# **SOTM Pt 28 - Love who?**

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Sermon on the Mount / Mt 5:43–48; Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 19:19; Luke 10:27; Matthew 22:37–40

**Matthew 5:43–48 NKJV**

43 “You have heard that it was said, ‘*You shall love your neighbor* and hate your enemy.’ 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, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more *than others?* Do not even the tax collectors do so? 48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

This morning we find the close of this section of the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus has taken the law, that which was written by God and how it had really been warped and twisted by religious leaders who had their own ulterior motives in wanting the people of God to follow them in their teaching.

We don’t often call it like this, but there is a word for this in the Bible, it’s called false teaching. Any teaching that is contrary to the actual word of God. How do we understand false teaching. There are really two key concepts in false teaching. Jesus reveals them BOTH right in this first verse of this little segment:

[Matthew 5:43](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Mt5.43) “43 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’”

Fales teaching almost always does one of these two things:

1. **Leaves out something from the text** that has importance to the correct interpretation of the text:

a. You shall love your neighbor stops short of the actual command of God: [Leviticus 19:18b](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Le19.18b) “18b … you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.” So the teaching of Jesus day, **being passed down through the rabbinic tradition omitted the phrase “as yourself”**

i. Jesus Quotes this verse rightly in [Matthew 19:19](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Mt19.19), [Mark 12:31](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Mk12.31), [Luke 10:27](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Lk10.27), & [Matthew 22:37–40](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Mt22.37-40) “37 Jesus said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 A**nd the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’** 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.””
Simple really, Love God, Love people. Right?

ii. Paul Quotes it in [Romans 13:9](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Ro13.9) & [Galatians 5:14](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Ga5.14)

iii. James, Jesus’ brother quoted it in [James 2:8](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Jas2.8)

b. The phrase “as yourself” sets the bar, the standard if you will very, very high - Paul equates this high bar to Husbands loving their wives and says :[Ephesians 5:28–29](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Eph5.28-29) “28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.”

2. Adding something to the text that changes the meaning of the text:

a. [Matthew 5:43](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Mt5.43) “43 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor **and hate your enemy**.’” Nowhere in scripture does God command, or even imply that one should “hate” ones enemy.

i. Actually it is quite the opposite:

1. [Exodus 23:4–5](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Ex23.4-5) “4 “If you meet your enemy’s ox or his donkey going astray, you shall surely bring it back to him again. 5 If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying under its burden, and you would refrain from helping it, you shall surely help him with it.” **In other words you should help your enemy, knowing that losing his ox or donkey would be very detrimental to his life. You should care enough to not ignore the plight of the one who is your enemy. This is equal to the treatment God commands His people do to their brethren** in [Dt 22:1](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Dt22.1) & 4 “1 “You shall not see your brother’s ox or his sheep going astray, and hide yourself from them; you shall certainly bring them back to your brother. “ 4 “You shall not see your brother’s donkey or his ox fall down along the road, and hide yourself from them; you shall surely help him lift them up again.”

2. [Proverbs 25:21–22](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Pr25.21-22) “21 If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; 22 For so you will heap coals of fire on his head, And the Lord will reward you.” Paul quotes this in [Romans 12:20](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Ro12.20)

ii. Adding “Hate your enemy” actually qualifies “neighbor” as ‘one whom you like” since an enemy is ‘one whom you hate’.

iii. In [Luke 10](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Lk10) an “expert in the law” comes to Jesus and asks Him “what must I do to inherit eternal life” Jesus answers “What is written in the law? What is YOUR reading of it?” This expert quotes it correctly: [Luke 10:27](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Lk10.27) “27 So he answered and said, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,’ and ‘**your neighbor as yourself.**’ ”” but when Jesus says “Do this and live” he comes back around with a question of his own: “***WHO*** is my neighbor?” ([Lk 10:29](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Lk10.29))

1. He is looking for Jesus to define ‘neighbor’ in the same way the rabbinical teachers have defined it “One whom you like” because that was the common teaching of the day. Instead Jesus broadens it even further by by essentially saying “anyone whom has need” is you neighbor.

False teaching is any idea that adds to, takes away from, contradicts, or nullifies the doctrine given in God’s Word. These both have added to, and taken away from to lessen the burden of responsibility to “love thy neighbor”

### From Hate to Love

Jesus wants to come hard against the idea that we have the right to hate someone else, someone we consider an enemy, or someone who considers us an enemy.

Enemy according to the dictionary is: “one that is antagonistic to another especially: one seeking to injure, overthrow, or confound an opponent”

[Matthew 5:44](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Mt5.44) “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,”

### 1 Command - 3 Examples

1. Love (now this afternoon google “Luv is a verb” and play the old DC Talk song, You will thank me later)

a. Bless

b. Do Good (both a verb and an adverb combined)

c. Pray

Love is described in many ways in the Greek culture and in the Bible, through different words that mean love:

• The first Greek word for “love” is *eros*, which refers to romantic or sexual love. From it we get the word *erotic*.

