



Message Outline

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March 1, 2026
Matt 5:43-48

Love Your Enemies

SERIES: *Stuff I Wish Jesus Never Said*

WHAT CULTURE SAID BACK THEN (AND STILL SAYS TODAY):

"Love your neighbor and hate your enemy"

WHAT I WISH JESUS SAID:

"Love Your neighbor and protect yourself from your enemy"

WHAT JESUS ACTUALLY SAID:

"Love your enemy"

- **ISN'T LOVING MY NEIGHBOR ENOUGH?**

No. Because there's nothing extraordinary about it.

And it leads to drawing a tighter circle

Matt 5:43; 46-47

- **IS LOVING MY ENEMY EVEN POSSIBLE?**

Yes. Because love isn't foolish trust. It's liberating grace.

Matt 5:44

- **WHY SHOULD I LOVE MY ENEMY?**

Not because they deserve it. They probably don't.

Not because it will change them. It might not.

But because I become more like God

Matt 5:44-48

- **THIS SEEMS TOO HARD. IS THERE A SECRET?**

It is hard. That's why we need to pray

Matt 5:44



Questions for Further Reflection & Discussion

Winter Session 2026

Love Your Enemies | *Stuff I Wish Jesus Never Said*

Matthew 5:43-48 | March 1, 2026

1. When you hear the phrase, "Love your enemies," what's your immediate gut reaction (inspiring, confusing, unrealistic, annoying)?
2. Read Matthew 5:43-48 and review the sermon outline. What got you thinking and why?
3. Why do you think focusing only on *loving our neighbor* (and NOT also loving our enemy) can quietly turn into shrinking the circle instead of expanding it?
4. Jesus doesn't say, "*Feel warmly toward your enemies.*" He says, "*Love... pray...*" How does that shift your understanding of what love actually is? How can you love someone and still keep protective boundaries?
5. Jesus says God causes the sun to rise on both the evil and the good (vs. 45). What does that reveal about God's character? What stretches you about that?
6. Our motivation isn't that enemies deserve it, or that it will change them. But rather it is so we might become more like God. How does that reframe the whole command?
7. Jesus ties loving enemies directly to prayer (vs. 44). How might praying for someone actually begin to change you?
8. This command feels impossible. Where do you sense you most need God's help to live this out? What would one small, concrete step look like this week?