



Sermon Notes

Matthew 5:43–48 (ESV)

⁴³“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’

⁴⁴But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

⁴⁵so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

⁴⁶For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

⁴⁷And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?

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

September 21, 2025

(Answer key located on the last page)

INTRODUCTION

Jesus shattered conventional thinking with eight revolutionary words: "But I say to you, _____ your _____."

I. REDEFINING LOVE'S LIMITS (*Matthew 5:43-44*)

Jesus uses the word "_____" for love—a deliberate _____ to seek someone's good regardless of how they treat us.

Jesus' method: "_____ for those who persecute you."

Application

- ☐ Identify people who have hurt or wronged you (e.g., rude coworker, difficult neighbor, conflicted family member).
- ☐ Write down their names.
- ☐ For 7 days, pray for each person every morning.
 - Don't pray for them to change—pray for their blessing (work, family, needs).

II. REFLECTING GOD'S GENEROUS LOVE (*Matthew 5:45-46*)

God makes His sun rise on the _____ and on the _____, and sends rain on the _____ and on the _____.

The best proof of our relationship with God happens between us and our _____ after we leave church.

Application

Post-Worship Challenge:

This Monday, pick your biggest relationship struggle: difficult coworker, complaining neighbor, or critical family member. Instead of avoiding them or responding with hostility, choose ONE action: bring coffee, offer help, greet warmly, send encouragement, or do a small favor.

Remember: God showed you undeserved kindness when you were His enemy. Now mirror His heart by responding with generous love—not because they deserve it, but because of who God is.

III. REACHING LOVE'S PERFECTION (*Matthew 5:47-48*)

"Perfect" means _____, mature, whole.

Spiritual maturity = loving _____ as well as friends.

Application

Spiritual Maturity Test: Ask yourself—"Am I loving anyone who doesn't love me back?" Even unbelievers love their friends—that's natural, not supernatural.

Your Challenge: Pick one person who's been unkind to you and show them one act of kindness this week. This proves you're maturing into God's character.

PERSONAL REFLECTION:

Who is the most difficult person in your life right now? How has your response to them reflected God's character?

Write your thoughts:

Answer Key

INTRODUCTION: Love,
enemies

I. REDEFINING LOVE'S

LIMITS: agape, choice, pray

II. REFLECTING GOD'S GENEROUS LOVE

evil, good, just, unjust
enemies

III. REACHING LOVE'S PERFECTION

complete, enemies

The Good News

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, (Romans 5:1)

The Bad News

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
(Romans 3:23)

The Ugly News

For the wages of sin is death, ... (Romans 6:23a)

The Great News

... but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

(Romans 6:23a)

Guess What?

You can become a Christian right now and experience salvation and the gift of eternal life through God's Son the Lord Jesus Christ! Simply Pray this Prayer Right Now! **"God thank you for Jesus Christ who died on the cross for my sins.**

Thank you for receiving what Jesus did for me on the cross as payment for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins. Right now I accept Jesus into my heart and ask that he become my Savior and Lord! Amen!"

If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. (Romans 10:9-10)

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