

How do you respond when people are mean to you?

- If they're mean to you, then are you mean back to them?

Jesus tells us...

## Love Your Enemies

### Luke 6:27-29

<sup>27</sup>“But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, <sup>28</sup>bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. <sup>29</sup>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.

Jesus tells us: **What these enemies are like**

**They hate you:**

**They curse you:**

**They abuse you:**

**They physically and emotionally hurt you:** strike your cheek or they humiliate you

**They steal from you:**

**They beg from you:**

They do all these terrible things to us? So...

## How should we treat them?

### Luke 6:30-31

<sup>30</sup>Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. <sup>31</sup>And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.

**Love them!** - Really care about them

**Do good to them:**

**Bless them:**

**Pray for them:**

Give to them.

One of the most radical things Jesus ever said was... **Love your enemies.**

But you may be thinking, **Jesus, why?** – Why would I want to do something like that?

Jesus gives us 4 reasons:

## 1. Love Your Enemies to Be Better than the World

Jesus wants us who are the recipients of his grace to be different than the rest of the world.

Yes, there should be a difference between the way you live and the way people live who are **NOT** followers of Christ.

Jesus says...<sup>32</sup>“If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.

You’re just being like the world. Anyone can love their **FRIENDS**.

Even the godless of this world love people who love them back. Even terrible, downright evil people are nice to THE PEOPLE **THEY LIKE**.

But Jesus gives us some additional motivation. ***Something’s in it for you.***

## **#2 – Why love your enemies?...**

### **2. Great reward**

<sup>35</sup>But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your **reward will be great...**

You will look back on every time you have loved those who have been mean to you, and you will say: **It was** (2 words) **worth it!!!**

Because in heaven God is going to give you these amazing rewards. The **more** you have **loved** people and especially the more you have loved your **enemies**, the more rewards you will get. **#3 – Why love your enemies?...**

### **3. You will be sons of the Most High**

<sup>35</sup>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. <sup>36</sup>Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.

You want to know if someone is **really a Christian?** Watch how they treat their enemies. Listen to how they speak about their enemies.

If you love your enemies, you will prove truly that you are a Christian.

Jesus gives 4 motivations for loving enemies: You’ll be different than the world, you’ll get Great reward, you’ll be a Son of the Most High, and

### **4. You will be acting like your Heavenly Father**

<sup>35</sup>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**. <sup>36</sup>Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.

**IF** I'm living like this... If I'm loving my enemies like Jesus taught me to, this gives me assurance that I have a living faith.

Also, it gives me assurance that I'm becoming godly. I'm becoming more like my God. More like my Heavenly Father.

They say... **Like Father, like son.** Oh, how I want that to be true of me!

If you live like this, it will be **clear who your Father is.**

You may wonder: **Who should I love?**

But Jesus leaves no room for doubt.

Jesus could have said: Love your family, your friends, brothers and sisters in Christ, acquaintances... And, we might wonder... How far do I go with this loving thing?

Jesus gives us clarity by going all the way to the **end of the list**... We're getting further and further away from those who are closest to us. Further and further from those we would naturally want to love. We get all the way to the end of the list...

When he says love your enemies. Implying that we are to love everybody in between.

He says love your enemies. And, he has set a great example for us.

**THINK ABOUT THIS:** By my sin, I made myself an **enemy of God**.

But Jesus still loved me!

He gave his life on the cross to save me. While I was in rebellion against him, he chose to love me, to die for me, and to save me from my sin.

**Jesus** is the ultimate lover of enemies.

And, **I am** the ultimate recipient of undeserved love. I am the enemy who has received a 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> chance.

I deserve the gallows, but I get grace.

You ask **CJ Mahaney** how he's doing. He'll say, **"Better than I deserve."**

In essence he's saying, I know what I deserve. But I'm getting grace.

I have made myself his enemy, but he loved me still. He made me his friend. He made me his child. And, he has lavished me with his love.

To the shock and awe of the angels in heaven, God in his sovereignty has chosen to do something that everyone would say is outlandish.

He has lavished his love upon his enemies.

And, in so doing, he has transformed them into His friends...

And not only his friends, but his **sons and daughters**... For we are the children of God.