

Jan 24, 1979 - P.M. W.M.S.

TREATMENT OF ENEMIES

Matt. 5:43-48

We approach a climax in the teachings of Jesus. We are near the summit.

If we see clouds of difficulty at this point, it only means that we are

reaching the top. We are now at the point of the treatment of our enemies.

What must be done for life? Eternal life - the deepest and the best? And

he is going to give us God's law on love. And this will be the soul in action.

Love consists in being willing to do. Because they try to love God with their

hearts, some people are disappointed. They have never made

will. It is beautiful when you find the trust of a parent

for the husband. It is very godless when you discover a b

mother.

Some of the Americans value their Canadian residence in spite of disadvantages. "You've got to face the fact that salaries are a bit lower and prices and taxes a bit higher," says Joe Flauto, a Toronto lab technician, "but my wife and I cleared out of Cleveland because we didn't feel comfortable about the crime problem. And not just Cleveland - I wouldn't want to live in any big American city. Too many people are busy hating each other. Four months after we came here my ulcer was gone."

The (children of God) must do more than others. Our Lord will demand

here more in the social area and he will help us to see how Christians form a

false estimate of themselves. Friends may flatter us - they may be generous

and kind, and we judge ourselves by our own circle in which we live. Now this

is far from being the adequate test.

I. The (Old Testament) Teaching

V. (43) - The Old Testament standard and teaching was very high. It

at least called for love of one's neighbor which deals with the question of Human relationships.

(Lev. 19:18.) Now Jesus said, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy."

Moses did command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor" but the phrase "And hate thine enemies" was a scribal addition which the Lord sharply criticized. The (Scribes and Pharisees) sought justification from the fact that God had commanded them to treat the Caananites severely. Under Joshua they took over the land. Now they failed to see this exception which was necessary in the plan of getting the chosen people settled on a land where they could be God's agents in a historical process of revelation.

Now the question arises, Who is my neighbor? Moses had already expanded it to include strangers in Israel. (Lev. 19:33-34.) The word neigh-bor is or nigh-bor meaning nigh the border, or dwelling nigh. But (nearness) itself does not necessarily insure love and peace. It sometimes means strife and tensions. The owning of a house or piece of land next to each other or across the street may be a problem.

The (Hebrews) treated members of their own tribe as neighbors regardless of how far abroad they may have been scattered. Then they had despised the

Samaritans living directly between Juda and Galilee.

The lawyer in Luke 10:29 made everything turn upon the question,

"And who is my neighbor?" It was as though he had said, "I am prepared to love my neighbor all right, but I have so much difficulty determining who he is."

And Jesus saw his reasoning and persuaded him with the account of the Good

Samaritan. He did not tell the lawyer the answer to the question. He asked

him a question in stead. "Which of these three thinkest thou was neighbor unto

him that fell among the thieves?" The lawyer was trapped. He had to answer,

"He that showed mercy on him." The neighbor is not necessarily the one who may

be close, but the neighbor may be one who is in need, and you have the power to

meet the need of another. "Go, do thou likewise," Jesus said.

Now Jesus saw through the old law as they were teaching that they should hate their enemies. And of course this was meddling.

Every man loves himself. Now this is universally true. The whole drift of the human life is centered in one's own individuality. Now this is the result of being born of the first Adam. Every man seeks the right of himself, and we are not so much concerned about others as we are about self.

We watch the interest of self. We always look out for insults or attacks or injuries. We have a defensive attitude, and Jesus is trying to help us to change

this attitude. Now Paul once said, "It is a very small thing that I should be judged of you or of man's judgement." He said, "I judge myself and I commit the whole thing unto God."

George Muller once made a good illustration on this point. He said, "There was a day when I died, utterly died. I died to George Muller and his opinions, his preferences, his tastes and his will, died to the world and its approval, died to the approval or blame of even my brethren or friends, and since then I have studied only to show myself approved unto God."

Now I cannot imagine a more perfect summary of what Jesus is going to teach us. He died to the censor of the world, to his intimate friends, he died to himself. Now this is a most difficult thing for a man to do is to die to himself. A man wants the approval of his friends. You value their opinions highly. You are sensitive to it. But Jesus is telling his people they are going to have to surmount this.

