

Matthew 5:38-48

“How Kingdom Subjects Treat Enemies”

Pastor Bruce Zachary

Who is your enemy? An enemy threatens your person, possessions, plans, provisions, or peace. How we treat our enemies says much about our re with God. Unlike the world, kingdom subjects overcome evil by good. How can you truly love your enemies?

Discussion Qs

- 1. How does the world generally treat enemies?**
- 2. Why does showing kindness and love to someone who threatens our person, provision, plans, and possessions (an enemy) counterintuitive?**
- 3. Think of a time where you tried to show love to an enemy. What happened and how did it feel?**
- 4. How can you show love and kindness above and beyond the norm this week to bring glory to God?**

Jesus is our King and the marriage realm [prelude: 2016 Vision: Jesus is Our King]

Husband + wife come to a pastor for counsel. He explains that she feels more like a neighbor than a wife. So the pastor asks, how does the Lord say you should treat your neighbor? So the man clarifies just how bad things are in the relationship. So the pastor says, “Oh I get it, she’s more like an enemy than a neighbor” and the man replies, “Yes, that’s it!” So, the pastor asks, “How does the Lord say you should treat your enemy?”

Commit to love, honor, and respect your spouse even if they feel like an enemy.

Share your questions or experiences at: Jesusisourking@clavarynexus.org, or use [#Jesusisourking](#) on social media

Matt. 5:38-48 “How Kingdom Subjects Treat Enemies”

Intro. Who is your enemy? An enemy threatens our person, possessions, plans, provisions, or peace. How we treat our enemies says much about our re with God

Subject: How kingdom subjects are to treat enemies

Object: Overcome evil by good

Context: Sermon on the Mount, kingdom attitudes re hatred, lust, commitments

I. Kingdom kindness [38-42]

A. The prevailing view is contrast with God's kingdom standard

1. Threats to your person (dignity) [38-39] You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'

a. The law [38] [Ex. 21:24, Lev. 24:20, Dt. 19:21] limits retaliation to prevent escalation. Cf. if someone blinds your eye, you may want to kill them.

How does the world generally treat enemies?

2. Overcome with kindness not revenge [38-39] But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek turn the other to him also: If someone injures, insults, or offends, our flesh wants to retaliate [revenge]

a. The slap on the cheek is an offense to dignity and pride. The Greek philosopher Aristotle said the greatest Greek attribute was the refusal to stand for any insult or offense. This was the dominant attitude/culture of the Roman Empire

b. Jesus at his trial [Jn. 18:22-23] had the ability, power, and opportunity to take revenge and doesn't. Peter points to this as an example for us [1 Pet. 2:20-23].

Rom. 12:21 Overcome evil by doing good

** Pres. Lincoln was ridiculed for kind treatment of Confederate leaders. He responded that he was dealing with enemies by making them friends.

** bz experience + phone call and *not* kind

B. Threats to your provision [40] If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have *your* cloak also.

1. Overcome with kindness not resistance

a. The typical person had one set of garments. Cloak was outer garment [blanket] to protect against elements. Tunic was lighter cloth worn against the skin [long shirt]

i. Per the law the outer cloak would not be taken from the poor [Ex.22:6]

* Management talks about cost cutting and you volunteer for salary reduction

** (Bill) meeting in coffee house

C. Threats to your plans [41] And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.

1. Overcome with kindness not resentment

a. Roman law provides that if a Roman soldier taps you on the shoulder with his spear you carry his equipment for a mile [*Simon the Cyrene and the cross Mt.27]. Jews resented this compulsory service

* Compelled to work overtime and be the best worker possible without resentment

** BZ exp. and countless demands for needs – all the time – struggle ...

D. Threats to your possessions [42] Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.

1. Overcome with kindness not refusal

a. Give generously or loan interest free and regardless of credit risk

ii. Cf. 2Th. 3:10 Those able to work, who refuse to work, are not to receive charity

1Jn. 3:17 Whoever has this world's goods and sees his brother in need, and shuts up

his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?

**** Benevolence requests that seem to exceed our resources**

II. Kingdom love [43-48] Love Your Enemies

A. The prevailing view is contrast with God's kingdom standard

1. To whom do you owe a duty to love? [43] "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.

a. The prevailing rabbinical view [43]. Lev. 19:18 commands us to love neighbor. There is no command to hate enemies.

i. **Ex.23: 4-5** ministry to enemy re lost or burdened animal

ii. Who is neighbor issue and Jesus' Parable of the Good Samaritan [Lu10]

2. Kingdom subjects demonstrate God's love to enemies [44-48]

a. Show love by blessing, doing good, and praying for enemies [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,

Rom. 12:14 Bless those who persecute you, bless and do not curse

b. The command to love enemies displays God's love [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.

i. **Rom. 5:10 God loved us while we were still enemies**

ii. It is the nature of God to do good for His enemies. He loves sinners but not the sin

ii. Jesus to Judas, David to Saul, Joseph to his brothers

c. Kingdom subjects are to show love beyond the norm [46-47] 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?

i. Even **tax collectors** (notorious sinners) love those who love them, and greet their brethren. A follower of Christ should display a greater love fro a greater witness

ii. Rom. 12:20 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

d. Kingdom kindness and love reveal God's standard, our maturity, and our need for a Savior [48] Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

i. **Perfect** refers to maturity and moral purity (no sin)

ii. To enter the Kingdom based on your efforts you must have a perfect attitude and behavior [5:17-48]

iii. No one of us can measure up to God's standard [Rom. 3:23]

iv. Our inadequacy insufficiency to do these things in our strength

v. Jesus' standard of loving enemies: I'm marveling at the fact that He constantly displayed this love, and that I'm so incapable of doing this in my strength. And it compels me to appreciate Jesus, the gospel, and how different His kingdom is from this world.

Conc. We need Jesus. We need to see we don't measure up & glory in His grace. And we need to learn to overcome evil by good in His strength. How will you show love and kindness above and beyond the norm this week to bring glory to God?