

Love for Enemies

Luke 6:27-36

SS Lesson for 10/11/2020

Devotional Scripture: Rom 12:14-21

OUTLINE

LESSON BACKGROUND AND KEY VERSE

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Key Verse: Luke 6:27-28

Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

MAJOR THEME ANALYSIS

A RADICAL LOVE (LUKE 6:27-31)

Love enemies (27)

Love enemies by praying for them (Matt 5:43-45)

Love enemies by doing good to them (Luke 6:35-36)

Love enemies by loving them as we love ourselves (Rom 13:8-10)

Love enemies by serving them (Gal 5:13-14)

Love enemies as we have been taught by God (1 Thess 4:9)

Love enemies by defending them and sharing with them (1 John 3:16-19)

Bless those who hate us (28)

Bless those who hate us by blessing them (Rom 12:14)

Bless those who hate us by keeping no record of wrongs (1 Cor 13:4-8)

Bless those who hate us by forgiving and living in unity (Col 3:13-14)

Bless those who hate us by being kind to them (1 Cor 4:12-13)

Bless those who hate us by meeting their needs (Prov 25:21-22)

Pray for those who hurt us (28-29)

Pray that Christians be rescued from them (Rom 15:31)

Pray for deliverance (2 Thess 3:2)

Pray that God grant them repentance (2 Tim 2:24-26)

Pray that God grant them grace (Lam 3:30)

Pray for them knowing that we have a better and lasting future (Heb 10:34)

Give to those who take from us (30)

Give to those who take from us because they may be in need (Rom 12:13)

Give to those who take from us by working to be able to give to them (Eph 4:28)

Give to those who take from us by doing good deeds and sharing with others (1 Tim 6:17-19)

Give to those who take from us by sharing with them (Heb 13:16)

Give to those who take from us by giving with cheerfulness (2 Cor 9:7)

Give to those who take from us by supporting the weak (Acts 20:35)

Treat people the way we want to be treated (31)

Treat people right because this sums up obedience to God's word (Matt 7:12)

God holds us accountable for how we treat everyone (Job 31:13-15)

Treat people right because we are accountable for how we treat others (Matt 18:32-34)

In the judgment of God, He does not forget the treatment of the poor (Heb 6:10)

In my treatment of others we are to remember that God is the Creator and Master of us all (Eph 6:9)

It is wise to ensure our treatment of others is consistent with biblical principles (Col 4:5)

A HIGHER STANDARD OF LOVE (LUKE 6:32-34)

Higher standard of goodness (32-33)

Higher standard of goodness by being good at every opportunity (Gal 6:10)

Higher standard of goodness is a benefit (Rom 5:7)

Higher standard of goodness by letting our light shine through good works (Matt 5:16)

Higher standard of goodness by being persistent in doing good (Rom 2:7)

Higher standard of goodness by pleasing our neighbors (Rom 15:2)

Higher standard of goodness by seeking the good for others (1 Cor 10:24)

Higher standard of goodness by praying for others (1 Tim 2:1-3)

Higher standard of goodness by sharing with others (Heb 13:16)

Higher standard of generosity (34)

Higher standard of generosity by being openhanded toward the poor (Deut 15:11)

Higher standard of generosity by being used by God Himself to scatter His gifts to the poor (Ps 112:9)

Higher standard of generosity by depending on God's promise of prospering (Prov 11:25)

Higher standard of generosity by sharing with the poor (1 Tim 6:18)

DIVINE ORIGIN OF LOVE (LUKE 6:35-36)

Divine love to wait for reward (35)

Rewards that come as the result of earnestly seeking God (Heb 11:6)

Rewards that come as the result of the treatment of others (Matt 10:41-42)

Rewards that come as the result of good works done (Matt 16:27)

Rewards that come as the result of the Christian inheritance (Col 3:24)

Rewards that are dispensed by Jesus (Rev 22:12)

Divine love to be merciful (36)

Being merciful is having regard for the weak and troubled (Ps 41:1-3)

For the merciful, there is hope in troubled times (Ps 112:4)

Not being merciful is sin (Prov 14:21)

The type of fasting God desires includes being merciful to others (Isa 58:6-8)

Without being merciful to others, we will not receive mercy from God (Matt 6:14-15)

Mercy is commanded for Christians (Eph 4:32)

