

## Loving Those You Hate

### Scripture Reading — Matthew 5:43-48

*“I tell you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you ...”*  
—Matthew 5:44 —

Though we may not like to admit it, we all have enemies. Jesus assumes there are people in our lives we simply cannot get along with. A bully at school. An ex-husband. The person who works in the next cubicle. For whatever reason, your relationship with that person is tainted with animosity and hostility.

But Jesus insists that we treat with kindness even those who make our lives miserable. Most everyone is kind to people who are kind to them. The mark of true discipleship, however, lies in how we act toward people who treat us like enemies. Following Jesus entails praying for people who wish us harm, going out of our way to be friendly to the unfriendly, and offering to help someone who has hurt us.

Why? Because God’s children must learn to mimic their heavenly Father, who shows kindness to people who don’t deserve it.

Most of all, loving our enemies is vital because if God did not love his enemies, you and I would be eternally lost. God loved his enemies—including you and me—enough to die for them. (See Romans 5:6-11.)

May God’s love humble us into radically loving the people around us who don’t deserve it.

Wonderful, merciful Savior,

### Prayer

*you loved your enemies so much that you died for them. Forgive us when we limit how much we are willing to love others. Melt our hearts with your grace so that we may have the strength to love our enemies. Amen.*

**Devotion topics:** [Christianity](#), [Discipleship](#), [Love](#), [Life](#), [Trials & Challenges](#), [Enemies](#), [Christian Life](#), [Following Jesus](#)

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