

First Friends Church
“Grateful People Love Their Enemies
11-16-08

Opposite: Ungrateful people love only those who deserve to be loved and will love them back.

Questions:

1. Does Christ’s love in me make any difference in the way I love others?
2. How could Christ’s love working in me empower me to love my enemy?

Review Last Sunday: Grateful People Serve the “*least of these.*”

Undeserving Candidates – Matt. 25:34-35, 40
poor, sick, hungry, prisoner, homeless, orphan, widow, elderly, unborn, unlovely, etc.

Qualifications: poor performers, under achievers, high risk, long-term need, low or no return.

First the “Log” Check – Matt. 7:1-5 Don’t worry about the speck in someone else until you’ve removed the log from your own eye.

Today’s Text: Matt. 5:43-48

(Message) "You're familiar with the old written law, 'Love your friend,' and its unwritten companion, 'Hate your enemy.' I'm challenging that. I'm telling you to love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the energies of prayer, for then you are working out of your true selves, your God-created

selves. This is what God does. He gives his best—the sun to warm and the rain to nourish—to everyone, regardless: the good and bad, the nice and nasty. If all you do is love the lovable, do you expect a bonus? Anybody can do that. If you simply say hello to those who greet you, do you expect a medal? Any run-of-the-mill sinner does that. "In a word, what I'm saying is, Grow up. You're kingdom subjects. Now live like it. Live out your God-created identity. Live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you."

Context: “Love your neighbor” quoted all the time. God’s hatred of evil eventually became man’s hatred of men who did evil. God hates the sin, not the sinner.

The Story of the “Good Samaritan” – Luke 10:25-37

Who is my “neighbor?”

Who is my “unrighteous enemy”?

How do we love our enemies?

1. Be Grateful that we are no longer “enemies of God.” Romans 5:8-10; Col. 1:21
2. Be Grateful for being part of God’s reconciliation plan to *Restore People To The Father’s Heart.* 2 Cor. 5:16-21
3. Remember there’s only one true enemy: Satan

Grateful people love their enemies: giving unconditional commitment to an imperfect person, to be a part of God’s intended purposes for their life.

Gal. 5:6 *The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.*