

In the Hot Seat with Jesus

Questions Jesus Asked

If you love those who love you, what reward have you?

Grace Fellowship Church / Sun, 23-Oct-2011 / Pastor Peter LaRuffa

Matthew 5:43-48

Love my enemies? Now why in the world would I do that?

Take a look at Matthew 5 and see three reasons Jesus wants us to love our enemies...

(1) **Loving your enemies shows you're a child of God!**

Matt. 5:45a ...so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven.

The greatest evidence of our being a child of God is the love we have for others.

John 13:35 By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

1 John 14:16 So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

God shows a measure of His love for all people in the “common graces” we experience in our everyday lives.

Matt. 5:45b ... For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

Psa. 145:15-16 The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

(2) **Loving your enemies is one way we're supposed to be "odd for God!"**

Matt. 5:46,47 For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?

In 1567 King Phillip II of Spain appointed the Duke of Alba as governor of the lower part of the nation. The Duke was a bitter enemy of the newly-emerging Protestant Reformation. His rule was called the right of terror, and his council was called the Bloody Council, because it had ordered the slaughter of so many Protestants. It is reported that one man who was sentenced to die for his biblical faith managed to escape during the dead of winter. As he was being pursued by a soldier, the man came to a lake whose ice was thin & cracking. Somehow he managed to get safely across the ice, but as soon as he reached the other side he heard his pursuer screaming. The soldier had fallen through the ice and was about to drown. At the risk of being captured, tortured, and eventually killed—or of being drowned himself—the man went back across the lake and rescued his enemy, because the love of Christ constrained him to do it. He knew he had no other choice than to be faithful to his Lord.

(Elon Foster, *New Cyclopedia of Prose Illustrations: Second Series*, p. 296)

(3) **Loving your enemies is one way we can be like our heavenly Father!**

Matt. 5:48 You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

2 Cor. 5:9 So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.

God loved us while we were still His enemies, so we can do the same for others.

Rom. 5:6-8 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare to even die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Rom. 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.