

**Sermon: Love Your Enemies.**  
**Series: Love Where You Live.**

**Scripture: Matthew 5:43-48.**  
**Date: June 15, 2025**

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**OBSERVATION** -- As a group, talk through and summarize the passage. Think through *Who, What, Where, When, How, Why* questions together.

**INTERPRETATION** -- Answer these questions together:

**1. What does this passage teach us about us?**

- a) Who comes to mind when you hear Jesus say "Love your enemies?" Remember: An enemy can be anyone not in our "in-group" or someone who is actively using their power to take advantage of us or oppress us.
- b) Why is spiritual growth impossible without loving our enemies? If this is true, are you growing spiritually, or is your love simply limited to those who love you back?

**2. What does this passage teach us about God?**

- a) Read Matthew 5:45 and John 3:16. How do these verses both demonstrate the agape love of God? Consider how his love is inclusive, unconditional, self-giving, and for our good.

**3. What does this passage teach us about grace/salvation? How does it point to Christ?**

- a) In what ways did Jesus fulfill the command to love his enemies? How is the cross the ultimate in agape love for an enemy?
- b) Discuss these truths together: In verse 45, Jesus says "So that we might become sons of our Father in Heaven." He is saying that we must **be what we are** – love like your Father because you ARE a child of God. The more we trust God's agape love for us (his former enemy) the more we will put into practice that same love for our enemies. Have you experienced this spiritual reality in your personal life – receiving God's love leading to sharing God's love?

**APPLICATION**

- a) We said God's love is inclusive, unconditional, self-giving, and for the good of the other person. In what ways would you like your own personal love to take on these same characteristics?
- b) We listed some practical ways to love our enemies in Grace Gives but also day to day: Greet everyone (Matt. 5:47); Bless with encouraging words (Luke 6:28); Do good to all (Luke 6:35); Pray for them (even those who persecute you) (Matt. 5:44).

Which of these can you put into practice this upcoming week? What might be your biggest obstacle to obeying these commands?

**PRAYER**

- Praise God for his agape love for his enemies through nature and through the cross.
- Confess ways that you have failed to love your enemies.
- Thank Jesus for being the ultimate Son who revealed the Father's love for his enemies.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you to love with the love of God – inclusive, unconditional, self-giving, and for the good of others.