

# What Are You Doing With Love? (Part 2) How do you treat your enemies?

January 26, 2025

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1.26.2025

Review

We have a mandate to love. Period.

[John 13:34-35 \(NKJV\)](#)

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

[Romans 13:9-10 \(NLT\)](#)

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.

[Jeremiah 31:33 \(NKJV\)](#)

But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

[Romans 2:28-29 \(NKJV\)](#)

For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; 29 but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.

[Romans 5:5 \(NKJV\)](#)

Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

There is no spiritual growth without growth in love.

[1 John 3:14 \(NLT\)](#)

If we love our Christian brothers and sisters, it proves that we have passed from death to life. But a person who has no love is still dead.

[1 John 4:7-8 \(NLT\)](#)

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Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God.

8 But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

[1 John 4:20-21 \(NLT\)](#)

If someone says, "I love God," but hates a Christian brother or sister, that person is a liar; for if we don't love people we can see, how can we love God, whom we cannot see? 21 And he has given us this command: Those who love God must also love their Christian brothers and sisters.

**Every step out of love is a step from light to darkness and sin.**

We tie God's hands, and we invite the demonic realm to hinder life when we do not allow love to rule us!

[James 3:14-16 \(KJV\)](#)

But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. 15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. 16 For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.

[James 3:14-17 \(NIV\)](#)

But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. 15 Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. 16 For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. 17 But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.

The love of God shuts down the demonic kingdom!

1. We are called to love people, even those we don't like.
2. Love is the default we are to live by when others harm us!
3. Love refuses to harbor judgments, bitterness, unforgiveness, and malice when wronged.

Today:

4. Love treats enemies kindly!

[Philippians 2:3 \(KJV\)](#)

Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves.

[Philippians 2:3-4 \(TPT\)](#)

Be free from pride-filled opinions, for they will only harm your cherished unity. Don't allow self-promotion to hide in your hearts, but in authentic humility put others first and view others as more important than

yourselves. 4 Abandon every display of selfishness. Possess a greater concern for what matters to others instead of your own interests.

You don't always have to prove your point.

#### [2 Timothy 2:24 \(NKJV\)](#)

And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, 25 in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, 26 and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.

#### [2 Timothy 2:23-26 \(TPT\)](#)

Stay away from all the foolish arguments of the immature, for these disputes will only generate more conflict. 24 For a true servant of our Lord Jesus will not be argumentative but gentle toward all and skilled in helping others see the truth, having great patience toward the immature. 25 Then with meekness you'll be able to carefully enlighten those who argue with you so they can see God's gracious gift of repentance and be brought to the truth. 26 This will cause them to rediscover themselves and escape from the snare of Satan who caught them in his trap so that they would carry out his purposes.

The demonic realm is invited to do life with you when you choose strife. Instead, choose love:

**So, here is the big question today – How do you treat a person who is like an enemy towards you in their attitudes, their speech, and their behavior?**

#### [Matthew 5: 38-44 \(NKJV\)](#)

You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. 39 But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. 40 If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. 41 And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. 42 Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away. 43 You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'

#### [Leviticus 19:18 \(NKJV\)](#)

*You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.*

44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,

*Paul:*

#### [Romans 12:20-21 \(NKJV\)](#)

*Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him;*

*If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head."* 21 *Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

*Peter:*

#### [1 Peter 3:9 \(NLT\)](#)

*Don't repay evil for evil. Don't retaliate with insults when people insult you. Instead, pay them back with a*

blessing. That is what God has called you to do, and he will grant you his blessing.

Again, listen to Paul in [1 Corinthians 13](#):

[1 Corinthians 13:5 \(AMP\)](#)

...it is not touchy or fretful or resentful; it takes no account of the evil done to it [it pays no attention to a suffered wrong].

(44) But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,

45 that you may be sons of your Father 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. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? 48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

This is completely the opposite of what you feel like doing.

[Matthew 5:44-48](#) (MSG)

I'm challenging that. I'm telling you to love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the energies of prayer, for then you are working out of your true selves, your God-created selves. This is what God does. He gives his best—the sun to warm and the rain to nourish—to everyone, regardless: the good and bad, the nice and nasty. If all you do is love the lovable, do you expect a bonus? Anybody can do that. If you simply say hello to those who greet you, do you expect a medal? Any run-of-the-mill sinner does that. In a word, what I'm saying is, Grow up. You're kingdom subjects. Now live like it. Live out your God-created identity. Live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you.