Mercy triumphs over judgment (James 2:13)

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CONCLUDING THOUGHTS FROM THE ECHOES COMMENTARY

Lesson Background and Key Verse

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

At 10:25 A.M. on October 2, 2006, Carl Roberts entered the West Nickel Mines School, an Amish one-room schoolhouse in Bart Township, Pennsylvania. After ordering the two teachers and all the male students to leave, Roberts tied up 10 female students and settled in for a siege. Within half an hour, with Pennsylvania state police surrounding the building, Roberts had shot all 10 girls, killing 5 of them, before killing himself. In the face of so much devastation to a tiny, rural community, what kind of reaction might we expect? On the day of the shootings, reporters overheard the grandfather of one of the victims say, "We must not think evil of this man." In the wake of funerals where they had buried their own children, grieving Amish families accounted for half of the people who attended the killer's burial. Roberts's widow was deeply moved by their presence. The imperative to forgiveness went beyond even this: the Amish community also generously supported a fund for the shooter's family. The desire for revenge is one of the deepest of human impulses. Sadness, rage, powerlessness, and a host of other emotions drive us to this. Jesus calls us to something very different, a new way of living in the world. We see this new way embodied in the reaction of that Amish community to an act of unspeakable brutality. Today's lesson, drawn from Jesus' Sermon on the Plain, further depicts the nature of this new way of life.

Luke 6 contains an account of what has traditionally been called the Sermon on the Plain. Much attention has been given over the years to the relationship between the Sermon on the Plain and Matthew's account of the Sermon on the Mount. Some commentators have seen them as different versions of the same event. Others (perhaps most) have understood them to be independent of each other. This seems to be the best line of interpretation, and it is the one we will follow here. The differences between the two sermons are readily apparent. One was delivered on a mountain (Matthew 5:1), the other on a plain (Luke 6:17). The Sermon on the Plain is about one-quarter the length of the Sermon on the Mount. The Beatitudes, which open the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3-11), contain blessings only; the Sermon on the Plain opens with (fewer) blessings that are followed by a set of corresponding woes (Luke 6:20-26). A cursory comparison of Luke 6:20-49 with Matthew 5-7 also shows how much these sermons have in common. Both sermons show great concern for the poor and socially outcast (examples: Matthew 5:5, 10; Luke 6:20-22), teaching love for enemies (example: Matthew 5:43-48), the centrality of mercy in the nature of the kingdom (example: 5:7), opposition to hypocrisy (examples: 6:2, 5, 16; Luke 6:42), and so forth. That both of these sermons deal with these themes indicates just how commonly they appeared in Jesus' preaching and ministry. In Luke 6, the sermon comes on the heels of a controversy with the Pharisees (Luke 6:1-11), after which Jesus left to pray on a mountain (6:12). As on other occasions, deep prayer precedes a significant moment in Jesus' ministry (example: 3:21-22). On this occasion,

prayer preceded Jesus' choosing of the Twelve (6:13-16). After that, he came down to the plain (6:17). When Jesus opened his mouth to speak, "looking at his disciples, he said" (Luke 6:20). In other words, it was the disciples—those who were already committed in word and deed to follow the Lord—who were the primary audience for what he had to say. Others were present ("the people," 6:19), but they were overhearing a message directed at Jesus' followers, not primarily at them. This is an important point to bear in mind as we undertake our study. Jesus was describing the nature of the kingdom in these verses. He painted a picture of the community that he was forming around him, of its way of life. These still are not words directed at outsiders or at the world at large. The Sermon on the Plain opens with a series of blessings and woes (Luke 6:20-26; see above). They undercut the conventional view of the world that justified the way in which most of Jesus' hearers lived out their daily lives. Most people, both then and now, would point to the rich and powerful, the popular and elite, as successful and honored in this life. Jesus says this is not so. Rather, it is the poor and hungry, the bereft and the persecuted, who are truly blessed. They can look forward to unimaginable blessings on the last day.

Key Verse: Luke 6:27-28

27 "But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.

Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

6:17-19. The sermon recorded in verses 17-49 is a shorter version of the Sermon on the Mount recorded in Matthew 5-7. Both sermons are addressed to disciples, begin with beatitudes, conclude with the same parables, and have generally the same content. However, in Luke the "Jewish parts" of the sermon (i.e., the interpretation of the Law) are omitted. This fits well with Luke's purpose. The problem in seeing these accounts as reflecting the same sermon is the place in which the sermon was given. Matthew recorded that Jesus was "on a mountainside" (Matt. 5:1), whereas Luke said Jesus was **on a level place** (Luke 6:17). The sequence of events solves the problem easily. Jesus went up in "the hills" near Capernaum to pray all night (v. 12). He called 12 disciples to be His apostles. He then went down on a level place to talk and to heal **diseases** (vv. 17-19). Following that, He went up higher to get away from the crowds and to teach His disciples (Matt. 5:1). The multitudes (Matt. 7:28; Luke 7:1) climbed the mountain and heard His sermon, which explains Jesus' words at the end of the sermon (Matt. 7:24; Luke 6:46-47).

Jesus began His sermon with a series of blessings and woes on His listeners. The items are placed in two sets of four—four blessings and four woes which parallel each other.

6:20-23. The term "blessed" (*makarioi*) was common in the Gospels; it occurs more than 30 times. All but 2 of the occurrences are in Matthew and Luke. Originally in Greek usage the word described the happy estate of the gods above earthly sufferings and labors. Later it came to mean any positive condition a person experienced. Unlike the biblical authors, the Greek authors drew happiness from earthly goods and values. In the Old Testament the authors recognized that the truly blessed (or happy) individual is one who trusts God, who hopes for and waits for Him, who fears and loves Him (Deut. 33:29; Pss. 2:12; 32:1-2; 34:8; 40:4; 84:12; 112:1). A formal beatitude was an acknowledgement of a fortunate state before God and man (Ps. 1:1; Prov. 14:21; 16:20; 29:18). Beatitudes in the New Testament have an emotional force. They often contrast a false earthly estimation with a true heavenly estimation of one who is truly blessed (Matt. 5:3-6, 10; Luke 11:28; John 20:29; 1 Peter 3:14; 4:14). All secular goods and values are subservient to one supreme good—God Himself. This is a reversal of all human values. The Beatitudes present the present in the light of the future (cf. Luke 23:29). Jesus spoke of four conditions in which people are blessed or happy when they are following Him. **Blessed are you who are poor... blessed are you who hunger now... blessed are you who weep now, and blessed are you when men hate you** (6:20-22). In each case a clause is added that explains why such a person is blessed or happy. A poor person is happy because his **is the kingdom of God**. Matthew referred to "the poor in spirit" (Matt. 5:3), but Luke simply wrote "poor." Jesus' hearers were physically poor. Luke already mentioned twice that those who followed Jesus left everything (Luke 5:11, 28). Jesus' explanation about their inclusion in "the kingdom of God" is mentioned because they were following the One who was proclaiming His ability to bring in the kingdom. They were staking everything they had on the fact that Jesus was telling the truth. They were following His new way (5:37-39). Jesus' words were not a promise that every poor person had a part in the kingdom of God; instead His words were a statement of fact for His followers. They were poor and theirs was the kingdom of God. They were much better off being poor, following Jesus, and having a part of the kingdom of God than being rich and not having a part of the kingdom. That is why they were blessed. The next two explanatory phrases have future fulfillments. The hungry **will be satisfied**, and the ones who weep **will**

laugh. The apostles who would hunger and weep because they followed Jesus would eventually be vindicated for their faith in Him. The final beatitude concerned persecution **because of the Son of Man.** This was to become a natural course of events for the apostles. They would be hated, excluded, insulted, and rejected. Yet they would be happy (“blessed”) because of their **reward in heaven** and because they were following in the train of **the prophets** (i.e., those who spoke for God; cf. 6:26).

6:24-26. In contrast with the disciples who had given up everything to follow Jesus were the people who would refuse to give up anything to follow Him (cf. 18:18-30). These were the **rich**, the **well-fed**, the ones **who laugh**, who were popular. They did not understand the gravity of the situation which confronted them. They refused to follow the One who could bring them into the kingdom, and therefore Jesus pronounced woes on them. These woes were the exact reversal of their temporal benefits. And they are the exact opposites of the blessings and rewards of Jesus’ followers, cited in 6:20-23.

