

Title: The Master's Mighty Message – Part 7

Text: Luke 6:37-38

Date: January 11, 2026

Proverbs 3:17 tells us that *"wisdom and understanding are the ways of pleasantness, and all their paths are peace."* 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 be looking at verses 37-38 this morning, which finishes Jesus's teaching on the radical love that ought to be seen by those of us who have been born again through faith in him. This is Jesus's main point, if you recall, in this sermon from the very beginning to the very end.

It is to describe the drastic change that Jesus alone can produce in your life if you would but surrender your life to his saving sovereignty. He can take you from being beset by earthly burdens and he can give you a yearning hope. He can take you from being marked by bitterness and anger and he can give you a radical love. And he can take you from being destructively proud and stubborn and deceptively self-assured and he can give you a desperate dependency on him. By his great power and wonder working power and compassion, Jesus can make you brand new and transform you from the inside out into a new creation. You can be born again. Born again to a yearning hope, a radical love, and a desperate dependency on him.

Well, this morning we're going to finish looking at that second gift of grace that Christ alone can give. And that is the radical supernatural sort of love that can only come from God himself. Now, we've already learned a lot about this love over the last several weeks. Back in verses 27-28, we saw the reflections of divine love where Jesus called on us to reflect the very love that we have received from God by loving our enemies, by doing good to those who hate us, by blessing those who curse us and by praying for those who abuse us. And then in verses 29-31, we studied the reactions of divine love where we saw that our commitment to show Christ's own divine love to others is to be courageously unending no matter what they do. Whether they strike us on the cheek or whether they take away our cloak or whether they borrow something and never give it back. We are not to respond in kind to others. We are to react in love.

And then finally, starting last week in verses 32-38, we started looking at the reasons for divine love. Why should we show this type of radical, relentless, and redemptive love to people who hate us and mistreat us and abuse us? What's the purpose? What are the reasons? Why? And Jesus shows us that there are two main reasons why we ought to, by his grace, reflect his love to others. The first is because it produces a desirable reputation. We learned this last week in the dark in verses 32-36. When we show the very love of Christ to those who do not and will not ever deserve it and can never repay it, when we show love to people like that, we show a watching world that Jesus is real and that he makes a real difference in your life by bringing you into his own family as adopted sons and daughters of the most high God. Sons and daughters who begin to bear their heavenly father's likeness by being merciful, just as their father in heaven is merciful. And so, this is the first reason why we ought to show Christ's own divine love towards others is because it produces a desirable reputation in us. We are seen as the sons and daughters of God.

But there's another reason why we ought to show divine love to others is Christ's followers and that is because it produces a desirable response from others. And that's what we're going to see this morning, verses 37-38. When we start treating sinners who mistreat us in kind and loving ways, we begin to disarm them of their weapons of slander and hate and open up opportunities to share with them the saving gospel of Jesus Christ. Our love becomes the argument for Christ that they cannot ignore. And so that is a major reason why we ought to reflect Christ's divine love to others because it not only produces a desirable reputation, but it also produces a desirable response.

And so, with that in mind, if you're able, please stand with me out of reverence and readiness for the word of God as I get to read our passage before us today from Luke 6, starting in verse 32 on into verse 38. Our author, Luke, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit writes these words for us,

"If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that for you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."

Verse 37, *"Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you."*

This is the word of God, whose precepts we will not forsake as long as we live.

Let's pray.

Father, we thank you for the great blessings that surround this moment as we approach your word. Father, we thank you for the blessings of being able to hold open in our hands a copy of your word by which we can read and study and see if these things be so. Father, we thank you for the gift of your spirit by which when we read these words, we are equipped with the very mind of Christ to understand them. Father, we thank you for the gift of faith, of faith and of grace, grace that has transformed our hearts so that when we read these words and we understand them, we can respond and obey. And Father, we thank you for the gift of your people so that as we hear these words being taught, it is not taught to us only individually, but to us as a body that we might help each other walk in these ways that please you. Father, as we were reminded once again this morning of the love by which we have been loved, by your grace and by the working of your spirit, help us to love others in this way so that they might know that Jesus is real, and he really changes people's lives. Give us grace to show the type of love that is seen here and use your word today to bring that about.

We ask this in Jesus' name, amen.

You may be seated.