[Luke 6:27-36](#) (TPT)

*Love Your Enemies*

But if you will listen, I say to you, love your enemies and do something wonderful for them in return for their hatred. 28 When someone curses you, bless that person in return. When you are mistreated and harassed by others, accept it as your mission to pray for them. 29 To those who despise you, continue to serve them and minister to them. If someone takes away your coat, give him as a gift your shirt as well. 30 When someone comes to beg from you, give to that person what you have. When things are wrongly taken from you, do not demand they be given back. 31 However you wish to be treated by others is how you should treat everyone else. 32 Are you really showing true love by only loving those who love you back? Even those who don't know God will do that. 33 Are you really showing compassion when you do good deeds only to those who do good deeds to you? Even those who don't know God will do that. 34 If you lend money only to those you know will repay you, what credit is that to your character? Even those who don't know God do that. 35 But love your enemies and continue to treat them well. When you lend money, don't despair if you are never paid back, for it is not lost. You will receive a rich reward and you will be known as true children of the Most High God, having his same nature. For your Father is famous for his kindness to heal even the thankless and cruel. 36 Show mercy and compassion for others, just as your heavenly Father overflows with mercy and compassion for all.

**A Word to my Enemies**

You are not really my enemies at all...in reality you are some of the best friends I have.

I speak sincerely when I say that there can be no spiritual growth in believers' lives without the chastising work of a real enemy. When a friend highlights all my good qualities and praises me from their heart of true friendship, I feel nothing but love for them.

But when I hear of an enemy who has unjustly brought shame upon me, I find that an attitude of self defence and of "righteous indignation" rises up in me to counter this enemy. This response I have to my enemy produces in me a conviction from the Holy Spirit that my response to my enemy is self-centered and carnal. It is then that I can see how wrong I am and I can finally see the things that I didn't know were in my responses.

When I see how I treat those who are unkind and harsh towards me, the Holy Spirit gives me the urge to repent of my harshness and so with sorrow of heart I cry to God, and He delivers me from what I have seen in my life. My selfish tendencies were hidden, lying dormant, until you, my beloved enemy, brought them to light with your crucifying process.

The prophets of old would never have had the glory of being stoned for the Word of God – no martyr's crown could ever have been won by early Christians without real enemies.

You see, I cannot crucify myself, and friends will not do it. So it takes you, my enemy, to bring me to the cross that Jesus has asked me to take up as I follow Him. And to the cross I must come, if ever I am to change my responses and see the likeness of Jesus in how I treat others.

But there is much progress yet to make before my life begins to bear the image of Jesus. There is much I must yet learn. And you, my enemy, are teaching me. I have learned that the road to Christlikeness is by the way of the cross. And without you I would not have found the way.

I'm sure if you knew the good your efforts are working out in my life, you would not want to help me so much. But the work is being done, and I have learned to love you because of it. "Love your enemies," Jesus said, and I wondered how I could do it. But you, my enemy, have taught me how to love. For because of you I have grown in God, increased in His grace, and partaken of His divine nature.

Your work has been sharp and cutting, and many times I was hurt and wounded deeply. But out of these trying experiences I have come forth a better Christian, and further on my way to being an overcomer. I doubt that you will receive any rewards for your lies and your efforts to destroy me, for "*woe unto them through whom these offenses come.*" But I want you to know that though your loss may be great on the Day of Judgment, I love you and appreciate the ministry you have had in perfecting and changing this life of mine.

Author Unknown

Lastly, here is a compilation of different translations of [1 Corinthians 13:4-7](#) that I've had in my files since the 1980's:

#### [1 CORINTHIANS 13:4 – 7](#)

Let me describe love. It is slow to lose patience; love stays in difficult relationships with kindness, and it always looks for ways to be constructive. There is no envy in love. It is not possessive and never boils over with jealousy. Love makes no parade of itself; it never boasts, nor does it puff up with pride. Love is never arrogant and never puts itself on display because it is neither anxious to impress nor does it cherish inflated ideas of its

and never puts itself on display, because it is neither anxious to impress, nor does it cherish inflated ideas of its own importance. Love never gets irritated and is never resentful.

Love holds no grudges, and it keeps no record of evil done to it. Love refuses to be provoked and never harbors evil thoughts.

Love is not rude or grasping or overly sensitive, nor does love search for imperfections and faults in others. Love does not compile statistics of evil or gloat over the wickedness of other people. On the contrary, it is glad with all good men when truth prevails. Love celebrates what is real and not what is perverse or incomplete.

Love never does the graceless thing. Love has good manners and does not pursue selfish advantage. Love never insists on its own rights, never irritably loses its temper, and never nurses its wrath to keep it warm. Love is not touchy.

Love can stand any kind of treatment because there are no limits to its endurance, no end to its trust. Love bears up under anything; it perseveres in all circumstances. Love's first instinct is to believe in people. If you love someone, you will be loyal to him no matter what the cost. You will always believe in him, always expect the best in him, and always stand your ground in defending him. Love never regards anyone or anything as hopeless. Love keeps up hope in everything. Love's hope never fades.

Love keeps on keeping on! It trusts in God in every situation and expects God to act in all circumstances. Love goes on forever. Nothing can destroy love. Nothing can happen that can break love's spirit. In fact, it is the one thing that still stands when all else has fallen.

### **Action Points**

1. Do you think about love as the most important thing in all of your relationships?
2. Do you seek to respond in love when others do you wrong and say things that are just not true about you?
3. Do you practice loving those who act like enemies by praying for them and seeking in some way to do something good for them?
4. What do you need to change so that others see the love of God in your life?