

## SERMON ON MT - THE CHRISTIAN AND LOVE

**Matthew 5:43-48**

Today we return to the Sermon on the Mount  
The first half looked at the DNA of Christian Character  
TODAY WE WILL LOOK AT CHRISTIAN CONDUCT  
How shall we live?

Jesus used the Jewish method of preaching called the **Charaz**—  
which means stringing beads.

The Rabbis said the preacher must move quickly,  
from topic to topic in order to maintain interest,  
That's why at times the scriptures can feel a bit disconnected.  
How shall we live and Love as Christians?

There is a lot of confusion about love in our world today.  
Our media and Music shows the Dysfunction of love  
And Country music is a classic example.

Listen to the title of these songs:

**"I Changed Her Oil And She Changed My Life"**

**"Her Teeth Was Stained, But Her Heart Was Pure"**

**Don't Cry On My Shoulders Cause You're Rustin' My Spurs"**

**"If Fingerprints Showed Up On Skin Wonder Whose I'd Find On You"**

The internet has added to our confusion on love.  
With all its pornography, and dating services.

SLIDE---Go on line with the promise to find a suitable companion.  
Not just in Aberdeen, but all over the world.  
In Lodz, Poland, women are demanding a refund  
after paying \$800 to join a dating agency  
They found out it had 300 women--but just seven men.

Jesus begins by saying:

**SLIDE---You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'**

Jesus is pointing out the

**SLIDE---I. THE FLAW OF HUMAN LOVE**

We have a tendency to love only those who love us.

To hate those who hate us.

To hurt those who hurt us.

Two Junior High girls were walking home from school. They saw Greg on the other side of the street. One nudged the other said: "There's Greg!" The other replied, "Oh, we're not speaking any more. I've lost all interest in him. We haven't spoken for 3 days, 6 hours, and 23 minutes."

Do you know that of all God's creation only humans reserve the right to hate?

Animals don't hate.

They have an instinct to survive.

They have an instinct to know who is an enemy.

But they do not have the emotion of hate.

**SLIDE ---Jesus said: 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' <sup>44</sup>But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, <sup>45</sup>that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:43-45**

Love your enemies  
Pray for those who persecute you.

Jesus turns it all around.  
If we're going to be God's children.  
Then we are going to have to think, act, and speak like God.

How many of us are guilty of wishing evil upon another person?  
Two of us in line for the same job, or the cheerleader spot,  
or the front guard on the basketball team?  
The other person falls or sprains his ankle, or gets mono?  
Then we get the position.  
Do you feel sorry about his misfortune?  
or are you secretly glad about your good fortune?

**Only humans reserve the right to wish evil upon another,**  
But divine love never hates.

**SLIDE ---"Bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." Matthew 5:44**

**The word persecute here means – pressure.**  
People who persecute others grind them into the dirt if they get the chance.  
**Pray for them that despitefully use you.**  
Christian can be used and abused.  
But we are not to be guided by that kind of conduct.  
Now you see why we need the Holy Spirit in our lives.

**It was a junior stock show when a grand-champion lamb, owned by a little girl, was being auctioned.** As the bids reached five dollars per pound, the little girl, standing beside the lamb in the arena, began to cry. At ten dollars, the tears were streaming down her face and she clasped her arms tightly around the lamb's neck. The higher the bids rose, the more she cried. Finally, a local businessman bought the lamb for more than \$1000, but then announced that he was donating it to back to the little girl.

**The crowd applauded and cheered.**  
Months later one of the judges was at an event judging essays and came across the same little girl who essay told of the about her grand-champion lamb that had been auctioned. She wrote "The prices began to get so high during the bidding, that I started to cry from happiness." I couldn't believe it and then the man who bought the lamb, for so much more than I ever dreamed I would get, returned the lamb to me, and when I got home, Daddy barbecued the lamb--and it was really delicious."

*Joe Wagner, in Reader's Digest.*

We are to pray for those that use us.

**SLIDE ---Jesus connects another bead here.**  
**For if you love them which love you, what reward have you? Do not even the publicans the same? Matthew 5:46**

**SLIDE---** The publicans here were tax collectors for the Romans.  
**They were traitors to their countrymen,  
 Parasites who over collected taxes and got rich  
 At the expense of their own people.**

Jesus was saying,

If you and I want others to believe we are children of our Heavenly Father, we must

**SLIDE ----Love your enemies<sup>[b]</sup> and pray for those who persecute you,<sup>45</sup> that you  
 may be sons of your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:44-45**

Perhaps the most telling criticism of the church today  
 is our lack of love for those unlike us.

We exclude from our invitation list certain people,

Who we don't get along with.

Or want to be seen with.

Christian love is to extend to those not just like me, but to all.

In the early church the word was:

**"See how they love one another":**

**I. WE SEE THE FLAW OF HUMAN LOVE**

**SLIDE---** **II. WE SEE THE FAIRNESS OF GOD'S LOVE**

**SLIDE-----But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,  
<sup>45</sup>that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the  
 evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. Matthew  
 5:45**

If you want to be a child of your Father in heaven.

Then love unconditionally.

That is the magnificence of God's love.

God didn't create man because he needs love,

He created man because he is love.

**The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. Psalms 24:1**

The fullness of what?

Fullness of oil, coal, diamonds, corn, wheat

For whom?

For man.

God uses the whole resource of his creation to care for us.

Who is taking credit for the energy resources around us?

Man.

Who is messing things up?

Man.

Who is really in control?

GOD.

