

Love Your Enemies

Matthew 5:43–48

Thursday, May 7, 2026

EPISODE SUMMARY

Matthew closes Matthew 5 with what Jesus saves for last — love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. The "hate your enemy" half of verse 43 was never in the Old Testament; it was a folk theology graft on top of Leviticus 19:18, and Jesus erases the line. The Father's indiscriminate love — sun on the evil and the good, rain on the righteous and the unrighteous — becomes the standard. And verse 48's "be perfect" isn't a demand for moral flawlessness; it's a call to let love grow up into its full design — to become complete in love the way the Father is complete in love.

KEY THEMES

- The folk theology graft: "hate your enemy" was never in the OT — Jesus erases the line.
- Love paired with prayer — the practice that does the emotional work.
- The Father's character as the standard — sun and rain on all, indiscriminate generosity.
- Beyond the natural floor: even tax collectors and Gentiles take care of their own.
- "Be perfect" as completeness in love, not moral flawlessness.
- Christ embodied this passage from the cross before he ever taught it.

KEY SCRIPTURE

"But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven. For he causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous."

— Matthew 5:44–45, CSB

TAKEAWAY TRUTH

The summit of Matthew 5 isn't moral flawlessness. It's love grown up into its full design — love that reaches past the lines that come naturally, the way the Father's love already does. Grace doesn't excuse us from the call. Grace is what makes the call answerable.

APPLICATION FOR TODAY

One noticing this week. Pick a name — not a category, a person — someone who has actually stood against you. Pray for them. Not pray about them — pray for them. Bring them before the Father and ask God to bless them. One name. One prayer. That's where the floor of this passage starts lifting you toward the ceiling.

SERIES FOCUS

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