

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES, PRAY FOR THOSE WHO PERSECUTE YOU (*A Call to Christlike Perfection*)

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
Let us take time today to meditate on the living words of God—a truth that challenges our human nature but reveals the heart of our Heavenly Father.

When we look at the life of Jesus, we see the perfect example of someone completely loved and trusted by the Father. Scripture tells us:

John 3:35

“The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand.”

Jesus performed countless miracles, healed the sick, cast out demons, raised the dead, and taught with unmatched authority. John even wrote that:

John 21:25,

“And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.”

But what set Jesus apart was not only His power or miracles—but His heart. He revealed mysteries of the Kingdom that had been hidden for generations. As He told His disciples:

Luke 10:24

“For I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen it, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard it.”

One of those kingdom mysteries—simple to hear but difficult to live—is the command to love our enemies.

Jesus said:

Mathew 5:44

“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.”

At first glance, I thought I understood this command. But as life unfolded, I realized how far I was from practicing it. When people offended me, I may have said I forgave them—but I didn’t pray for them. I avoided them. My forgiveness was partial and self-protective.

But Christ calls us to a higher standard—one that mirrors the

heart of the Father. It's not enough to say, "I forgive you," and then create distance. Kingdom forgiveness goes further: it involves intercession and love in action. This is what it means to walk in the Spirit.

Let's look to Jesus Himself. He didn't just teach this principle—He lived it out even with His betrayer, Judas Iscariot. Jesus knew Judas would betray Him (John 6:64), yet He kept him close, gave him authority to preach and cast out demons (Luke 9:1-2), and even referred to him as "friend" at the moment of betrayal:

Matthew 26 :50

"But Jesus said to him, 'Friend, why have you come?'"

Imagine that. Even in betrayal, Jesus still addressed Judas with compassion. When He washed the disciples' feet (John 13), Judas was among them. Jesus offered Judas every opportunity for repentance. That's grace. That's divine love.

Now ask yourself: Can you love like that?

Can we, as born-again believers, love those who offend us? Can we intercede for those who gossip about us, manipulate us, or oppose us?

This is what Christ meant when He said:

Matthew 5 : 48

"Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect."

This kind of love reflects the very nature of God:

Mathew 5:45

"...for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."

God is merciful even to the ungrateful. Paul reminds us:

Romans 5:8, NKJV

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Before we were saved, we too were enemies of God (Romans 5:10). Yet He showed us mercy. How then can we deny that same mercy to others?

If it's a co-worker, neighbor, or fellow believer who constantly offends you—don't only forgive—pray for them. Don't retaliate or hold grudges. Paul teaches:

Romans 17- 21

“Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men... Beloved, do not avenge yourselves... If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink... Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

This is spiritual maturity. This is Christlikeness.

But let us be honest: loving enemies is impossible in our own strength. It requires the power of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God deeply rooted in our hearts. The fruit of the Spirit—love, patience, kindness—grows only in surrendered hearts (Galatians 5:22-23).

When we walk this way, God draws nearer. Jesus said:

John 14 : 21

“He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”

A Pastoral Warning:

Beware of teachings or “deliverance ministries” that encourage calling down Holy Ghost fire on your enemies to destroy them. This contradicts the Spirit of Christ. When James and John wanted to call down fire on a Samaritan village, Jesus rebuked them:

Luke 9: 55-56

“You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives but to save them.”

Such teachings nurture bitterness and vengeance—fruits of the flesh, not the Holy Spirit.

Instead, choose the hard but holy way—love your enemies, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who persecute you. This

is the narrow road that leads to the heart of God.

Let us pray:

Father, fill our hearts with Your love. Teach us to love not only our friends but also our enemies. Help us to overcome evil with good, to walk in mercy and truth, and to reflect the perfect love of Christ. Amen.

God bless you richly.

Shalom.

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