

LOVING YOUR ENEMIES

READ: Matthew 5:43- 48

⁴³ "You have heard the law that says, 'Love your neighbor' and hate your enemy. ⁴⁴ But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! ⁴⁵ In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For He gives His sunlight to both the evil and the good, and He sends rain on the just and the unjust alike.

⁴⁶ If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. ⁴⁷ If you are kind only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that. ⁴⁸ But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.

REFLECT:

What two things does Jesus tell us to do?

Why is this hard to do?

As Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King said in one of his sermons "Probably no admonition of Jesus has been more difficult to follow than the command to "love your enemies."

However, if we want to be like Jesus we need to love like Jesus loved. Jesus loved those who didn't love Him. During the last supper he washed Judas's feet right before Judas betrayed him. Now that is love! Even more amazing is that while He was dying on the cross for our sins, He prayed for those who were crucifying Him. WOW!

In Romans 5 it talks about how when we were God's enemies Christ died for us. Jesus doesn't ask us to do something that He didn't do Himself. When we are kind to those who are mean to us, we are being like Jesus.

One way we can love those who are unkind is to pray for them. When you pray for someone, you start to think about that person like Jesus would. You realize they are a person made in God's image and need to be forgiven of their sins just like you do.

RESPOND: How will you be kind to someone who is unkind to you this week?

Thank God that even when you were His enemy He died for you and ask Him to help you love those who are hard for you to love.

Thank God for _____

Pray for _____