6:27-38. Jesus mentioned seven aspects of unconditional love. These actions, not done naturally by human nature, require supernatural enabling—and are thus proof of true righteousness:

- (1) **Love your enemies.**
- (2) **Do good to those who hate you.**
- (3) **Bless those who curse you.**
- (4) **Pray for those who mistreat you.**
- (5) Do not retaliate (v. 29a).
- (6) Give freely (vv. 29b-30).
- (7) Treat **others** the way you want to be treated (v. 31).

This kind of **love** marks one off as distinctive (vv. 32-34), and as having the same characteristics as the heavenly Father (v. 35).

Jesus then taught His followers a fundamental principle of the universe—what one sows he will reap (vv. 36-38; cf. Gal. 6:7). Jesus outlined five areas which were proof of the sowing and reaping theme, mentioned so often in Scripture: (1) Mercy will lead to mercy (Luke 6:36). The disciples were exhorted to have the same merciful attitude God displayed toward them.

- (2) Judgment will lead to judgment (v. 37a).
- (3) Condemnation will lead to condemnation (v. 37b).
- (4) Pardon will lead to pardon (v. 37c).
- (5) Giving will lead to giving (v. 38). It is simply a fact of life that certain attitudes and actions often reflect back on the individual.

6:39-45. Jesus explained that a person is not able to hide his attitude toward righteousness. It is obvious that if a person is **blind** he will lead another **into a pit** (v. 39). He will not be able to hide the fact that he is not righteous for he will lead others astray. Jesus also noted that a person becomes like the one whom he emulates (v. 40). Therefore His disciples should emulate Him. One must rid himself of a sin before he can help his **brother** with that sin (vv. 41-42). And often one’s own sin is greater than the one he criticizes in someone else—a **plank** compared with a **speck of sawdust**. The point is that one cannot help someone else become righteous if he is not righteous himself. To seek to do so is to be a **hypocrite**. Jesus also pointed out that a man’s words will eventually tell what kind of **man** he is (vv. 43-45). Just as people know the kind of **tree** by the **fruit it bears**, so people know from what a person says whether he is righteous or not. In this case **fruit** stands for what is said, not what is done: **out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks**

Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)

A Radical Love (Luke 6:27-31)

27 "But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,
28 "bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.
29 "To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either.
30 "Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask them back.
31 "And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise.

Love enemies (27)

Love enemies by praying for them (Matt 5:43-45)

44 But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 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.

Love enemies by doing good to them (Luke 6:35-36)

35 But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. 36 Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

Love enemies by loving them as we love ourselves (Rom 13:8-10)

9 The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself." 10 Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

Love enemies by serving them (Gal 5:13-14)

13 You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. 14 The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Love enemies as we have been taught by God (1 Thess 4:9)

9 Now about brotherly love we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other.

Love enemies by defending them and sharing with them (1 John 3:16-19)

16 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. 17 If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? 18 Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.

Bless those who hate us (28)

Bless those who hate us by blessing them (Rom 12:14)

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

Bless those who hate us by keeping no record of wrongs (1 Cor 13:4-8)

4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. 8 Love never fails.

Bless those who hate us by forgiving and living in unity (Col 3:13-14)

13 Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Bless those who hate us by being kind to them (1 Cor 4:12-13)

12 We work hard with our own hands. When we are cursed, we bless ; when we are persecuted, we endure it; 13 when we are slandered, we answer kindly. Up to this moment we have become the scum of the earth, the refuse of the world.

Bless those who hate us by meeting their needs (Prov 25:21-22)

21 If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; if he is thirsty, give him water to drink. 22 In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head, and the Lord will reward you.

Pray for those who hurt us (28-29)

Pray that Christians be rescued from them (Rom 15:31)

31 Pray that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea and that my service in Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints there,

Pray for deliverance (2 Thess 3:2)

2 And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has faith.

Pray that God grant them repentance (2 Tim 2:24-26)

24 And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. 25 Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, 26 and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

Pray that God grant them grace (Lam 3:30)

30 Let him offer his cheek to one who would strike him, and let him be filled with disgrace.

Pray for them knowing that we have a better and lasting future (Heb 10:34)

34 You sympathized with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions.

Give to those who take from us (30)

Give to those who take from us because they may be in need (Rom 12:13)

13 Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

Give to those who take from us by working to be able to give to them (Eph 4:28)

28 He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

Give to those who take from us by doing good deeds and sharing with others (1 Tim 6:17-19)

17 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 19 In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

Give to those who take from us by sharing with them (Heb 13:16)

16 And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

Give to those who take from us by giving with cheerfulness (2 Cor 9:7)

7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

Give to those who take from us by supporting the weak (Acts 20:35)

35 I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

Treat people the way we want to be treated (31)

Treat people right because this sums up obedience to God's word (Matt 7:12)

12 So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

God holds us accountable for how we treat everyone (Job 31:13-15)

13 "If I have denied justice to my menservants and maidservants when they had a grievance against me, 14 what will I do when God confronts me? What will I answer when called to account? 15 Did not he who made me in the womb make them? Did not the same one form us both within our mothers?

