserve. Jesus says that should never be said of us. We're not supposed to have ill will or ill intentions towards any man. We're to have good will and good intentions. We're to love with generosity, just as was proclaimed at Christ's birth in Luke 2:14, *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace,"* what, ill will towards all men? No, *"good will."*

God loved us with generosity. He desired the eternal good of his creation and so he sent his son to be the savior of all those who trust in him. By sending his son to earth, God was not expressing ill will, but good will to men on earth. As John 3:17 says, *"God did not send his Son into this world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him."* God has loved us in Christ with a genuine heartfelt generosity, and we are to reflect that same love towards others as well. Not just to put a nice kind face on it, but to do real heart surgery with the gospel so that we love them with a sincere and genuine, generous love. He has loved us that way in Christ and we're to reflect that towards others.

When people vilify us, we should respond by genuinely desiring their ultimate good. As Job said in Job 31:29-30, *"have I rejoiced at the ruin of him who hated me, or exulted when evil overtook him (no, I have not let my mouth sin by asking for his life with a curse.)"* When someone pours out vile verbal abuse on you, when they assault you in your character, we are called on here by Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit dwelling within us to reflect Christ's own love towards us by loving them with totality, with actuality, and with generosity, doing as much good to them as possible and then desiring the absolute best for them just as God in Christ has loved us.

I hope you're realizing as I'm going through this that ladies and gentlemen, this is unnatural, isn't it? Indeed, it is supernatural. And that's why Jesus says it is so critical for us who have been made God's children to show it because such divine love catches people's attention, and it shows the very character and presence of God in our life. As 1 Peter 3:9 says, *"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."* Love your enemies with totality, with actuality, with generosity, and then finally, love with integrity. And that's part of the end of verse 28 where Jesus says, *"pray for those who abuse you."* Here Jesus brings his reflections of love to its deepest point. How do you know when you're truly loving your enemy? How do you know when you are truly seeking their best good? How do you know that your love has integrity and you're truly reflecting what you have received? It's when you're all alone and that person comes to mind, and when you're all alone and that person comes to mind, you start praying for them. That's when you know your love has integrity. Not just when you're making it look good on the outside, but that you're actually seeking their ultimate good before the throne of grace when no one else will ever know about it.

The ultimate expression of divine love is to pray in secret for someone who hates you. That is integrity of love. A love that is not merely outward but inward from the heart. It doesn't just play act, but it flows out of a heart that's been transformed by God's grace. Notice, Jesus doesn't say pray against those who abuse you, does he? He says pray how? I know this is hard, pray for them. I'll talk about this more next time, but in terms of imprecatory prayers, we are not to pray down judgment upon others. We're to pray down mercy. We're not to pray for people to be judged in their sins. We're to pray for people to be saved from them. God will judge sin. You don't have to worry about that. What your enemies need is an intercessor who will supernaturally love them enough to pray for them in the midst of their hatred? For is not this the very example that Jesus himself set for us in his life and in his death?

When it came to Peter, who would later deny him publicly, we read in Luke 22:32, Peter, I have what? *"Prayed for you that your faith may not fail."* When it came to his apostles, who would abandon him that



night before his death, we read in John 17:9, *"I am praying for them.... for those whom you have given me."* And when it came to his enemies, who would falsely accuse, torture, and murder him, what do we read in Luke 23:34, *"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they're doing."* Jesus prayed for those who abused him. And we are to do the same. We are to reflect what we have received. We are to pray for them, to pray for their best eternal good, to pray for their salvation, to pray for their repentance and reconciliation.

Now, to be clear, Jesus is not saying that you are to purposely keep yourself under any abuse. Can I say that again? Jesus is not saying you are to purposely keep yourself under any abuse. No, we'll talk about that next time. But when you do suffer abuse because of your relationship with Jesus, pray for those who have abused you. That's how you know that you are loving your enemy with integrity, with Christ's own love. It is when you do good to them. It is when you genuinely desire for their best ultimate good. And it is ultimately when you prove all of that by praying for them and not against them. This is how we reflect what we have received. It is by loving with totality, by loving with actuality, by loving with generosity, and by loving with integrity. And Christmas shows us that this type of love is possible because the one who commands it is the one who demonstrated it and the one who died on the cross to enable us to live it. What a truth to remember today. That everything we've seen today about love is ultimately seen in the face of who? Jesus, Jesus.

