

March 28, 2018
“Making a Difference through Love”
David Self

“You have heard that it was said, Love your neighbor and hate your enemy. ⁴⁴ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ so that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. For He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. ⁴⁶ For if you love those who love you, what reward will you have? Don’t even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing out of the ordinary? Don’t even the Gentiles do the same? ⁴⁸ Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” Matthew 5:43-49

1. **Love Without Limits** (43) - The rabbis had corrupted the original law **“love your neighbor”** (Lev. 19:18) by adding **“and hate your enemy.”** Jesus commanded us to avoid boundaries on our love. (John 13:34, 15:12-14)

“For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring you to God, after being put to death in the fleshly realm but made alive in the spiritual realm.” 1 Peter 3:18

2. **Love the Unlovely** (44-47) - The human reaction is to return love for love. When we say, “I don’t love him/her anymore” what we often mean is “I don’t feel love so I’m not obligated to return love.” Never is this truer than in a husband/wife relationship! Jesus commands us to love unconditionally to love even when we don’t feel it. **“But God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us!”** Romans 5:8
3. **Love Completely** (48) **“perfect”** means “fully mature”, “complete,” “finished.” Our goal is to love as God loves. **“For the entire fullness of God’s nature dwells bodily in Christ, ¹⁰ and you have been filled by Him, who is the head over every ruler and authority.”** Colossians. 2:9

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