Treat people right because we are accountable for how we treat others (Matt 18:32-34)

32 "Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. 33 Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' 34 In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

In the judgment of God, He does not forget the treatment of the poor (Heb 6:10)

10 God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.

In my treatment of others we are to remember that God is the Creator and Master of us all (Eph 6:9)

9 And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.

It is wise to ensure our treatment of others is consistent with biblical principles (Col 4:5)

5 Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity.

A Higher Standard of Love (Luke 6:32-34)

32 "But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.

33 "And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.

34 "And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back.

Higher standard of goodness (32-33)

Higher standard of goodness by being good at every opportunity (Gal 6:10)

10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

Higher standard of goodness is a benefit (Rom 5:7)

7 Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die.

Higher standard of goodness by letting our light shine through good works (Matt 5:16)

16 In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

Higher standard of goodness by being persistent in doing good (Rom 2:7)

7 To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life.

Higher standard of goodness by pleasing our neighbors (Rom 15:2)

2 Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.

Higher standard of goodness by seeking the good for others (1 Cor 10:24)

24 Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others.

Higher standard of goodness by praying for others (1 Tim 2:1-3)

1 I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone- 2 for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. 3 This is good, and pleases God our Savior,

Higher standard of goodness by sharing with others (Heb 13:16)

16 And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

Higher standard of generosity (34)

Higher standard of generosity by being openhanded toward the poor (Deut 15:11)

11 There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward your brothers and toward the poor and needy in your land.

Higher standard of generosity by being used by God Himself to scatter His gifts to the poor (Ps 112:9)

9 He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor, his righteousness endures forever; his horn will be lifted high in honor.

Higher standard of generosity by depending on God's promise of prospering (Prov 11:25)

25 A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.

Higher standard of generosity by sharing with the poor (1 Tim 6:18)

18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.

Divine Origin of Love (Luke 6:35-36)

35 "But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.

36 "Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

Divine love to wait for reward (35)

Rewards that come as the result of earnestly seeking God (Heb 11:6)

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Rewards that come as the result of the treatment of others (Matt 10:41-42)

41 Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward. 42 And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward."

Rewards that come as the result of good works done (Matt 16:27)

For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.

Rewards that come as the result of the Christian inheritance (Col 3:24)

since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

Rewards that are dispensed by Jesus (Rev 22:12)

"Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.

Divine love to be merciful (36)

Being merciful is having regard for the weak and troubled (Ps 41:1-3)

1 Blessed is he who has regard for the weak; the LORD delivers him in times of trouble. 2 The LORD will protect him and preserve his life; he will bless him in the land and not surrender him to the desire of his foes. 3 The LORD will sustain him on his sickbed and restore him from his bed of illness.

For the merciful, there is hope in troubled times (Ps 112:4)

Even in darkness light dawns for the upright, for the gracious and compassionate and righteous man.

Not being merciful is sin (Prov 14:21)

He who despises his neighbor sins, but blessed is he who is kind to the needy.

The type of fasting God desires includes being merciful to others (Isa 58:6-8)

6 "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? 7 Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter--when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? 8 Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard.

Without being merciful to others, we will not receive mercy from God (Matt 6:14-15)

14 For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Mercy is commanded for Christians (Eph 4:32)

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Mercy triumphs over judgment (James 2:13)

because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment!

Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Commentary Thoughts from Bob Deffinbaugh

The Practice of Loving One's Enemy: The King of Love Christ Calls For (6:27-30)

Entire sermons could be preached on these verses, but our approach precludes this. Let us begin with an overview of what Jesus is calling for in this section.