God loves according to need,

Not according to character.

Next Jesus connects another bead of truth.

**He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous  
 and the unrighteous. Matthew 5:45**

If God's rain depended on our goodness,  
 Or on what man is doing to one another today.  
 Then the whole world would have famine in the whole world.  
 Because our human heart is full of sin.  
 We can't be good on our own.  
 We can't seem to stop hurting one another.

But God responds to us in spite of our character flaws?  
 He created the world the sun, moon, and stars  
 To sustain his people and show us his amazing love..

The Native Americans captured this ability,  
**To live by the ages rather than by the day.**  
 The tribe made decisions based on how it would affect people  
 seven generations into the future!

**God send his love to us for all the generation of the future.**  
**For God so love the world, that he gave his only....Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Joh, 3:16**

If you are going to make an impact as a child of God,  
 Then we must love as God loved.  
 Divine love always expects the best.

**Jesus connect another bead:**

**SLIDE----III. THE MATURITY OF CHRISTIAN LOVE**

**<sup>46</sup>If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? <sup>47</sup>And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Matthew 5:46-47**

**Jesus is saying the love that makes the Christian  
 different from the pagan world  
 Is to love other without regard to reward, or return.  
 Don't just love and take care of your own family.  
 Even the pagan do that.**

**Jesus strings up another bead in vs 48**

**SLIDE----Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect. Matthew 5:48**

**The translation would be more correct if we could substitute  
 Mature for the word Perfect.**

**Be Mature, therefore as your heavenly Father is mature.**

Jesus is not talking about sinless perfection,  
 He's talking about maturity in love, about kindness,  
 The love of God doesn't hate people.  
 The love of God isn't unkind to people,  
 God hates what they do.  
 But he love who they are,  
 That takes maturity.

When we see a young boy we may say:  
 he is the spitting image of his father  
 Or a little girl we might say,  
 She has the eyes of her mother,

But how many people say,  
 They are as loving as their heavenly father.  
 They are compassionate as their God.  
 And yet that is exactly how we are to live.  
 Amy Grant song says: "He has his Father's eyes."  
 Whose eyes do you have?

Do your eye look with greed upon another,  
 Or lust or, or covetousness, or envy?

**SLIDE----Jesus says: Love me and love your neighbor.**

**Love me and love your enemy.**

In that order.

Work for and expect the best between you.

**Can we see what is good and best in all people.**

A college senior took his girlfriend to a football game.  
 They found seats in the crowded stadium and they were cheering on their team.  
 When a substitute was put into the game. As he was running onto the field  
 the boy said to his girlfriend, "Take a good look at that fellow.  
 I expect him to be our best man next year."  
 His girlfriend snuggled closer to him and said,  
 "Wow, that's the strangest proposal I have ever heard, but I accept.

How do I show the world God's love?  
 Jesus said: By your obedience to God's command.  
 How do I show my love to others?  
 By not ignoring him in his suffering.

**SLIDE----"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works,  
 and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matthew 5:16**

"We have a whole story of the Good Samaritan who was beaten robbed and  
 thrown into a ditch.  
 Friend Christian love has been beaten robbed and thrown into a ditch.  
 We need to resurrect it in our lives and church.  
 If a person needs me,  
 Then I am called to help.  
 by helping him.  
 I display my love of God thru him.

**SLIDE-----Cindy Beard shared with me that in 2007**

our meals ministry delivered 49 meals with the help of 53 volunteers.  
 This is up over last year and is a growing ministry.

**SLIDE-----Sheri Gross shared that our new errands and delivery ministry**

ran over 35 errands and service ministry with the help of only 6 volunteers.  
 Both of these ministry our touching people and  
 Both can use your help.  
 You can contact these wonderful servants and offer your helping hand of love.

We have hundreds of volunteers this past year did  
 Who painted, served, assisted,  
 Counted, cut, folded, pasted, sorted mailings.  
 So that all our people can feel connected and informed.

Others taught and assisted,  
 Ushered, and greeted, sang and cleaned.  
 Filmed, delivered tapes and videos.

We can't do this on our own.  
 But together we bring the dynamics of Christian love.

Sure we must not let people run over us.  
 Or take advantage over others,  
 But in correcting them we can still love them as children of God.  
 We must love them even if they are our enemy.

**Peter Miller was a Baptist pastor during the American Revolution.**

He lived in Pennsylvania. He was a friend of George Washington.  
 But there was an evil man named Michael Wittman who also lived in the same town.  
 This man did all he could to oppose and humiliate pastor Miller. But one day Michael Wittman was arrested for treason and sentenced to die. Pastor Miller traveled seventy miles on foot to Philadelphia to plead for the life of this enemy traitor.  
 General Washington said: "No, Peter, I cannot grant you the life of your friend."  
 The Old Preacher said: "My friend! He's the bitterest enemy I have." "What?" cried Washington. "You've walked seventy miles to save the life of an enemy?  
 That puts the matter in different light. I'll grant your pardon." And he did.  
 Peter Miller took Michael Wittman back home no longer an enemy but a friend. [Lynn Jost](#). In [The Grace of Giving](#), Stephen Olford

When we live in sin and rebellion  
 We are enemies of the Grace of God in Christ.

**SLIDE----**But Jesus walked all the way to the cross for you and me.  
 Just so you could be a friend of his Father.

Will you open your life today and  
 let Christ live in your heart,  
 So you can become a servant of God in your conduct,  
 Mature, and fully equipped to do God's will in  
 Loving your enemy as yourself?