

Matthew 5:43-48

November 25, 2018 – Rev. Rick Lyon

Intro

1. The Traditional Teaching on Love: Limited Love

Leviticus 19:18 - Love your neighbor as yourself.

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

Proverbs 25:21 - If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; if he is thirsty, give him water to drink.

2. Jesus' Teaching on Love: Unlimited Love

The lowest level is to return evil for good.

The middle level is to return good for good.

The highest level is to return good for evil.

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Why should you love your enemies?

Reason #1 - Because God loves His enemies.

Psalm 145:9 - The Lord is good to *all*.

Mahatma Gandhi: I like your Christ, I don't like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ.”

Reason #2 - There's a reward for loving your enemies.

Reason #3 - Loving your enemies distinguishes you from others.

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Jesus: "Everyone will know that you're My disciples, if _____."

John 13:35 - "Everyone will know that you're My disciples, if you love one another."

How do you show love to your enemies?

C.S. Lewis: The rule for all of us is simple. Don't waste your time wondering whether you "love" your neighbor; act as if you did. As soon as we do this we find one of the great secrets. When you're behaving as if you loved someone, you'll presently come to love him. If you injure someone you dislike, you'll find yourself disliking him more. If you do him a good turn, you'll find yourself disliking him less... The difference between a Christian and worldly man is: the worldly man treats certain people kindly because he "likes" them; the Christian, trying to treat everyone kindly, finds himself liking more and more people as he goes on--including people he couldn't have imagined himself liking at the beginning.

- 1. Bless those who curse you.**
- 2. Do good to those who hate you.**
- 3. Pray for your enemies.**

1 Samuel 12:23 - "Far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD by failing to pray for you."

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