

#### 4. Exceed Normal Expectations!

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.

Matthew 5:46,47

If your conduct can only be explained in terms of the *supernatural* then you've got something to say to the society, they're going to take note.

**But if you're like everybody else, what is the difference?**

#### 5. Pursue the Perfection of God!

But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Matthew 5:48

Jesus saying is a command, a promise and a hope.

Since Jesus is both the perfection of the image of God as a human and the perfect image of the invisible God as the divine Son of God (Colossians 1:15-20)

He is the ultimate example for his disciples to follow as they hear the command to *"be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect."*

We can follow Christ in this life  
with a *"restful dissatisfaction"*  
until our final perfection in eternity.  
Michael J. Wilkins NIV Application Commentary



Sierra Community Church  
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Dan Wilvers Part 7

#### Love Your Enemies

**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. Matthew 5:43-48

**Jesus says:** "You have heard the law that says, 'Love your neighbor' and hate your enemy. 44 But I say, love your enemies!"

#### Compare this with Paul's teaching:

Owe nothing to anyone—except for your obligation to love one another. If you love your neighbor, you will fulfill the requirements of God's law. 9 For the commandments say, "You must not commit adultery. You must not murder. You must not steal. You must not covet." These—and other such commandments—are summed up in this one commandment: "Love your neighbor as yourself." 10 Love does no wrong to others, so love fulfills the requirements of God's law.

Romans 13:8-10

**Paul and Jesus are saying the same thing... love fulfills the whole moral law of God.**

Jesus is calling for love towards an enemy, and that's a simple thing to understand but hard to do. I don't know how else to say it, other than to simply say it means to love everybody exactly the same, be it a friend or foe.

God doesn't expect you to love them *philia*, like a friend.

He doesn't expect you to love them *storgē*, like your own family.

He doesn't expect you to love them *eros*, affectionate love

But what He does say is to love them *agapaō*, which is a love that **seeks their highest good and seeks to serve their needs.**

## Jesus Speaks FIVE Commands

### 1. But I say, love your enemies!

"You have heard the law that says, 'Love your neighbor' and hate your enemy. 44 But I say, love your enemies! Matthew 5:43,44a

"If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads." Romans 12:20

"You have heard the law that says, 'Love your neighbor' **and hate your enemy.** vs. 43

Nowhere does the Bible command us to hate our enemies.

### The heart of the Jewish ruling class was reflected in this situation.

Later, Matthew invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners. 11 But when the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with such filth? Matthew 9:10,11

**You know who their neighbors were?** The people in their group. Therefore, if someone who is not your neighbor is not to be loved and the opposite of love is hate, so love your neighbor means hate your enemy."

### 2. Pray for those who persecute you!

Pray for those who persecute you! Matthew 5 :44b

Jesus wants us to ask God for their highest good. Wouldn't it be great if we just began to pray for the people who are against us?

***Praying what? That they would be saved***  
Just that prayer in and of itself will fill your heart with love.  
It will wash your soul to pray like that.

### 3. Show Your True Colors!

In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:45a

So you must live as God's obedient children. Don't slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn't know any better then. 15 But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy. 16 For the Scriptures say, "You must be holy because I am holy." 1 Peter 1:14-16

### Jesus gives us an example of how we do it.

For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. Matthew 5:45b

Notice– the evil comes first one time and the just comes first the next time – Jesus inverts the order, why? **So that you might see the point here is impartiality**, to show you that what Jesus is saying is God loves everybody.

We have a theological term for this love  
it's called, "**common grace**".

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. 2 Peter 3:9