



## Daily Verse and Comment

### Matthew 5:43-48

(43) Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. (44) But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; (45) That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. (46) For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? (47) And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? (48) Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

*King James Version*

These verses contain perhaps the most startling, sublime statement Christ made. [Jesus](#) does not mean that we resolve to like everyone, but that we act in goodwill toward those we do not like as well as those we do. This command seems unreasonable and absurd, but only because of our carnality. Christ desires all to be happy. Both the hater and the hated are miserable to some degree, and the misery will not cease until the hatred dissolves. The antidote to hatred is [love](#).

Some have described this love as an unconquerable goodwill, an invincible benevolence. This love does not merely involve feeling, but also the will. With this love, our concern for another's good overcomes any feelings of [offense](#), resentment, and retaliation. It motivates us to do good rather than react in kind to what caused our negative feelings toward the other. Only those who have the mind of Christ can do this. We must seek it from [God](#).

In this section Christ lists three ways people show their ill-feelings toward others. *Cursing* indicates verbally denigrating others and working to destroy their reputation; gossiping. *Hatred* implies an active, passionate feeling

against another. *Spitefully using and persecuting* means continually at war with, harassing, always being on another's case.

He also specifies three ways a Christian can combat these actions. We can *bless*, meaning giving good words for bad. We can also *do good* for our enemies, not merely restrain ourselves from retaliation. Lastly, we can *pray* for them and for their welfare, asking God to change their hearts so a two-way love can exist.

This is a major test for God's children. God wants us to do this so that we may resemble Him—be in His image—because this is the way He is. If a man has this love, he is like God. God shows us His love in this very manner. Despite what we do on His great green earth, the sun still shines, the rain still falls, and He is constantly providing for and working toward our salvation.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

**To learn more, see:**

**[The Sixth Commandment \(Part One\) \(1997\)](#)**

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