This then is true of the natural man. It is difficult for the natural man to rise above this world that may despise him or be aggressive, and the real problem is to face self and to be honest, and we react in self-defense, and we are really moved and disturbed. It is pride. And it is easy to explain it some other way. But to a certain extent, self is the thing that controls. You

react according to self. And you make this horrible discovery - the extent of your misery and unhappiness and failure and trouble may be due to self.

Your unhappiness, your irritability, the reason you're disturbed is based on this problem of self.

Now, this is the supreme illustration of why Jesus came into the world, and that statement he starts with is the teaching of the Pharisees and the Scribes. Where did they find this in the Old Testament? Is there anywhere?

The answer is of course "no". They said their neighbor meant an Israelite and they were taught to love the Jews and to hate with bitterness ~~wi~~ their enemies.

Nowhere, I repeat in the Old Testament do we find "Love your neighbor and hate your enemy." Now there may be many statements that people use to encourage people to hate enemies as the Jews entered the promised land and had to deal with some of the problems there.

Now, note second, every man has a neighbor. This is taken for granted. You have a part in the circumference of somebody else's life. You may have a very wide one or a far extended one, but you cannot evade the fact that you have been born into a community or into a family of people. The point is not who is your neighbor, so much as whom you will be neighbor to.

Now, Jesus gives a method here and he is going to try to work out this limit as far as the number of your neighbors - few or many? God's principle goes forth that all who need comfort and help you are to help.

Now there are three characteristics that I see in this opening verse.

First, every man has his rights.

There are his inherited rights - his right to freedom. No man should enslave another man. Every man has a right to the fresh air, the fresh water, and to sufficient land to maintain his life. And no man is justified in imposing anything, even his creed of worship, upon another. These are rights, and the human family has a claim to it. We have acquired rights, such as character and reputation. Now now one has the right to take another person's character or to hurt his reputation, or to blemish another or to blame another.

You have property rights. Now these must be respected.

In the second place, every man has his necessities. The master needs the seryant and the servant needs the master, and I think you see the contrast between the demands of Christ and the demands of the devil.

Every man in the third place, has his sins. Christ is laying down the principle here for us. You have heard it said, "Now if a brother tresspass against thee" - what are you going to do? You going to be cool to him - not

speak to him? Somebody does us wrong, we are going to not speak to him?

No, Jesus said, you are going and tell him his fault. And if you meet this need, the Lord says, you perhaps will win a brother. If a man is overtaken in default, ye which are spiritual restore such an one. Too often we whisper the story - "of course you will not tell" - but that is not God's way. Lovingly, we should lift that fallen man or woman up in the spirit of meekness. Remember how easy it is to be tempted - and then go to the place of secret prayer and pray to God for them. "If any man see his brother in sin, he shall pray."

I John 5:16. Instead of talking of it, let us hasten away to the secret place of prayer and pray for him.

The illustration that Jesus is giving here is that he was the fulfillment of the law, and this is going to be the most moving exhortation on love. Moses said when you meet your enemy's ox or his ass going astray, "Thou shalt surely bring it back again to him, for if you see the ox of the man that hateth you lying under a burden, you will not forebear, but you will help him." Exodus 23:4 and 5. "Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, nor let thine heart be glad."

Now, this is the way the teachers had corrupted Hebrew history, and they had obliterated the words "as ~~thys~~ thyself" - and had finally whittled it

down, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" - they had cut it down -

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor". They had added their own words out of their own bad hearts, "And hate thine enemy." And so through the centuries this had taken place. And Christ is here taking the old law and doing away with this edition, and he is going to make significance come to the words of Moses.

## ✓ II. The Christian Standard

V. (44) Here is an illustration which our Lord uses and brings to us as ~~we~~ we seek the well-being of enemies. "But I say unto you, love your enemies."

There are two ways to get rid of an enemy. First, you can kill him - kill him dead. You may make a friend of him. No enemy is ever made into a friend by treating him as an enemy. This is the Christian distinctive - love of one's enemies.

How to love one's enemies is carefully spelled out in this verse for us. It is not passive good will, but it is something that is active, that seeks to assist the well-being of the enemy.

First, Jesus says, "Love your enemies." Now, this is the social pattern. Those who might be classified as enemies, whether it be of different race, whether it be capital or labor, whether it be the country, the urbanites,



the educated, or the uneducated. The command is that Christ does not accept

as natural any division or factors that would take away the love of enemies.