(1) Jesus is giving instructions to all of those who would be His followers, His disciples. Verse 27 informs us that Jesus spoke these words to "all who hear." This may be another way of saying, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." Nevertheless, I believe that Jesus is telling those who would follow Him what practices are required of them.

(2) The practices which our Lord requires here all pertain to our "enemy," the one who hates, curses, mistreats, attacks, and takes advantage of us. Our enemy, I think we can say, is the one who is not seeking our best interest at their expense, but who is striving to achieve their best interest at our expense.

(3) The practices which Jesus requires are all responses to a specific evil done to us personally by our enemy. The actions our Lord requires are responses to personal offenses against us.

(4) The evils done against us may be due to the fact that we are followers of Christ, although this is not clearly stated. The responses are clearly required of Christ's followers.

(5) The actions (responses) our Lord requires are those which are contrary to Judaism, to our culture, and to our own fallen nature. The actions which Jesus requires are supernatural responses. We would not do them normally (motivation), nor could we (means, power). Thus, the actions set the follower of Jesus apart from all others.

(6) Generally speaking, the actions required of our Lord necessitate the surrender of our personal rights. To put it in other words, we could file charges against our enemy for their doing to us what they have done.

(7) The list of practices which Jesus laid down here is suggestive, not all inclusive. Matthew, for example, gives us additional matters to consider, which were a part of this same sermon (cf. Matt. 5:41). Jesus did not intend for this list of required responses to be considered complete, but rather suggestive. These are but examples of the way in which a more general principle: Do not return evil for evil, but overcome evil with good.

(8) The things Jesus required require faith and supernatural enablement. These are not acts which one does in his own strength, in order to be saved, but are acts which one who has been saved does, due to the new mind and the new strength Christ gives through His Spirit.

(9) The things which our Lord here commands could be abused and may need to be set aside in order to carry out other instructions. The Christian life is not simple, as the Pharisees sought to make it (they really complicated it further). The Christian seldom acts on just one principle at a time, but on several, all held in balance and tension. We are thus something like a juggler, trying to keep several principles in the air at the same time by our deeds.

(10) The practice of the commands of our Lord given here relate to the "blessings" pronounced by our Lord above. Doing as Jesus commands may make us poor. We may object, "But I'd go broke doing this!" Jesus' words above, "Blessed are you who are poor ..." would become very relevant.

(11) Knowing that one had made the commitment to practice these precepts would have a great impact on his conduct. For example, if I knew that I were not going to strike a person back who hit me, I would be encouraged thereby to become a blessed "peacemaker" and "gentle" person (cf. Matt. 5:5, 9). Those who choose to carry firearms in their cars know that this does not tend to make them meek, just as those who choose a more pacifistic lifestyle tend to avoid developing chips on their shoulders. The conscious chose to obey Jesus' commands here will also tend us to develop other godly characteristics.

Parables Explaining the Need for Loving Our Enemies (6:39-49)

I would not "go down fighting" for the fact that all of these words are parables, but I do think that the one common factor is that of explaining why it is essential for Jesus' followers to obey these commands. In simplest terms, Jesus is saying that it is necessary for His followers to "march to the beat of a different drum," to live life by a higher standard, to have their practice be better than that of others, who are not His followers. "Betterness" is the unifying thought which undergirds these verses and gives a unity of thought. Let us briefly summarize the impact of each statement which our Lord makes here to see His reasons for "betterness" in living of His followers.

(1) Guides of the blind need to see better than those they lead, v. 39. The first parable has to do with those who lead the blind. If the “guide” is as blind as the one he leads, both will get hurt. The guide for the blind must see better than the one he guides. Jesus came, He said, to “give sight to the blind” (Luke 4:18). This, I believe this involved more than the giving of physical sight (cf. John 9:35-41). If Jesus’ followers are going to do as He did, their sight must be better than that of sinners.

(2) Teachers must be better than their students, v. 40. Jesus reminded His of what we all know: teachers must be better than their students, for it is the student’s task to come up to the level of his teacher. We do not have a 5th grade student teaching 12th grade students. We might, however, have a 12th grade student teaching the 5th grader (in the old days this happened). Because students are in the process of becoming like their teachers, teachers should be better.

(3) Eye inspectors and correctors must have better vision than the one whose eye from which they are trying to remove a small foreign particle, vv. 41-42. If one has bad eyesight, caused by a large foreign object, he can hardly function well at helping another remove a small imperfection from his eye. One must have better vision than the one with impaired vision, whom we are seeking to help.

