

The Sermon on the Mount
(Lesson 10)

Introduction:

1. In Matthew 5:21-48 Jesus addressed 5 important subjects by mentioning what the Jews had heard and then revealing His will.
2. In vs.43-48 Jesus dealt with how we are to treat our enemies.

Discussion:

- I. (vs.43) JESUS REVEALED WHAT THE JEWS HAD HEARD ABOUT HOW THEY WERE TO TREAT THEIR ENEMIES
 - A. They had heard, *"Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy."*
 - B. The command to *"love thy neighbor"* is found in Leviticus 19:18.
 1. Many instructions in the law related to this one commandment (Leviticus 19:9-11, 13-17).
 2. This is why Jesus said that loving your neighbor as yourself is the second great commandment (Matthew 22:39).
 3. The Jews were clearly taught to love their neighbors; however, . . .
 - C. The Law of Moses did not teach the Jews to hate their enemies.
 1. It is true that the law taught the Jews:
 - a. not to associate with heathen people, but the Jews were not instructed to hate them
 - b. to punish evil doers, but the Jews were not instructed to hate them.
 2. This idea that the Jews were to hate their enemies did not originate with God -- it originated with the Jews.
 - D. After talking about what the Jews had heard, . . .
- II. (vs.44) JESUS REVEALED HIS WILL ABOUT HOW WE ARE TO TREAT OUR ENEMIES
 - A. Rather than hate our enemies as the Jews had been taught, Jesus said, *"Love your enemies."*
 1. This is not an affectionate type of love that Christians are to have for one another (Hebrews 13:1).
 2. This is the kind of love that seeks what is best for the other person (Romans 12:20-21).
 - B. There are 3 ways our enemies may treat us -- they may curse us, they may hate us, and they may spitefully use us and persecute us.
 - C. In loving our enemies, the Lord wants us to bless those who curse us, do good to those who hate us, and pray for those who spitefully use us and persecute us.
 - D. It may be difficult for us to understand what the Lord requires, so perhaps it will help us to see it being practiced by:
 1. Jesus (Luke 23:34)
 2. The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:33-35)
 3. Stephen (Acts 7:57-60).
 - E. After teaching us how He wants us to treat our enemies, . . .
- III. (vs.45-47) JESUS GAVE 2 REASONS WHY WE MUST LOVE OUR ENEMIES
 - A. (vs.45) First, we must love our enemies so we may be children of God.
 1. God blesses both the righteous and the unrighteous.
 2. We must do the same if we want to be God's children.
 - B. (vs.46-47) Second, we must love our enemies so we won't be like people in the world.
 1. The Jews considered the publicans to be some of the worst people.
 2. However, even the publicans loved those who loved them and saluted fellow publicans.
 3. The Lord wants us to do more than just love those who love us.
- IV. (vs.48) FINALLY, JESUS TELLS US TO BE PERFECT LIKE THE FATHER
 - A. If we do not consider this statement in its context, we can easily misunderstand it.
 - B. (vs.45) Remember that God blesses the righteous and the unrighteous.
 - C. In loving our enemies, we must practice the same principle.
 - D. When we love our enemies as the Lord teaches us, we are perfect, even as the Father is perfect.