So, after Jesus gives us the first reason to show the relentless and radical redemptive love of God to others because it shows it produces a desirable reputation in us, Jesus then delivers the second reason why we ought to reflect God's love to others, even the most cruel and hateful of individuals and that is because it produces a desirable reputation. And that's in verses 37-38. Jesus concludes this section that's describing the gift of divine love that he gives to all of his disciples by saying in verse 37, *"Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you."* Now, despite what your Bible's non-inspired subheadings might cause you to believe at this point, verse 37 is not introducing a change of thought or topic. Jesus is not shifting the topic from loving others to judging others. No, Jesus here in verse 37 is actually continuing with the very same thought that he began way back in verse 32 and that he left off with in verse 36.

In verse 36, if you remember, he called on us to *"be merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful."* So, you have to ask yourself, well, what does that merciful love look like? Well, it looks like judging not, condemning not, it looks like giving and forgiving. Jesus is filling out what he has just said. This is what divine love, when it is reflected through redeemed humanity, this is what divine love looks like. And so, Jesus hasn't changed topics yet. He is still very much focused on this issue of reflecting God's love towards others in clear and unmistakable ways. And because of this, I was really, really tried hard last week to fit this passage in as the conclusion to last week's message because it really is the conclusion.

However, when I was studying it, I realized these verses deserve a much more careful exposition than a mere conclusion could ever give them. Primarily because the beginning of verse 37 is probably the most misapplied and misunderstood phrases in all of scripture. You will hear that phrase, *"judge not, and you will not be judged"* or *"judge not lest you be judged,"* said by the most unlikely people at the most unlikely times in the most unlikely of ways. It is so misused that one preacher I respect, whenever he hears someone misapply that phrase, *"judge not lest you be judged,"* always replies and twists not scripture lest you be like Satan. And what he's pointing out in that moment, rather bluntly, is that most people will quote that phrase and not have a single clue as to what they're talking about and have never spent even 30 seconds reading the surrounding context to that phrase. And so, we're going to take our time this morning as learners of Jesus to make sure we understand exactly what Jesus is saying here. In verses 30, and the first thing we need to understand is just the basic structure of these passages.

And first, in verses 37-38, we have four commands being given in these verses. Four commands that are grouped into two pairs each that we'll look at together this morning. The first pair of commands in verse 37 are negative, that's the judge not and condemn not commands, and then the second pair of commands at the end of verse 37 and the beginning of verse 38 are positive, forgive and give. The second thing we need to understand about these verses is not only their structure, but also their nature. These are cause and effect statements that Jesus gives here. Cause and effect commands that, if obeyed, will often produce a desirable, reciprocal response from others. If you do this, then this will be the result, cause, and effect statements. So that's the structure and the nature of these verses, and now we get to examine their meaning.

And we'll begin with the first pair of related commands given in verse 37, where Jesus says, *"judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned."* Now already, just by reading the entirety of the verse together, just by reading the whole verse, we're receiving some helpful context here. Namely, that the type of judgment that Jesus is forbidding here is a judgment of condemnation. Of viewing someone and treating someone as if they are under an already determined state of judgment of condemnation, of settled condemnation. That's what Jesus is forbidding here. He's not forbidding, as you'll often hear from those in the world, he's not forbidding the exercise of spiritual discernment or outlawing the performing of ethical evaluations.

Which is how the world almost always interprets that phrase, especially in our post-modern culture, where truth is viewed as purely subjective, right? You start sharing a biblical perspective on any given subject concerning whether it is good or bad, right or wrong, moral or immoral, and what will you almost immediately be told? Hey, who are you to what? Judge, right? Just because it's wrong for you, doesn't mean it's wrong for them. How dare you tell them that they're doing wrong? After all, truth is in the eye of the beholder. They wouldn't say it that bluntly. So, judge not, lest you be judged.

First, talk about a walking contradiction when people say things like that, right? Being judged by someone who's telling you you're wrong to judge. Or being told that you're doing something wrong by someone who says you can never tell someone they're doing wrong. Of being told there are no absolutes, and I am absolutely sure of it. See, even by their own arguments, they are operating within the Christian worldview. By their own arguments, they are proving that the whole world, in fact, does operate on the basis of objective truth and absolutes. You cannot escape it.

But anyway, Jesus is not being a post-modernist when he says here, judge not. He's not advocating for his disciples to operate in this world on the basis of subjective morality where you can never determine what is true and what is right or what is wrong and what is false. Jesus is not calling on his people to suspend their spiritual discernment. We know this is the case because, one, because of the immediate context, and then two, because of the rest of Scripture.