When a large house-dog comes out with an announcement of himself, a man knows

what he has got to meet. But these little nasty spitz dogs that don't bark at

all, but run behind and nip, you don't know whether to run or stand still.

Whether to fight or whether to give up. Now, Jesus knew about these enemies -

some that would strike openly, some would whisper and be a backbiter, and nip

at you, and kind of sneak around behind your back, but nevertheless he says,

"Love your enemies."

Louis XII of France - there is a story that he had many enemies when

he came to power, and when he seceded to the throne, he called for a list of them

to be drawn up and he marked against each of them - their names - a large black

cross. When this became known, the enemies of the king fled, because they thought

it was a sign that he intended to punish them. The king hearing of their alarm

recalled them and he gave them the assurance of his good will. That he had placed

a cross beside their names to remind him of a cross that brings pardon to all, and

he urged them by his own example and by the example of Christ who prayed for his

enemies to go and do likewise.

A Godlike life begets a Godlike disposition. And therefore he said,

"Love thine enemies."

✓ Second, blessings for those who curse. We are to have kind words for those who curse us. To curse back could start violence. To refuse the role of the enemy and to assume the attitude of a friend may dissolve the evil of the enemy. A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. A soft answer turneth away wrath.

~~XXXXXXXX~~ A man being insulted is biting his lips to keep back the anger. He finally smiled and said, "My matches are all wet. I can't get started." Now if he did not make a friend of the enemy immediately, he certainly won the admiration of all by-standers.

✓ Third, kindness to the hateful. Now, it is not only enough to talk and feel kindly towards those who hate you, but you must demonstrate it in deeds. Do good to them that hate you. A charitable deed melts much ill will. It is a pity that we could not have such following the German and the Japanese war. This principle might stop much strife before it starts. This doing good to them that hate you is to be studied alongside of V. 39 - "Turn the other cheek." You completely take the enemy off guard when you turn the other cheek. If you do not descend upon him on his level, you let him decide the amount of strife. When

you give the coat or go the second mile, you lift the battle from the physical realm and you put it in the spiritual. Even if you suffer indignities, you don't lose in the long run. Your love offensive may work. The enemy tries to misuse you; you try to melt his heart. Your obligation as a Christian.

Non-resistance shows weakness in you and immorality in the enemy.

Now, going on grudgingly reveals that you have tension, and there is tension in both directions.

In the fourth place, pray for our enemies. There should be used intercessory prayer. ~~for those~~ The highest expression of love for those who do not only hate but despitefully use you and persecute you. To pray for your enemies will deepen your sincerity of your concern for them. ~~I think~~ think this is one of the most supreme acts of love.

Prayer changes things and more important, prayer changes people.

Whether it be one who violently persecutes, or one who nags and obstructs, he needs to be treated with the Christian's sharpest weapon - prayer.

Let me insert this point - Jesus did not guarantee ~~physical~~ physical safety to his followers. Second, he assumed that men are not gorillas - that the image of the divine is in every man and this will make him open to the grace and mercy when extended or demonstrated before him. There are still some men

who behave like ~~xxx~~ soulless animals and some of us are going to get hurt.

And sometimes some of God's choicest people get hurt.

Somebody must be prepared to give in and make a concession. Yes, to give up his rights if necessary in situations that could lead to divorce, to revenge, or to murder. Somebody must be willing to yield a point - even forego a right in order to keep the peace. It is pagan of us to duel or divorce or law suit at the least violation of personal rights.

Jesus was never more kingly than when he was under fire of persecution.

The soldiers came to him in the garden when he bodily stepped forward to place himself in their hands - they fell backwards. John 18:6.

When Pilate's soldiers stripped him and put on his scarlet robe, and put a crown of thorns upon his head and a reed in his right hand, and they mocked him saying "Hail, King of the Jews." They spit upon him. Matt. 27:28-30, Jesus never replied with so much as a word of complaint. Why did he not strike back?

He had a right to. Through all this persecution, Jesus remained ready to forgive.

They were the losers. He was dying. Even before Pilate, Jesus never lost balance.

What a pity - what a shame - that we are so often not like Jesus. We blunder as a representative of our Saviour.

Pilate delayed - did not do his best. He tried to remain neutral when this moral issue was at stake. He washed his hands publicly.

