

How to Respond to an Enemy

Luke 6:27-36

²⁷“But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. ²⁹ Whoever hits you on the cheek, offer him the other also; and whoever takes away your coat, do not withhold your shirt from him either. ³⁰ Give to everyone who asks of you, and whoever takes away what is yours, do not demand it back. ³¹ Treat others the same way you want them to treat you. ³² If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³ If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴ If you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners in order to receive back the same amount. ³⁵ But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men. ³⁶ Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

It seems that no teaching of Jesus has been more scrutinized than the instruction to love our enemy. The response of the world has been avoidance or an uneasy coexistence which emphasized what you did not do related to another person. What Jesus taught was in complete opposition to the millennia of teaching before Him. Let’s look at His teaching in more detail.

Jesus teaches us to

1. Love our enemy.

1 John 2:9, 1 John 4:7-8, Romans 5:8, 10, John 3:16, 1 John 4:9-11

2. Do good to our enemy.

Luke 6:31, 1 Peter 2:21-24, Romans 12:20

3. Bless our enemy.

1 Corinthians 4:12, 1 Peter 3:9, Romans 12:14, Luke 6:35-36

4. Pray for our enemy.

Proverbs 24:17, Luke 23:34, Acts 7:60