So first, if you just take 30 seconds to read the context surrounding this verse, you know Jesus is not forbidding his people from making spiritual and ethical determinations and judgments. After all, Jesus already commanded us three times, back in verse 27, verse 33, and verse 35, that we are to do what? Good to those who hate us, and we are to be kind and merciful to the what? Evil. Well, the only way you can do that is if you objectively know what good is and if you objectively know what evil is. That requires discernment. That requires spiritual judgment.

And then later on in verses 43-45, Jesus is going to command us there to be fruit inspectors. He's going to command us to be able to recognize the difference between good fruit and bad fruit, between good actions and bad actions, between good teachers and bad teachers. Well, again, the only way you can do that is if you objectively know and can spiritually judge and discern the difference between good and evil. So, we know Jesus isn't calling on people to suspend spiritual judgment and discernment, one, because of the immediate context, and then two, because of what we read throughout the rest of scriptures,

throughout the rest of scripture, where we are called innumerable times to exercise and enact spiritual judgment and discernment.

First, we are called to exercise judgment externally. 1 Corinthians 5:12 says that we are to judge the actions of unrepentant sinners in the church who bear the name of brother. He uses the word judge. 1 John 4:1, we are told, *"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see if they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out in the world."* 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22 says, *"test everything; hold fast to what is good. And abstain from every form of evil."* Why, even in Acts 17:11, even Paul's own preaching was judged and examined by those in Berea to see if what he was saying was true. And so, we're called to exercise spiritual judgment and discernment externally, and not just externally, but internally also.

Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 13:5 that we're even to *"examine ourselves and test ourselves to see if we are in the faith."* So, we're supposed to exercise spiritual judgment and discernment over all things, even over ourselves. In fact, to do so is a sign of spiritual maturity. Hebrews 5:14 makes this very clear that a person who is spiritually mature has *"their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good and evil."* In other words, a spiritually mature person is always discerning and making moral judgments between good and evil or between better and best. Throughout the pages of scripture, it is what we as believers are always called to do, not in opposition to Jesus's emphasis here on love, but actually in service to it. As Paul prays in Philippians 1:9, *"my prayer is that your love would abound and increase more and more,"* how, *"with all knowledge and discernment."*

See, contrary to what the world will tell you today, the best love by which you can love someone is a discerning love, a love that holds fast what is good and rejects every form of evil. That's the best love. And so, Jesus is not saying that we're to suspend a discernment, turn a blind eye to evil, never point out error, and prohibit the execution of judgment in the court of law in the name of love. No, absolutely not. What Jesus is forbidding here is self-righteous, self-exalting, critical judgmentalism, where the sins of others cause us to look down on them. Rather than the sins of others causing us to reach out to them.

John Stott defines this judgmental attitude in an astonishing clear way when he says that those who are marked by the spirit of judgmentalism always do the following. One, they attribute the worst possible assumptions to other people's motives. Two, they pour cold water on their skins and their dreams. They're a wet blanket. Three, they are ungenerous towards others when they make mistakes. This is the type of critical judgmentalism that Jesus is forbidding.

We would do well to pause and to think to ourselves, do you sense any of this in you? Father, towards your children. Wives, towards your husband. Boss, towards your employees. Church leaders, towards your fellow members. Church members, towards your fellow leaders. We are not to be marked by this harsh, merciless, self-exalting, critical, condemning spirit of judgmentalism towards anyone, even our enemies. We are not to pronounce judgment on others and write them off as being dead to us, as being beyond reach, as being beyond hope of saving. No, we are to speak blessings to them as Jesus has already commanded. We're to love them with kindness and mercy and compassion continually that they might, by God's grace, turn from their wicked ways and their spiritual death and live. We're to love them.

And do you know what the response will likely be if you choose to obey Christ in this way and not write people off and judge them in a condemning way? Answer, you will not be judged, and you will not be condemned by them either. Now this makes sense because as Jesus has already taught in verses 32-34, sinners generally give back what they are given, don't they? This is why I would say that these verses are most likely talking primarily about how sinners respond to us when we love them, not primarily how God responds. Now it is true, it is true that by judging not, you are showing yourself as someone who will not be judged. It is true that by condemning not, you are showing that you are not someone who will be condemned. By forgiving, you are showing yourself as someone who has been forgiven. And by giving, you are showing that you are someone who has received much. That is true.