• The second is *storge*, which refers to familial love like that of a mother for her baby or of a brother and sister for each other.

• The third Greek word for “love,” *philia*, refers to friendship and comradery. This word is often translated as “friend” (one who is loved) in the New Testament.

• Finally, *agape* is used to speak of God’s love that He has for the world and that Christians are supposed to emulate.

The word Jesus uses here is agape - and it is the great contrast here in the treatment of enemies, because scripture tells us we were in fact enemies with God: [Romans 5:10](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Ro5.10) “10 For if **when we were enemies** we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.”

[John 3:16–17](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Jn3.16-17) “16 For God **so loved** the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”

Love not earned. Love not deserved. Love not sought after. Perfect love that **pursues those who are enemies of God to turn them from enemy to friend.**

In the Greek “Reconcile” and its related word “Reconciliation” usually come from these Greek words: **καταλλάσσω (katallassō)[ kata-la-so] & καταλλαγή (katallagē)[kata-la-yay]**. The first of these, **καταλλάσσω (katallassō)[ kata-la-so]** is a verb and as we know from elementary Grammar; a verb is a word used to describe an action, state, or occurrence. **καταλλάσσω (katallassō)[ kata-la-so]** - “To Reconcile” the action - the exchange of one thing for another. exchange being God’s enemy to having this incredible relationship with Him that cant really be described, and **καταλλαγή (katallagē)[kata-la-yay]**, “To BE Reconciled” or “Reconciliation”is **the result**, to be changed from enemy to friendship, reconciliation.

[Romans 5:10](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Ro5.10) “10 For if **when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son**, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.”

### **Love is the command: But it is an action word, a verb. It has to look like something:**

**1. How we speak - Blessing** - εὐλογέω (eulogeō): The basic meaning of eulogeō is “to speak well” of someone or something. Both the words used here of bless, and curse pertain to the tongue. People will say bad things about you. Jesus told us in the beatitudes at the very beginning of the Sermon on the Mount - [Matthew 5:10–12](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Mt5.10-12) “10 Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 “Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, **and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake**. 12 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

James describes our own lack of control over our tongues and our speech and used both these words again: [James 3:8–10](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Jas3.8-10) “8 But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. 9 **With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men**, who have been made in the similitude (likeness) of God. 10 Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. **My brethren, these things ought not to be so.**”

[Proverbs 18:21](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Pr18.21) “21 **Death and life are in the power of the tongue**, And those who love it will eat its fruit.”

Speak Life. Speak Blessing rather than cursing! This is step one of Love in Action - How we talk

**2. How we act - Do Good** - To do good is to act towards others in righteousness, doing towards, and for those whom show you nothing but hate. Jesus later in the Sermon on the Mount encourages His followers to do to others what we would have them do to us, not what they are doing to us [Matthew 7:12](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Mt7.12) “12 Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.”

**3. Pray** - Bring our Father to bear on the situation - Intercession. One intercede’s in prayer for another. Intercede means to intervene between parties with a view to reconciling differences. Your prayer is for their reconciliation with God. That they who are enemies of God would find their own salvation experience with His Son and become as you are.

### **God’s Ordinary means of Grace**

[Matthew 5:45](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Mt5.45) “45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”

[Psalm 19:1-6](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Ps19.1-6) Reveals God’s intent to reveal Himself on the earth to ALL, bot the just and the unjust to call them towards Himself. This is the picture of [Matthew 5:45](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Mt5.45) - Evil and good, just and unjust are called to the transforming power of Christ

Son’s and Daughters reveal their Father

### **We are different than the world**

[Matthew 5:46–47](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Mt5.46-47) “46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so?”

• Do we love only those who love us first, or can show us love in return? NO - We love the unlovable and those who refuse to love us. This is the call to believers, to love regardless of love being reciprocated

• Do we greet only those who are “like” us (the brethren) or do we give worth and dignity to those who are NOT like us. (this is the idea of greet, to acknowledge those who look and act nothing like us, revealing to them that they have value and worth before almighty God and before us His son’s and daughters)

### **Perfect. You cant be**

Jesus begins this section with **your righteousness must exceed that of the pharisee’s** ([Matthew 5:20](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Mt5.20)) and closes it with [Matthew 5:48](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Mt5.48) “48 Therefore **you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect**.”

What is the point - YOU CAN’T BE either “more righteous” than the pharisee’s and YOU CAN”T BE perfect. Who’s Righteousness exceeds the pharisee’s? Jesus. Who is “perfect”? Jesus. The only hope of becoming like Jesus describes us to be is by being led by the Spirit towards Christ likeness.

**Love (Matthew 5:43–48)**