(4) The superiority of some things can only be discerned by the better quality of their output, their “fruit,” vv. 43-45. The quality of some unseen things can only be measured by the visible “fruit” of their output. The nature (species) and quality of a tree can only be known by the nature and quality of its fruit. The condition of a man’s heart, invisible to other men, can only be judged by what proceeds from him (his mouth). If following Christ is the better way, then Christians should produce better “fruit.” Thus, Christians are called to live by a much higher standard.

(5) Obedience to the “tough” commands of our Lord proves a person to be a true follower of Christ, and handling the tough tasks now assures us of enduring tough times ahead, vv. 46-49. Jesus taught that it is not only to call Jesus Lord, they must prove He is Lord by obeying His commands (v. 46). It is in doing the tough things which shows our discipleship. It is not test of a child’s obedience to hand him money and instruct him to go and buy candy. It is a test of obedience to have the child submit to an inoculation at the doctor’s office.

In verses 47-49, Jesus sought to illustrate the fact that doing the hard thing now gives confidence in the hard times ahead. When building a house, the wise man “goes the extra mile” of laying a strong foundation. Digging deep to establish a solid foundation is not the easy way, but when the storms come, the building will stand. Obedience to our Lord’s commands regarding the loving of our enemies is not easy, but it does give us confidence that in the future we will have been well founded, well established in our faith and obedience, and able, by His grace, to withstand any coming storms.

In each and every one of these illustrations, the need for “betterness” has been established, even though the cost is high to live according to Christ’s higher standard. The commands of Christ regarding loving our enemies is a very high standard, higher than that which others hold or practice, but this only shows that which God all things are possible for those who trust in Him, who obey His commands, and who are sustained by His power and grace.

Principles Underlying the Loving of our Enemies (6:31-38)

The precepts about loving our enemies, which our Lord has given us in verses 27-30 are based upon principles. Beginning from the lowest level principle and ascending to the highest, Jesus gives us several governing principles in verses 31-38. Let us briefly consider these.

(1) Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

This principle is based upon a fundamental premise, that of **reciprocity**. We tend to respond to others in kind. Those who love us, we love. Those who are kind to us, we are kind to. Those who are harsh with us, we tend to be harsh with. The “golden rule” teaches us that that given the human tendency toward reciprocity we should treat others in the same way that we want them to respond to us. If we want people to be kind and gracious toward us, we must be kind and gracious toward them.

There is nothing particularly noble about following this principle, since we serve our own best interest by being kind toward others. Kindness shown toward others tends to be reciprocated toward us. We gain from what we give. Much of the secular counsel in how to relate toward others is based upon the principle of the golden rule. It does not rise above the standard which unbelievers set for themselves.

The golden rule, however, is but a minimum requirement. It relates toward with the expectation that our kindness will be returned. It does good so that good will be done for us. The golden rule can be followed by any

self-seeking person. Obedience to it has little virtue, for it sets a standard which all men would try to keep. The golden rule is not bad—it is simply not good enough. Thus, our Lord presses on to other (higher) principles.

(2) Do good unto others when they have done evil against you.

Jesus made it very clear that there is no virtue in living according to the same standard as others, even sinners (vv. 32-34). Then Christian is to surpass the world's minimum standard in the matter of loving others. The world gladly responds in kind. Sinners love those who love them. But the saint must love those who hate him. This is by far the more difficult path. If others reciprocate in kind, we are to respond otherwise. We are not only to give love for love, and good for good, we are to love our enemies, and to return good for evil.

(3) Do unto others, without looking to men for your reward.

If we are to do good to those who have done evil against us, we are also to do good to men who will do evil against us. Men do good things for others, expecting them to do for them in return (reciprocation). The Christian not only is to disregard what their enemy has done against them, but is also to act kindly toward others, knowing that they may not reciprocate, and may do evil to us when we have done good to them.

Sinners look to men for their reward, and they look for their rewards to come quickly. Christ's followers are to look to God for their reward, and that may not come until eternity. This means, of course, that men must live by faith in order to love their enemy, faith that God sees, that God rewards, and that blessings will come later on.

(4) Do unto others as God has done unto you.