But I think when Jesus is describing this in a reciprocal type of fashion, do this and the very same thing will be done to you, he's referencing back to how sinners love those who love them and how they do good to those who do good to them and how they lend to those who lend to them. The people that we've been learning about over the last few weeks who act with reciprocation is man. And this is how the love of the unredeemed works. They act with reciprocation. And now Jesus is describing more reciprocal acts here. The reciprocal acts of who? I believe of sinners. That if you do not judge or condemn them, they will generally not judge or condemn you back.

If you, in the midst of being hated and cursed and abused by others, if you do not judge or condemn or hearten yourselves against them for what they've done, but instead keep on courageously and relentlessly loving them unconditionally with the kindness and mercy and goodness of God, then what will happen generally is they will not judge you back. They'll ease up on you. Their hostility will be dampened and the doorway to evangelism will remain open. I think this is similar to what Paul is saying in Romans 12:19-21, where he tells us there that *"if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he's thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head."* In other words, showing someone love and kindness in the midst of hostility has a convicting, redemptive, overpowering power to it.

And so, in self-righteousness, Jesus is telling us do not set yourself up as judge, jury, and executioner when it comes to people who have wronged you. Rather remember who you really are and set yourself up as a missionary through acts of mercy. As Titus 3:3-5 reminds us and as we read this morning, *"For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another."* That's who we were. And what made all the difference in our life when that was our spiritual state? Verse 4, but when the harsh critical judgment and spirit of the Lord laid upon you. Is that what it says? It says, *"But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us."* What made the difference between who we were and who we now are? The goodness and loving kindness of the Lord.

And could it not be that this is exactly what our enemies need to see from us as well? The goodness and loving kindness of the Lord. You don't need to be their judge and executioner for in judging them, you judge yourself. Because in a very real sense, they are you. They are exactly what you would be apart from the goodness and loving kindness of the Lord. So don't be their judge and executioner. Be their missionary and a living example of God's loving kindness and mercy.

As Jesus taught back in verse 31, treat them as you would want to be treated if you were in their spiritual state. So, they wronged you, they hate you. What else do you expect from someone who is dead in their trespasses and sins? What they need is to be shown the love of Jesus. Don't set yourself up in self-righteousness and condemnation. See yourself in them and love them as Christ has loved you. And if you do that, if you show the gospel, then opportunities to share the gospel will increase and abound more and more. This is why Jesus says, *"Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned."* And then on the positive side, he says, *"forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you."* So, this is the essence of being merciful as your heavenly father is merciful. You are never more like God than when you forgive and do good to someone who hates you and has wronged you. Because that's exactly what God did for you.

As Jesus will cry out later in Luke 23:34, *"Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they're doing."* And we are to follow Christ in this way just like Stephen did in Acts 7:60 when he said, moments before he died, *"Lord do not hold this sin against them."* Do not judge, do not condemn, rather forgive, and give generously to all, even those who hate us. Overcome evil with good. And when we do, Jesus I believe is showing us that when we do, that's when they'll start wondering how in the world can these Christians keep treating me with mercy and kindness and love and forgiveness when I keep on treating them like this? That's when they'll see, as Matthew 5:16 says, *"that they'll see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."* Through showing constant love and mercy to those who have wronged us, the door to a relationship and for gospel witness stays open and the evangelistic rewards will be generous.

As Jesus says next at the end of verse 38, he says, *"Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap."* That's a pretty cool image that Jesus is giving there. It's a word picture. And what he's saying is that showing love to your enemies will eventually produce the evangelistic equivalent of going to a generous merchant. So, for example, you come to buy a basket of grain. The merchant doesn't just pour grain into your basket. He fills it up to the top. And then he presses it down with both hands and fills it up again. And then he takes the basket and shakes it around to make sure there's no empty spots on the bottom and tops it off again. And then he pours even more grain on top until it's shaped like a cone pouring out over the sides. And then he tells you to hold the basket onto your robe. And then he pours more grain on top so that not only the basket overflowing with grain, but your robe is also. That's *"good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, put into your lap."*

And Jesus is saying if you relentlessly love people like this, they will reciprocally, most likely love you right back. And the evangelistic and relational rewards will be overwhelming for with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. If you are rich in sharing love and mercy to those who hate you, the evangelistic results will be rich also as you show yourself to be a son and daughter of the most high God. As sinners see love that is not like their love and begin to love you back. That's the final reason that Jesus gives as to why we should show this divine love to our enemies. It is because it often produces a desirable response. It produces an openness to the gospel.