As one songwriter put it, love was when God became a man, locked in time and space without rank or place. And that is true. Love was when God the Son stepped into a world of enemies to love them with totality, actuality, generosity, and integrity. When we were his enemies, Christ loved us without boundaries. When we hated him, he accomplished for us eternal good. When we cursed his name, he came to us with goodwill. And when our sins drove him to the cross, even there he prayed for us. This is the love that came down at Christmas and as Christians, this is the love that Jesus now calls on us to receive and to reflect this week.

Friend, if you are here this morning and you've never trusted in Jesus Christ, today is God's call to you to receive the gift of supernatural love that you cannot earn, and you do not deserve. The eternal Son was born in Bethlehem to rescue sinners, sinners like you, sinners like me, to rescue his enemies by laying down his life on the cross and rising again in victory on their behalf. I want you to know, you cannot love like this passage describes, until you come to know the love of God in Christ Jesus through faith in him, until the love of God himself is poured into your heart through Christ Jesus. But the good news is that God delights to pour it out. He delights to save and to forgive and to turn enemies into beloved sons and daughters.

And so, I would encourage you this morning that if you've not received this gift of radical love this morning, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved. Turn from your sin, lay down your arms and trust in the one who loved you before you ever loved him and came into the world not to condemn you but to save you. Come and receive his gift of love, the love that will transform your life.

And then finally for us, brothers and sisters, those of us who can hear this message today, how should we respond? It is by reflecting the very love that you rejoice in today in Christ. Reflect the very love that you have received. This week as we celebrate the incarnation with family members and friends and people in the community, I want to encourage you to love those around you with totality because Christ loved you when you were his enemy. I want to encourage you to love those around you with actuality, doing real costly good for someone else, just as Christ did for you. Look for ways to show them good. Third, I want to encourage you to love those around you with generosity, desiring every true eternal good for those who wrong you.

And then fourth, I want to encourage you to love those around you with integrity, praying for those who have mistreated you over this holiday season, just as Christ prayed for you. This week, by the grace of God and your good effort, let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you with all malice. And let your home, let your table, let your conversations, and let your relationships this Christmas be marked by the same divine love that dawned that first night in Bethlehem. May those around us see through our love the character of our savior who came for his enemies. That's what I wanted to remind you of this morning. Beloved, Christmas is not merely a season to remember God's love, it is a call to reflect it. So may the radical redeeming love of Jesus shine through us as his people this week so that others might come to know the one who first loved us.

And this is the word of God from Luke 6:27-28, which I consider a great privilege to have been able to share with you today, which I now commit to your further study and your faithful obedience until Jesus, the King of love, returns for his own.

To that end, let's pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you so much for this passage before us. We thank you that your word is clear and cutting. Father, we thank you that first and foremost your word has shown us the very heart of Christ. Father, we thank you, we thank you that he loved his enemies. We thank you that he did good to those who hated him. We thank you that he was someone who blessed those who cursed him. We thank you that he was someone who prayed for those we abused him. And Father, as we think about those who mistreat us and wrong us are our enemies in many ways. Father, I pray that you would by your grace help us to see ourselves in them that we were once enemies, haters of God and of one another. That we were those we cursed you and cursed others. That we were those who hated and lashed out in anger and violence towards those around us and yet you loved us. Help us Father to show this same type of radical love so that the world around us can see that Jesus Christ is real. And that there is a transforming love that is found through faith in Christ alone. Equip us this week to share this gift of love towards others.

We pray this in Christ's name and for his glory, in Jesus' name, amen.

Available online at: <https://gracechapelwl.org>