Now, this is the illustration which Jesus gives to us here in the treatment of our enemies. And he tells us that this will bring fire upon their heads. Coals of fire principle will work (eleven out of ten times) someone said. Somebody gossips or treats you wrong, and those people have need and you are willing to meet that need in deep humility, it works.

### III. Reasons for Loving Enemies

There are three excellent reasons.

V. 45 - A mark of sonship to the Heavenly Father. The treatment of your enemies is Godlike. Children who practice it do so by taking after their father. Doth God not treat the wicked mercifully? Jesus did not say as we do, "It rains." He said "The Father sendeth the rain. In Him all things ~~exist~~ consist. He sendeth on both the good and the bad and on the wicked." Here is the inspiration of a great ~~nature~~ nature. Sons of yours - the Father which is in Heaven. We think much of the ancestry. We have been born again by the word of the Spirit from the family of the first Adam, we have become grafted into the family of the second. We are all children of God by faith in him and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Then we are partakers of the divine

nature. We have within us the capacity for divine love and it is present in us and nevertheless he illustrates here that God sends that rain and the sunshine upon them and this is an experience of the common grace of God. How does God do this? God does not deal with them according to what they are or even what they do to him. That does not govern God's attitude. He is not dependent upon anything that is in us. It is in spite of us that God loved the world. Now this is a tremendous important principle. Love that we are to manifest with respect to others. We are not governed by what the other fellow does to us, but we are governed by this love - that we are new creatures.

Think of the unkind and cruel thoughts that have come into your mind and ~~thoughts~~ heart. What produced them? Somebody else. How much of our thinking and acting and behavior is entirely governed by other people. This is the thing that makes life so wretched. You see a particular person and your ~~his~~ spirit is upset. If you had not seen that person, you would not have felt like that. Your life must be governed by a new principle. And God looks down upon us in a different way, and we must learn to look at other people and say, "Yes, they are doing this and that and the other to me." And we must not be governed by this world, and must not be annoyed by these hell-bound sinners. I must do everything to save them and that's God's way of doing things.

Now you understand this (takes it out of the sentimental) and gets it above the action of just on friendly terms. (How) then are we to manifest this love of God in our contact with other people? (Here) it is - you are to ~~not~~ bless them that curse you. When people say harsh and unkind things, you will say "I really am going to give it to him." You put ~~yourself~~ yourself on their level when you do that. But use kind words instead.

You're going to do good to them that hate you just like God does with the farmer that may hate him. He is going to send the rain and he is going to cause the sun to shine upon him.

In the (last) place, you are (going to pray) for them which despitefully use you, he says, and persecute you. We must get on our knees and talk to ourselves before we talk to God. Instead of being bitter and reacting, we must get down first and reckon with ourselves - "Why should a person behave like this?" It is the horrible nature which is in man. (Do) you pray for the people who persecute you and despitefully use you? Do you have mercy upon them that would punish you? (Will) you ask God to save their souls and open their eyes before it is too late? Do you feel any great concern?

Now there is a whole lot of (difference) between loving and just liking a person. This is not something sentimental, but it is a principle, a command which Jesus makes to us that he offers to us to follow.

You can love God and you can love man in this way and you need a great ~~exampl~~ example in this and he has given it to you in that the Heavenly Father's sun he maketh to shine on the children that play games, on the prison that is filled with criminals, on the cottage where there is a sick girl, on the path of a poor man, on the ground that belongs to a poor widow, on the tyrant, He drops his showers on the aetheists, the worst type, on the man who may rob the widows or brow-beat the poor. God's love is showered upon a home, upon childhood upon a loving wife, upon a sweet child, upon seasons of good health, upon ill health, upon business anxieties, because God has no special care whether a man is good or bad, but because God loves his enemies, blesseth those that curse him, and is kind to the unthankful.

A man will sometimes speak, "I am one of the luckiest fellows living."

All of my dreams have been realized. I have a good wife. I have not had an hour's illness. I have never wanted for money." Such men do not realize that it is God who has given them all things richly to enjoy making no distinction between them and his dearest children, but he longs to break in upon their shame, and he sends them the blessings from heaven. Like the prodigal son. Somebody said that the parable should be re-written. That the father heard about the boy going to eat husks with the swine, and he sent him day by day supplies of



sumptuous food, and on each hamper or basket were these words: " I love thee still, Come home. Haste to come home."

