
SERMON
LUKE - ACTS
SERIES



LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

HEAD

- In the upside-down Kingdom, love is the only force capable of extinguishing the incinerating fires of hate.
- The Golden Rule coupled with Jesus' command to be merciful are the guiding principles of Jesus' social and relational ethics, may we apply them to our friends and enemies indiscriminately.
- God's promise to reward us greatly and recognize us as children of the Most High is contingent upon our social and relational ethics surpassing what generally characterizes sinners.

– Luke 6:27-36 –



HEART

- (1) Jesus commands his followers to love their enemies not as an emotional feeling but as a deliberate act of the will – what is the hardest part of separating your emotions from your actions when it comes to someone who has genuinely wronged you?

– Luke 6:27-36 –



HEART

- (2) Pastor Daryl described the kingdom of God as "upside down' compared to the world's values – in what specific areas of your daily life do you find the greatest tension between the world's way of responding to conflict and the kingdom's way?

– Luke 6:27-36 –



HEART

- (3) Dr. Stein's illustration compares loving actions to a train engine and loving feelings to the caboose – have you ever experienced a moment where choosing to act lovingly toward someone eventually changed how you felt about them?

– Luke 6:27-36 –



HEART

- (4) Jesus issues four commands in Luke 6:27-28 to: love, do good, bless, and pray – all in the present tense indicating continuous and habitual action; which of these four commands do you find most difficult to practice consistently and why?

– Luke 6:27-36 –



HEART

- (5) Pastor Daryl raised the complex tension between violence, vengeance, and vindication, noting that the Bible contains examples of all three – how do you personally discern when it is appropriate to seek justice or self-defense versus surrendering a grievance to God?

– Luke 6:27-36 –



HEART

- (6) The examples of Gandhi, MLK Jr., and Nelson Mandela demonstrate different approaches to confronting injustice – what do their lives teach us about the practical power and the limits of nonviolence as a kingdom strategy?

– Luke 6:27-36 –



HEART

- (7) Jesus raises the standard for his disciples by pointing out that even sinners love those who love them back – what does it reveal about the state of your discipleship if the people you love and do good to are exclusively those who treat you well?

– Luke 6:27-36 –



HEART

- (8) Pastor Daryl shared that the prize for loving enemies is being called a child of the Most High, just as Jesus is called the Son of the Most High in Luke 1:32 – how does the identity of being a child of God motivate you differently than simply following a rule?

– Luke 6:27-36 –



HEART

- (9) John Nolland suggested that when someone steals out of genuine need, a disciple might reframe the stolen item as something that was always meant to meet that need – how does this kind of radical paradigm shift challenge your understanding of ownership and generosity?

– Luke 6:27-36 –



HEART

- (10) Pastor Daryl was transparent about his personal struggle to embrace Jesus' commands in this passage, admitting he would rather read genealogies than wrestle with these teachings – what does honest spiritual struggle with a difficult scripture passage look like in a healthy discipleship community?

– Luke 6:27-36 –



HANDS

- Choose ONE of the following action steps:
  - **Option 1:** PRAY FOR AN ENEMY. Identify one person who has mistreated, insulted, or wronged you. Pray for them by name every day this week. Do not pray about them – pray for them. Ask God to bless them, provide for them, and show them grace.

– Luke 6:27-36 –



HANDS

- Choose ONE of the following action steps:
  - **Option 2:** DO ONE GOOD THING. Identify one person who has been hostile or unkind toward you. Do one specific, practical good thing for them this week. Do not tell them why. Do not expect anything in return.

– Luke 6:27-36 –



HANDS

- Choose ONE of the following action steps:
  - **Option 3:** CHANGE THE SCRIPT. The next time someone speaks negatively about you or to you, resist the urge to respond in kind. Instead, say something kind, true, or neutral. Notice what it costs you and what it produces.

– Luke 6:27-36 –



HANDS

- Choose ONE of the following action steps:
  - **Option 4:** EXAMINE YOUR GOLDEN RULE GAPS. Write down two or three types of people or situations where you consistently fail to apply the Golden Rule. Bring those to God in prayer and ask him to begin transforming those specific areas.

– Luke 6:27-36 –



HANDS

- Choose ONE of the following action steps:
  - **Option 5:** HOLD SOMETHING LOOSELY. Identify one possession, resource, or advantage you hold tightly. Ask God whether there is someone in your community or circle who needs it. Consider what it would mean to make it available.

