

“Love Does More: How Can I Love My Enemies?”

Greg Wendschlag July 23, 2017

You have heard that it was said, “Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.” But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than the others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” Matthew 5:38-48

The way it used to be

“You have heard that it was said, “Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.”

Who is my neighbor?

Who is my enemy?

The Love Does way

1. Intentional action

“But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you...”

- **Active** response vs **Passive** avoidance
- **Love** vs **Hate**
- **Blessing** vs **Judgment**

Love Does next step: I will begin praying daily for my enemies

2. Impartial affection

“that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.”

- God shows no **favoritism**
- God’s love is expressed, not based on merit, but because **He is love**.

Love Does next step: I will daily thank God for His grace knowing I am no better than anyone else.

3. Clear distinction

“If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than the others? Do not even pagans do that?”

“What makes the Christian different than other men is the peculiar, the extraordinary, the beyond all that...the more...God is more...we also shall be more.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Love Does next step: I will look for one person a week that I can show love to when they wouldn't expect it.

4. Submit to **perfection**

“Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

Perfect – teleios - fully realizing the **plan**, **potential** and **purpose** for which it was made.

Love for our enemies starts and ends with our love for God.
When God is our desire, His heart becomes our heart.

Love Does next step: I will read my Bible and pray daily knowing my love for God will allow me to love my enemies.

Love Does Self Evaluation

- I have people in my life that I do not love.
- There are people, enemies, in this world that I do not pray for.
- I may not retaliate against people but I hold deep grudges.
- I see myself as more lovable to God than others based on my own goodness.
- I am not convinced of my perfection as a child of God who is in Christ.

Starter Questions for your GIC this Week

1. How do you love someone you don't like?
2. Where is the balance in loving discipline, resistance and even punishment?
3. What other scriptures support loving one's enemy while also holding people accountable in love?
4. What are some practical things you can do to live a life of distinction?