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# CBC WEEKLY RESOURCES

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OCTOBER 5, 2025  
COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH  
3645 Cashiers Rd, Highlands, NC 28741

# I. SERMON RECAP

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Pastor Gary began his sermon by sharing his appreciation for a recent time of rest and reflection, setting the stage to delve into the series on the profound statements of Jesus. He highlighted the concept of "profound" as something deeply impactful, requiring contemplation and introspection. Drawing from the Sermon on the Mount, specifically Matthew 5:43-48, he explored the radical directive of Jesus to love one's enemies. Pastor Gary emphasized how Jesus' words challenge us to break free from status quo thinking and invite a heart revolution that encourages a deeper, more empathetic understanding of others.

Throughout the sermon, Pastor Gary connected historical revolutions initiated by profound statements to our personal and spiritual lives today. He asserted that the church is key in facilitating change, calling us to challenge the ways we separate people into categories and hold onto grievances. By loving and praying for enemies, believers allow their own hearts to transform, emulating Christ's revolutionary love. Pastor Gary captured this transformation by suggesting that prayer shifts our perspective—not only focusing on others but reshaping our own hearts to reflect the love of Christ more fully.

Concluding with a call for personal reflection, Pastor Gary urged the congregation to conduct a "heart check," discovering any areas of life where Jesus needs to make a profound impact. He explained that the real transformation begins by listening to what comes out of our hearts, as revealed by our words and actions daily. Using the illustration of Christ's sacrificial love, he underscored the importance of bridging divides and opening ourselves to the profound changes the Holy Spirit can initiate when we invite Jesus into every facet of our lives. Pastor Gary closed with a call to let Jesus meddle in our faith walk, leading us into a deeper relationship with God and others.

## Chapters

### Chapter 1: The Power of Profound Statements

We explore the concept of profound statements and their impact on our lives and faith.

### Chapter 2: Loving Our Enemies: A Revolutionary Concept

We delve into Jesus' command to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us.

### Chapter 3: Becoming Childlike in Faith

We explore the concept of childlike faith and its importance in our spiritual growth.

### Chapter 4: Distinguishing Ourselves from the World

We consider how our faith should set us apart from the world.

# II. STUDY GUIDE

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## Key Points

- Jesus' teachings are often profound and require deep reflection to understand and apply
- Loving our enemies is a revolutionary concept that goes against human nature
- Praying for those who persecute us changes our own hearts more than it changes others
- The church needs to embrace this teaching to have a real impact on society
- We should seek to understand and empathize with those we consider enemies or different from us
- True Christianity involves allowing Jesus to love others through us, even those we struggle to love
- We need to cultivate a childlike faith and trust in God's ways, even when they seem counterintuitive

## Key Scripture

**Matthew 5:43-48** You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

**Matthew 10:34** "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.

## Other Relevant Scripture

### Referenced Scripture

**Proverbs 14:34** ("Righteousness exalts a nation")

**Matthew 18:3** (Becoming like children to enter the kingdom of heaven)

**2 Corinthians 5:20** (Christians as ambassadors of reconciliation)

**John 17:14-16** (Being in the world but not of it)

**Isaiah 53:7** (The lamb before the shearers is silent)

**Luke 23:34** ("Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do")

**Matthew 4:19** ("Come, follow me")

**Luke 6:45** ("Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks")

**Revelation 3:20** (Jesus wanting to dine/sup with believers)

**1 Corinthians 11:28** (Examining oneself before taking communion)

#### **Other Verses Aligning With Main Themes:**

**Romans 12:18** ("If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all")

**Ephesians 4:32** ("Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you")

**Luke 6:27-28** ("Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you")

**Colossians 3:13** ("Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you")

**1 Peter 3:9** ("Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing")

# III. DEVOTIONAL MATERIAL

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## Day 1: Loving Our Enemies

Question: How might our lives and relationships change if we truly embraced Jesus' command to love our enemies? What practical steps can we take to begin loving those we consider enemies or opponents?

Reading: Matthew 5:43-48

Devotional: Jesus' command to love our enemies is perhaps one of His most challenging teachings. It goes against our natural instincts and cultural norms. Yet, this radical love is at the heart of Christ's message. As we read this passage, let's reflect on the profound impact this kind of love can have.

Who in your life do you consider an "enemy" or someone difficult to love? Consider how God's love extends even to those who oppose Him. Pray for the strength to see these individuals through God's eyes and to take a small step towards showing them Christ-like love today. Remember, loving our enemies isn't about approving their actions, but about reflecting God's unconditional love and seeking their ultimate good.

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## Day 2: The Transformative Power of Prayer

Question: How does praying for those who persecute us or oppose us change our own hearts? Can you think of a time when praying for someone difficult changed your perspective?

Reading: Ephesians 6:18-20

Devotional: Prayer is not just about getting results; it's about allowing God to change our hearts. In the sermon, we heard how praying for our enemies can transform us. As you read this passage, consider how consistent, fervent prayer for others - especially those you struggle with - might reshape your perspective and soften your heart.