He committed his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. We need to tell this to Pilate, we need to tell it to Herod, we need to tell it to the men who drove the nails in the hands of Jesus, and we need to pray for such today.

*Reason for loving Enemies*  
 V.H.C. Second, a mark of superior righteousness - V. 46. Our righteousness

must exceed that of the Scribes and the Pharisees. Now the Publicans were among the most despised people of the land collecting taxes. They were classified with harlots and sinners. The chief complaint against Jesus was that he associated with these folks. Jesus shows that the conduct of the Pharisees was to no more godly according to his standards than that of the publicans. These hated people loved one another after a fashion. Now there is fellowship in the underworld even. Quite often there is more fellowship among people of the world than we find

among some church members who cannot restrain themselves from gossiping about

*Beatles - England - Singing Group - Breaking up - Japanese Bride + Financial Ventures Together. Now lawsuit Divide Millions \$ -*

To love only your own friends or kin is usually a backhanded way of loving yourself.

A Chinese emperor had been appraised of his enemies that they were

going to have an uprising says, "Come follow me and I will quickly destroy them." On arrival the rebels submitted to him and all expected him to take revenge. Instead, he treated them with utmost humanity. "How" cried his first (minister of state) "You ~~xxxx~~ have a promise to fulfill. You have pardoned them all."

"I have promised," said the emperor, ~~to~~ "to destroy my enemies. I have fulfilled my word. (They are enemies no longer. I have made friends with them."

V. 47 - Suppose you salute your brethren only. Again you ~~may~~ lose your reward. Do not even the publicans do so?

Now, we see that we are not to wait for an emotion, but the key to all of this is to obey the power of our will and second to begin with individuals.

Have we an enemy who is always trying to curse us? Then bless him with your benedictions. Eastern ~~men~~ people made much of salutations and greetings in public and in the home. Ordinarily some of them would not salute a gentile.

Now for the Christian to be unwilling to speak to his fellow man is at least a failure in common courtesy. The Pharisee would prolong his greeting in the market place and in the synagogue. The revelation of a mutual admiration society. Matthew was a publican, but if he was in the congregation that heard this sermon, Jesus

certainly did not tone it down for him.

The big question is, what do we more than others? If we only salute our friends? Now, any man can go one mile, but the Christian must be willing to go a second mile. Not only a man who is doing more than others, but a Christian is a man who is supposed to do what others cannot do. The Christian can go above and beyond the natural man, because of his standard in Jesus Christ.

V. 48 Third / A Mark of Perfection V. 38

Thus you will reach perfection. ~~Everying~~ Everything lies in the will. Are you willing that his will should be done in and through you in respect to the life of love? There are many people ~~whom~~ who think of Christians as a man who believes in God. Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ had a belief, but he says that he was not a Christian, and yet we examine his activities. But first of all, a Christian is different from a natural man and goes beyond a natural man in his thinking and his behaviour.

"Perfect" in the Bible has three common meanings. Full grown in body and mind, moral completeness or maturity, and moral perfection, with particular reference to love as here. To love friends and not your enemies is incomplete love. To speak only to friends is evidence of imperfect love.

Now all men are perfectionists after a fashion. We demand a perfect standard where it is to our advantage. We insist on 36 inches to a yard, four quarts to a gallon, sixteen ounces to a pound, 100 pennies to a dollar. Otherwise we think we have been shortchanged. Now the Bible language here is "Like as" and "in according as". The emphasis is on Godly conduct in a man's life. This is our goal. We can afford to give all our allegiance to Jesus Christ who demands something of us.

Another illustration of the simple word "perfect" means to go ~~on~~ on to a ~~different point~~ given point toward a (definite place). The suggestion is that we travel towards this goal meaning that place towards which the journey was taken - termination, a result, a purpose

Classic such this word used of adults as distinguished from ~~adults~~ infants <sup>new</sup> <sup>and</sup> <sup>old</sup> children undergoing discipline.

Baby - is it perfect? -

YOUTH - " " " " always room for growth advancement.

MAN - " " " " (always stage of completeness)

Perfect means arrival at particular stage of completeness not impossibility of procedure.

"Just Be like your father" - A son is like his father!

Love Mastered Life →

You are responsible for your attitudes - A Christian was never hurt anyone by giving them anything - He does not describe the results upon the recipient - [Joseph] - won his Brothers.