

Day 1

Love Your Enemies

27 "But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. (Luke 6:27-28)

Love your Enemies; Do good to those who hate you; Bless those who curse you; Pray for those who mistreat you. The Bible says that we are supposed to be different than the world. One of the best ways we show that we are children of our heavenly father is how we treat others. It's easy to love those who love us back, but the Bible says that our love is to extend even to our enemies.

But who is our enemy? Someone who has turned against you. One of the first places to look is your home.

35 For I have come to turn "a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law— 36 a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.' (Matt 10:35-36)

The home, your church, and your work. Sometimes the greatest hurt comes from those we love the most, those who are closest to us and trusted the most.

Do you have any enemies? How do you react to those who have been mean to you, made fun of you, or have been hurtful to you? Ask God to reveal your heart and show you how you're treating those around you.

Day 2

Love Your Enemies

7 Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.” (Jer. 29:7)

In Jeremiah chapter 29, Jeremiah is writing a letter to the exiles from Jerusalem in Babylon. Jeremiah tells them not to listen to the false prophets, but to settle down and wait for God’s purpose to be completed. Notice in verse 7 God says the He is the one who carried them into exile. It was God who placed them there. They were in Babylon because God had a purpose. He also tells the people to pray for the city and to seek the peace and prosperity of the city because if it prospered, they would too. Their blessing was tied to the blessing of their enemy. They needed Babylon and Babylon needed them.

Some people say, “I’d rather not be blessed than for God to bless my Enemy.” Are you missing out on a blessing because you are seeking a curse on your enemy instead of a blessing? Just as the exiles needed the time in Babylon, sometimes God allows difficult people in our life to accomplish His purpose, to make us more like Jesus.

How could loving your enemy change them and draw them closer to God? How could loving your enemy change you? Are you missing out on God’s greatest blessing because you refuse to love your enemy?

Day 3

Love Your Enemies

43 "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'
44 But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 46 If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? 47 And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? 48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect. (Matt. 5:43-48)

What are some practical ways that we can show love to our enemies?

1. Greet them

Greet them instead of avoiding them. A warm and heartfelt greeting can disarm a situation and make an opening for a pleasant exchange.

If you are unwilling to greet a person, how can God use you to bring healing? After all, even sinners will greet those they love, but we as Christians are called to a higher standard, to love like Jesus.

Is there someone who you avoid talking to? Do you hide when you see them? Ask God to give you the courage and a loving heart to greet that person the next time you see them. Ask a close friend to pray for you and the person you are greeting and have them follow up with you afterwards.

Day 4

Love Your Enemies

32 "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. 34 And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. 35 But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. 36 Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. (Luke 6:32-36)

2. Do good to them

Luke 6 tells us to do good to our enemies. We need to view our enemies as hurting people we want to see healed. We need to take the initiative and make the first move. We may think; "What if they don't respond well?" But that isn't our responsibility. The Lord is responsible for the outcome, we are only called to be obedient.

3. Refuse to speak evil of them

The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit. (Prov. 18:21)

If you are speaking, you are either speaking evil or good. If you can't think of anything good to say then take a vow of silence.

36 But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken. (Matt 12:36)

The Bible says we will have to give an account for the words we speak. If you can't say something nice, refuse to speak evil of them.

How do you need to change your actions or speaking? Pray for God's strength to help you keep from speaking evil and to replace your words and actions with His words and actions.

Day 5

Love Your Enemies

15 Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else. 16 Rejoice always, 17 pray continually, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (1 Thes. 5:15-18)

4. Thank God for them

Do you believe in the sovereignty of God? Have your enemies been sent by God's design or allowed by Him? God places every person in our life to make us grow. God used Saul to help shape David's life, even though Saul tried to kill him. Sometime God sends:

- A Saul to challenge our faith
- A David, who was so passionate in his worship of God, to inspire us
- A Barnabas to pick us up and encourage us when we are down
- A Jezebel to persecute us, yet help us grow (Just as God used Jezebel to develop Elijah's leadership)
- A Judas?

Do you think Jesus chose Judas by accident? Did God know he was going to betray Him? Of course! Behind every Judas in our life is the hand of God.

Has God brought a Saul, David, Barnabas, Jezebel or Judas into your life? How has God used that person to help you grow? Thank God for His sovereign will.

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4 *"If you come across your enemy's ox or donkey wandering off, be sure to return it. 5 If you see the donkey of someone who hates you fallen down under its load, do not leave it there; be sure you help them with it. (Exod. 23: 4-5)*

17 *Do not gloat when your enemy falls; when they stumble, do not let your heart rejoice, 18 or the Lord will see and disapprove and turn his wrath away from them. (Prov. 24:17-20)*

5. Ask God to bless them

Bless them with what? Use what you would want for yourself as a guide. Pray a specific blessing for them without strings attached.

You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. (Gen 50:20)

We need the attitude of Joseph who recognized God working through his circumstances. Sometimes we need the enemies that God sends us because if we didn't, He wouldn't send them. The enemies God sends can put you in a position to impact your generation, country or world for Christ just as he did with Joseph.

Do you want to be like Jesus? If so, don't fear when enemies come your way. Ask God for the wisdom to see Him working, the strength to make it through, and the spirit of love to permeate your life.