Now let me tie all of this together in conclusion. Is not this true that the two greatest desires of a born-again heart is that you might glorify God and be used by him to reach others for Jesus Christ? Indeed, is

the very purpose by which we exist, it is the very reason for why we are still here on earth. It is to bring glory to God and is to reach the lost for Jesus Christ. And do you not see from this passage before us today that the only way you will ever accomplish those two things as a disciple of Jesus Christ is if you demonstrate this type of divine, radical, relentless love.

First, you will never glorify God in your life until you reflect his love in your life. As we saw last week, you are to relentlessly love even your enemies by doing good to those who hate you, by blessing those who curse you, and by praying for those who abuse you without ever expecting anything in return because it is in those moments that you show yourself to be a son or daughter of God, just like your heavenly father. It is through your godly love that you will be used by him to turn enemies into friends, which is exactly what God specializes in. Boy, we need that today, don't we? Christians who know how to turn enemies into friends by being merciful, kind, generous, and loving.

Sadly, I think one of the greatest testimonies of many believers is that they know how to turn friends into enemies rather than the other way around. But Christ is calling for us to live a higher way, a better way, a way that honors and glorifies his Father in heaven. And that is by dying to yourself, dying to your ideas of self-righteousness, and self-worth, and self-rights, and simply loving others as Christ has loved you. We need to be known not as Christians who turn friends into enemies, but as Christians who know how to turn enemies into friends with the love of Christ.

We live in a time and age where Christians are sadly viewing their mission fields as battlefields, as people to look down on rather than people to reach out to. The world will hate us, it is true. But let them hate us in the face of our loving concern and mercy, not in the absence of it. We need to be drenching fires of hostility under the relentless torrent of our unmerited love. Why? Because by our love, we might be building opportunities and not obstacles to declaring the saving gospel to them. And that's the second reason why you should share this divine love and reflect it.

It's because you will never reach the lost until you reach them with the undeniable evidence of God's love. We must be those who are known not as being critical or harsh or judgmental. We must be known as those who are loving, merciful, patient, and kind. We must heed the powerful words of Christ and take advantage of the situation. It must be us in relationships who act with love first. The unsaved can't love their enemies, but we can. They can't do good to those who hate them, but we can. They can't bless those who curse them. They're still in bondage to sin, but we can. And though they cannot build a bridge to you, you by the love of God that is in you, can tear down obstacles to the gospel and build a bridge to them. You can reach those whom you might think are unreachable, but you will do it by your love.

And so, I say to those of you who hear, do you desire to glorify God with your life? Do you desire to reach the lost for Jesus Christ? Then I would encourage you, do not leave the sermons that I have preached as a one and done thing. Study this passage for yourself, memorize it, and beg God's grace to live it out this week for the glory of God and for the salvation of the lost. It all begins by loving others as we have been loved. So beloved, may the love of Calvary's Cross be seen in us this week as we repent of our critical

judgmentalism and commit to following in the loving footsteps of Christ our savior. May God give us grace to do that this week, to reflect the Lord, to reach the lost by loving others as we have been loved.

This is the word of God from Luke 6:27-38, which I consider a great privilege to have been able to share with you, which I now commit to your further study and your faithful obedience until Christ, the son of the most high God, returns for his own.

To that end, let's pray.

Father, we thank you so much for your word. Father, I thank you for how Jesus finishes this teaching on his divine love and how to reflect it. Father, I pray that you would work within our hearts such a yearning ache for your glory and a yearning ache for the spiritual state of those around us that we would not consider ourselves and the wrongs in which we have received, that we would not walk through our relationships thinking that we ought to be served, but that we would walk through our relationships thinking how can I serve others? How can I reflect you and lead this person who has wronged me to Christ? Father, help us to die to our self-righteousness, to take up our cross daily and follow you. And as much, Father, as we exercise spiritual discernment, help us not to wield it in condemnation, but in fervent love for the salvation of the lost, for so we once were. But your goodness and loving kindness was revealed to us in Christ, and we are saved. Help us to reflect that same goodness and loving kindness to those around us this week. Change our responses so that you might change our reputations. That we might be known as sons and daughters of the most high God. Give us grace to do this, Father, we pray.

In Jesus' name, amen.

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