

# Love like God

Luke 6:27-49

**Reciprocity: literally “back and forth”**

Give back what we received

Like a ball bouncing off a wall

What is a good way that this works in life?

What is a bad way that this works in life?

What is God’s design for how we are to respond to the negative things that come our way?

**Jesus’ message to His disciples in Luke 6:17-26:**

Things are the opposite of what they seem!

Blessed are you who are poor, hungry, weeping, and rejected because of Jesus

Woe to you who are rich, full, laughing, and praised by everyone

**The Big Idea:**

Those in Christ who find their blessing in God (rather than earthly riches) experience present and future joy in His overwhelmingly generous hand

**Luke 6:27-49**

**27-31: Treat your enemies the way you treat those you love**

Far beyond “nonretaliation”!

Love is action more than emotion → illustrations

Do good

Bless

Pray for

Accept dishonor

Let them take / Give

“Love is hopeful that enemies will change, and not resentful if they do not”

Wisely...

Paul used Roman law to avoid flogging and death

And radically...

Coat and shirt may be all the clothing the poor had

So certainly we can love in far less dire circumstances!

The Golden Rule

Treat your enemy the way your close friend treats you

**32-34: No praise for merely loving those who love you**

Normal pattern for relationships: reciprocity

Justice: treat people according to their behavior

Love those who love you

Even the most evil people do this

This is not worthy of praise!

God’s command is worthy of praise

To those who deserve retaliation... show sacrificial kindness

**35-36: Be like God: kind to the ungrateful and wicked**

Commands restated: love, do good, lend without expecting return

An astounding surprise!

God is kind to the ungrateful and wicked

God’s mercy is for everyone, including the “undeserving” (which means us)

This is amazing and beautiful and glorious!

Children of God are to live like God: be merciful!

This is praiseworthy, and distinctively Christian

### 37-42: Our task: forgive, and work on my faults

Reciprocity only works for people who are truly good

“An eye for an eye” leads broken people to blindness

Forgiveness is the right action by the forgiven

When we judge we lead others to be judgmental too

So we need mercy

God is abundantly merciful to the merciful

To help us remove the plank from our eye...

We, as forgiven people, keep judging others!

### 43-45: We need a change of heart for changed actions

Our attitudes & actions reveal what is inside us

When others are ungrateful and wicked, it squeezes us, and what is inside comes out

Our problem is what is inside us

It eventually works its way out

### 46-49: This requires a change of action

Jesus presents the path of blessing: taking action!

Benefits show up in storms that will eventually come

Especially persecution

Everyday life is a time for good actions

Everyday life is preparation for harder days

## The Big Idea

**God's will is**

**to love the ungrateful and the wicked**

**through us**

**bringing the blessings of Christ to us as well**

**as we are transformed by Him**

Luke 23:34: Jesus on the cross

Acts 7:59-60: Stephen while being stoned

Genesis 50:19-21: Joseph having been sold into slavery

1 Corinthians 4:11-13: Paul about being an apostle

Romans 12:17-21: Instructions for Christians

Who is my enemy?

People who don't love me

People I don't love

## Application

Love your enemies

Do good to them

Bless

Pray

If they take, give more

Lend without expecting return

Don't judge

Don't condemn

Forgive

Give generously

Deal with (admit and fix) my own faults before addressing theirs

Be like God

## As Christ has done for us

“God is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.”

This is what Jesus did for you and for me

This is what Jesus does for you and for me

How much do you and I need this forgiveness?

Luke 7:41-47

How much have you and I been forgiven by Jesus?

## Does this mean we don't pursue correction of systemic and personal injustice and sins?

Sometimes it is right to overlook the wrong

“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.” 1 Peter 4:8

Sometimes it is right to confront the wrong

Always in love, with joy and peace, showing patience and kindness, doing goodness, with faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control

Never with an attitude of judgment, but in humility

Never delighting in evil or their loss, but in compassion

James 3:9-10

## Putting it into action

Pray for your enemies → each day this week

Do good to your enemies → one action this week

## Reflection Questions

1. Who is in your “not friend” category? Who is in your “enemy” category?
2. What makes it hard to be kind to them? To forgive them? To give more when they have ungratefully taken already?
3. As you read Luke 7:41-47, what is Jesus' interpretation of the difference in behavior between the “righteous” Pharisee and the “sinful” woman?
4. Where does the power come from to love our enemies?
5. For whom will you pray? What action will you take to do good to those who have hurt you?