While sinners deal with others in accordance with the way they have been treated by them, saints are to deal with others in accordance with the way God has treated us (and all men). Christ's followers are to show mercy to their enemies because God has shown mercy to us. In His mercy, God has always provided men with a way to escape the judgment of God. This has always been by means of God's grace, through the instrumentality of man's repentance and faith (which is also a gift of God). The mercy of God is to provide the follower of Christ with the motivation to show mercy to his enemy. We are to treat others as God has treated us.

(5) Do unto others in the same way you want God to do to you.

We have already seen that we are to deal with men as God has dealt with us. Now we must press this even further so that we deal with men in such a way that determines how God will deal with us in the future. This is not an easy principle to grasp, but the Lord Jesus taught that the way we treat others determines how God will treat us. In the "Lord's Prayer" Jesus taught that we are to ask God:

“AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS, AS WE ALSO HAVE FORGIVEN OUR DEBTORS” (Matt. 6:12).

Lest we fail to grasp what this means, our Lord explains,

“For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions” (Matt. 6:14-15).

God deals with us in the same way that we deal with others. God judges us according to the standard we use for others (Matt. 7:1-2). When we deal with men in mercy, God deals with us according to mercy. When we demand our rights, that is, justice, then God gives us justice (what we deserve) too. So, Jesus taught that God deals with us in the same way we deal with others, including our enemies:

“And do not pass judgment and you will not be judged; and do not condemn, and you shall not be condemned; pardon, and you will be pardoned. Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, they will pour into your lap. For whatever measure you deal out to others, it will be dealt to you in return (Luke 6:37-38).

Here it is, then. While ordinary men live ordinary lives, Christians are to live supernatural lives. While ordinary men love those who love them, Christians are to love those who hate them. And they can do so because they look to God for their reward, not to men. Christians can be taken advantage of by men because God is the one who blesses and rewards them. Christians can engage in a kind of “deficit spending” of love because God will always replenish the supply.

(Adapted from URL:<https://bible.org/seriespage/20-tough-love-luke-627-49>)

Concluding Thoughts from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

What is said in today's text actually requires very little in the way of commentary. There are no textual issues or obscure cultural references that need to be explained in order for the reader to comprehend this passage. This is not a difficult passage to understand. It is, however, an exceedingly difficult passage to put into practice. As we suggested at the outset, this is because the way of life that Jesus described here runs counter to the fundamentals of human nature: the deep-seated desire for revenge, for redress of injustice, for the respect of others. In light of this, it is common to view the teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Plain as impractical or unrealistic—even among Christians—and to seek ways to get around the implications of Jesus' words. The truest and best application we may make of Jesus' words is simply to reject this way of thinking, thus clearing the way for his words about love of enemies to reshape our hearts and our lives.

Concluding Thoughts from the Echoes Commentary

A Different Way - Jesus' Sermon on the Mount set forth a new standard of living, especially in the area of relationships and our interaction with those we consider our adversaries or enemies. The religious leaders incorrectly taught to hate your enemies (Matt. 5:43). Jesus commanded the opposite: Love those who are against you. Why? Because that is how God responds to people—all day, every day, no matter what. He loves those who love Him and those who do not. His followers should do the same.

Bless and Pray; Pray and Bless - Jesus prayed on the Cross for His murderers to be forgiven. Stephen, while being stoned to death, uttered the same request. Praying for one's enemies is asking God's favor or blessing upon the person, not harm.

Do Not Seek Revenge - Jesus was hated by many, yet He insisted not to retaliate, but be gentle, humble, and generous. He told His audience to refuse to stoop down to their opponent's level. Instead, they were to treat them kindly, the way they themselves would want to be treated. Jesus didn't say to let someone physically harm you and not defend yourself, nor was He saying to not protect your family. Rather, He was speaking about acting spiritually mature rather than as a petty, vengeful person.

Love Your Enemies - It is easy to love friends and family who are kind and affectionate. However, the heart is truly tested when you are called to love those who gossip, insult, offend, and spew hatred. Jesus endured those who called him a glutton, a drunk, a blasphemer, a madman, a liar, and so many other negative names. He responded to His accusers with the truth but also with sacrificial love. This is the kind of behavior God wants from His children. We do not imitate the ways of the world, but instead allow the Holy Spirit to transform us and love through us. The Holy Spirit needs to be depended on for His strength, wisdom, and guidance to carry out Jesus' command.