Today, commit to praying for someone you find difficult to love or understand. Ask God to give you insight into their life and circumstances. As you pray, pay attention to how your feelings towards this person might begin to shift. Remember, prayer is a powerful tool for personal transformation and spiritual growth.

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## Day 3: Childlike Faith

Question: Pastor Gary mentions becoming more childlike in faith. What does this mean to you, and how might it transform your relationship with God and others?

Reading: Matthew 18:1-4

Devotional: Jesus calls us to have faith like a child - trusting, curious, and obedient. In our complex world, it's easy to lose this simplicity of faith. As you read, reflect on what childlike faith means to you.

How might embracing a more innocent, trusting approach to your relationship with God change your daily life? Consider areas where you've become cynical or overly analytical in your faith. Ask God to renew a spirit of wonder and trust in you. Today, try approaching a challenge or decision with the simple trust of a child, believing that your Heavenly Father has your best interests at heart.

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#### Day 4: Being Set Apart

Question: What distinguishes Christians from non-believers in how we treat those who oppose or differ from us? How can we better reflect Christ's love in these interactions?

Reading: Romans 12:1-2

Devotional: What distinguishes us as followers of Christ from the world around us? This passage calls us to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. Considering the sermon, reflect on how your thoughts, actions, and social media presence reflect Christ's love.

Are there areas where you've conformed to the world's patterns rather than God's? Today, identify one specific way you can demonstrate Christ's love that goes against cultural norms. It might be reaching out to someone different from you, choosing not to engage in gossip, or responding with kindness to a harsh comment. Ask God to help you be distinctively Christ-like in a world that often promotes division and self-interest.

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#### Day 5: Christ's Sacrificial Love

Question: How does the example of Jesus on the cross, forgiving his persecutors, challenge our typical responses to those who hurt or oppose us?

Reading: Philippians 2:5-11

Devotional: The ultimate example of loving one's enemies is found in Christ's sacrifice on the cross. As you read this passage, meditate on the depth of Christ's humility and love. He chose to die for us while we were still sinners - His enemies.

How does this sacrificial love challenge and inspire you? Reflect on areas in your life where you're called to demonstrate sacrificial love. It might be in a difficult relationship, a challenging work situation, or a community need. Ask God to fill you with His love and strength to follow Christ's example. Today, look for an opportunity to put others' needs before your own, embodying the selfless love of Christ.

# IV. SMALL GROUP RESOURCES

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## Small Group Guide: Loving Your Enemies - A Heart Check

### Opening Prayer:

### Opening Question:

What was your initial reaction to Jesus' command to "love your enemies"? Does it seem impossible or counterintuitive?

### Key Takeaways:

1. Jesus' statement to love our enemies is profound and revolutionary.
2. Praying for our enemies changes our own hearts.
3. We need to move beyond just loving those who love us.
4. Loving our enemies distinguishes us from the world.
5. Jesus wants to love our enemies through us.

### Discussion Questions:

1. Who do you consider your "enemies" or people you struggle to love? Why?
2. How does praying for those who persecute or oppose us change our own hearts?
3. In what ways do we tend to surround ourselves only with people who agree with or affirm us? How can we break out of this pattern?
4. What are some practical ways we can show love to those we disagree with or find difficult to love?
5. How does Jesus' example on the cross (saying "Father, forgive them") challenge our own attitudes towards those who hurt us?
6. What areas of your life or relationships might Jesus be asking to "meddle with" to cultivate a more loving heart?

**Practical Applications:**

1. This week, identify one person or group you struggle to love. Commit to praying for them daily.
2. Look for an opportunity to engage with someone who has different views or beliefs from you. Practice listening and seeking to understand their perspective.
3. Examine your social media habits. Are you only interacting with like-minded people? Challenge yourself to engage respectfully with different viewpoints.
4. Reflect on your speech. How often do you speak negatively about others? Practice speaking with more empathy and understanding.
5. Choose one "enemy" or difficult person in your life. Brainstorm one concrete way you can show them love this week, even if it's a small gesture.

**Closing Prayer:**



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Recovery Alive and Pastor Joel's Parent Class will continue this Wednesday, as well as our normal youth and children's programming. Remember to get here at 5:00 for dinner!

We are taking donations for Angel Tree throughout October. Start giving now, so that money can be put away early and there is plenty of time left to get gifts! Just designate "Angel Tree" in your giving. Angel Tree is a coalition of churches in Highlands that come together to bless children who would otherwise not receive presents.

If you haven't signed up for the Men's Super Awesome Sleepover Adventure, be sure to get on the list before it's too late! The dates for that are approaching quickly, October 17-18<sup>th</sup>.

The youth head to Whisper Mountain for camp November 14-16. Get signed up now so Pastor David can get an estimate on numbers!

As always, email [Info@cbchighlands.com](mailto:Info@cbchighlands.com) for more information or call the church office at [\(828\) 526-4685](tel:(828)526-4685)