

Loving When It's Hard

Agape - Part 5

February 25, 2024

1. Made for Love
2. God is Love
3. Loving God
4. Loving Others

When predictability is high, impact is low.

The same goes for Christian love.
We don't always **surprise** the world.

*"But I say to you who listen: **Love your enemies** ... "* Luke 6:27 (CSB)

Who around you is **hard to love**? Maybe it's ...
... the person whose very name spikes your blood pressure.
... the person you avoid at all costs.
... the person with whom you have full-length imaginary debates with.

An enemy can be anyone in your proximity that is in **opposition** to you.

*"²⁷... do what is **good** to those who hate you, ²⁸**bless** those who curse you, **pray for** those who mistreat you. ²⁹If anyone hits you on the cheek, **offer** the other also. And if anyone takes away your coat, **don't hold back** your shirt either. ³⁰**Give** to everyone who asks you, and from someone who takes your things, don't ask for them back. ³¹Just as you want others to do for you, do the same for them. ³²If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. ³³If you do what is good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. ³⁴And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners to be repaid in full. ³⁵But love your enemies, do what is good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High. For **He is gracious** to the ungrateful and evil. ³⁶Be merciful, **just as your Father** also is **merciful.**"*
Luke 6:27-36 (CSB)

Jesus isn't asking us to do what He hasn't already done himself.

You cannot control if someone sees you as their enemy but you can control whether you see someone as your enemy.

When we begin to view people through the eyes of Jesus, we are less likely to see their flaws and more likely to see their need for love.

What does love require?

- #1 - Empathy (Vs. 27)
- #2 - Humility (Vs. 28)
- #3 - Integrity (Vs. 28-29)
- #4 - Generosity (Vs. 30)
- #5 - Gentleness (Vs. 35-36)

Loving your enemies may not change your enemies, but it will keep your enemies from changing you.

*“For if, while **we were enemies**, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, then how much more, having been reconciled, will we be saved by His life.” Romans 5:10 (CSB)*

When we are overwhelmed by the relentless love of God, it will overflow into our lives in a way that is irresistible to others.

God’s love on the cross not only gets you to Heaven but can also make brothers out of your enemies.

Agape **surprises the world. Agape **changes** the world.**

*“And if you greet only your brothers and sisters **what are you doing out of the ordinary?**” Matthew 5:47 (CSB)*