

The Power of Loving Our Enemies – Luke 6:27-36

January 21, 2024 • Ryan Wildauer

Jesus calls his followers to _____ a difficult _____. vs. 27-31

Jesus wants us to _____ the supernatural transformation he has produced in us.
vs. 32-36

3 Biblical Reflections:

Loving our enemies has been an expectation for God's people throughout Scripture.

Jesus lived with love for his enemies throughout his life and in his death.

Believing the gospel means applying it to those who wrong us.

3 Positive Outcomes of Loving Our Enemies:

We illustrate our confidence in the gospel's sufficiency.

We demonstrate our trust in God to execute justice.

We reflect the amazing character of our merciful God.

Luke 6:27-36

²⁷ "But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. ²⁹ To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. ³⁰ Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. ³¹ And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.

³² "If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.

³³ And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴ And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners

lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. ³⁵ 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. ³⁶ Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. (ESV)

Personal Reflection or Group Discussion Questions

Open: Have you ever had someone extend an act of kindness to you that surprised you because of your relationship with them? What happened and how did you respond?

Read & Discuss: Luke 6:27-36

1. Jesus' command to "love your enemies, do good to those who hate you" comes just following a teaching in which He is challenging common values (*Luke 6:20-26*). Why might this command shock or make little sense to many? Although we may not think of ourselves as having "enemies," what types of people might we struggle to love as Christ calls us to?
2. Jesus tells us to "bless those who curse us" (v. 28). If blessing others is the opposite of cursing others, how might this help us understand what it means to "bless" others? While we might not go so far as to "curse" our enemies, how might we think of or respond to those we dislike in ways that are less than God-honoring?
3. Verses 28-30 present a very counter-cultural way of living. What might this look like in everyday life? How should we apply this command in a way that does not allow us to be taken advantage of—Or, should it matter if we're taken advantage of? Are there appropriate biblical limits to obeying these commands? (Consider Neh 4:9; Prov 31:8-9; Jn 18:22-23; Acts 9:23-25; 17:10,14; 23:2,3,16,17)
4. Verse 31 says, "As you wish that others would do to you, do so to them." (*See also Matthew 7:12*) How is calling us to do something *for* our enemies more significant than calling us to not do something *against* our enemies? In general, how would we want others to treat us, and what would we like them to do for us? Why might Jesus have felt the need to give this instruction in the middle of a teaching on loving our enemies?
5. In verses 33-35 we're told to give to those who cannot pay us back and to do good to those who may not do good to us in return. Why is this so difficult for us to do? What does this difficulty reveal about our true motives for doing good to others? What promises of God might be helpful to remember if we're struggling to live as Christ calls us to here?
6. This section concludes with a call to "be merciful, even as your Father is merciful" (v. 36). He is described as one who is kind to the ungrateful and evil (v. 35c). What are some biblical accounts of ways God showed undeserved mercy to various people (as well as to mankind in general)? What can we learn from these examples that we should emulate in our own lives—especially with regard to those we struggle to love?

Apply: What is something specific you could do this week to fulfill Jesus' calling to love those whom you struggle to love?

Pray: Pray that we would be people who love our enemies and do good to all, including those we struggle to want to share our blessings with.