– Luke 6:27-36 –





FIVE DAY DEVOTIONAL

Day 1: The Command That Changes Everything
Reading: Luke 6:27-28

- **Devotional:** Jesus does not offer a suggestion here – he issues a command. Love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who mistreat you. Every verb is present tense, meaning this is not a one-time act but a habitual way of life. Nothing in our natural instincts prepares us for this. We want to match energy for energy. But the upside-down kingdom operates on different currency. The question is not whether you feel love for your enemy. The question is whether you will choose to act in love anyway. The will must lead. The feelings follow.
- **Reflection:** Who in your life right now is hardest to love? What would one deliberate act of goodwill toward that person look like this week?



– Luke 6:27-36 –

Day 2: The Engine and the Caboose
Reading: Romans 12:17-21

- **Devotional:** We often wait to feel love before we act in love. But Jesus commands the engine, not the caboose. The engine is the will – the deliberate, determined choice to pursue the highest good of someone who has wronged you. The feelings, like a caboose, get pulled along behind. You may never feel warmth toward someone who has caused you harm. That is honest, and God knows it. But you can choose to pray for them. You can choose to speak well of them. You can choose to act with decency toward them. That is where transformation begins – not in the heart, but in the will surrendered to God.
- **Reflection:** In what area of your life are you waiting on your feelings to change before you act in obedience? What would it look like to let your will lead today?



– Luke 6:27-36 –

Day 3: The Golden Rule Has No Exceptions
Reading: Luke 6:31-36

- **Devotional**: The Golden Rule is beloved and widely quoted, yet rarely applied to its fullest extent. We gladly extend it to friends, colleagues, and family members who treat us well. The real test comes when we are asked to extend it to those who despise us. Jesus makes the standard uncomfortably clear in Luke 6:32-34 – even sinners love those who love them. Even sinners do good to those who are good to them. If our love extends only as far as the people who love us back, we are living no differently than those who do not know God at all. The children of the Most High are called to a higher standard, not because they are better, but because their Father is.
- **Reflection**: Is there someone in your life to whom you have never applied the Golden Rule? What is one concrete way you can treat that person the way you would want to be treated?

– Luke 6:27-36 –



Day 4: Children of the Most High
Reading: Luke 1:30-35; 1 John 3:1-3

- **Devotional:** Gabriel announced to Mariam that her child would be called the Son of the Most High. That title carries the full weight of divine identity. Yet Jesus, in Luke 6:35, extends an extraordinary invitation: those who love their enemies, do good, and lend without expecting return will be called children of the Most High. We bear the family name when we bear the family resemblance. God is gracious to the ungrateful and to the evil. When we extend grace to those who do not deserve it, we look like our Father. We act like our Father. The watching world does not need to hear an argument for God. They need to see the character of God walking around in his sons and daughters.
- **Reflection:** In what ways does your daily conduct reflect the character of your heavenly Father? Where does the resemblance break down, and what needs to change?

– Luke 6:27-36 –



Day 5: Only Love Can Drive Out Hate
Reading: Matthew 5:43-48; Romans 5:6-8

- **Devotional:** God did not wait for humanity to become lovable before sending his Son. Paul reminds us in Romans 5 that while we were still sinners – while we were still enemies of God – Christ died for us. That is the ultimate expression of the upside-down kingdom. Darkness cannot drive out darkness. Hate cannot drive out hate. Only love can do that. Every time a follower of Jesus absorbs hostility and responds with goodness, every time a disciple prays for someone who has caused them harm, every time a child of the Most High blesses rather than curses, the darkness loses ground. This is not weakness. This is the most powerful force in the universe, modeled first by Jesus on a Cross, and now entrusted to us.
- **Reflection:** Where in your life is hate currently winning because love has not yet been deployed? What would it look like to annihilate that hatred with a deliberate, sustained, Spirit-empowered act of love?

– Luke 6:27-36 –



Closing Prayer

Closing Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for revealing through Jesus that Your kingdom operates by a radically different standard. Teach us to extinguish the fires of hate through deliberate acts of love rather than retaliation, resentment, or resignation.

Father, give us the discipline to love our enemies through intentional actions, not merely emotional feelings. Help our obedience lead our emotions, and may our actions reflect the character of Jesus even when our feelings have yet to catch up.

Lord, remove every exception or condition we place on whom we choose to love. Teach us to extend the Golden Rule and Your mercy indiscriminately to friends and enemies alike.

Finally, cultivate within us a righteousness and relational ethic that exceeds the standards of this world. May our love and mercy distinguish us as Your children, worthy of being called children of the Most High. In Jesus' beautiful name, Amen.


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