

Good Shepherd, Beaver Dam
February, 2022
Luke 6:27-38

What would you do for someone you loved? That answer changes through the different stages of life doesn't it? The answer is different for a thirteen-year-old with their best friend compared to a bride and groom on their wedding day or compared to new parents holding their baby in their arms for the first time. What would you do for someone you love?

There was a couple, Donald who loved his wife, Nancy, so much that the two of them wore matching outfits for 35 years! You might not have heard of Shan Jahan, but he did something very special for his wife. Shan Jahan was a Mughal emperor who lived in the early 1600's. He loved his wife Mumtaz Mahal very much. She died giving birth to their 14th child. When his wife died, the empire mourned for two years.

Shan Jahan decided to build a tomb worthy of the woman he loved so much. He built the Taj Mahal for he and his wife to be buried in. This is a complex on 42 acres of land. It took 7 years to build. It was 240 feet high!

Unbelievable love does unbelievable things.

I think we would do much for someone we loved. But, would you show love to someone who hates you? Remember what Jesus said in the Gospel: Love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.

When Jesus said this maybe the biggest question was "What!" Ask your friends how you should treat your enemy and they will probably say, "Do to them what they do to you!" When you think of enemies you might think of Christian-killing terrorists. But chances are, you won't ever meet any of them. However, I want you to think more of people at school, at work, or someone on your basketball team.

That enemy could be the person you avoid because you disagree

with him politically and you don't want get in a shouting match today. Your enemy could be the one who always blames you for everything bad that happens in her life at school or at work. Your enemy could be the person who glares at you when you walk in the room. These are the people that Jesus wants us to love!

Jesus says, If someone hits you on the cheek, let him hit you on the other one! If anyone takes your coat, let him take your shirt, too! If anyone asks you for anything, give it to them! You might say, "Lord, this is an instruction manual on how to be a total pushover!"

- *Love my enemies – people will walk all over me!*
- *Turn the other cheek – I'll be a target forever!*
- *Give someone what they want – people will take advantage of me!*

Jesus can't mean that, can He? Oh yes, He does! Jesus is teaching us a lesson in love. When we have opportunities to forgive, to give, to be generous – to show true love – even to our enemies, we should think, "My Savior has shown unbelievable love to me throughout my life. How can I show that same kind of love to the person who doesn't like me? How can I be like Jesus in all I do?"

Try this, please. Take the commands that Jesus declares in our text and put your name as the subject. For example: Dennis Meier loves his enemies. Dennis Meier is kind to everyone who hates him. Dennis Meier blesses those who curse him. Dennis Meier gives to others whatever they want. If you substituted your name in those commands, was what you said true? I can honestly say that what I said wasn't true!

Now let's substitute Jesus' name: Jesus loved His enemies. Jesus was kind to those who hated Him. Jesus blessed those who cursed Him. Jesus prayed for those who mistreated Him. Do you see a difference?

Every time we do not reflect Jesus' unbelievable love to others in our lives, we fail! Jesus forgave His enemies. Jesus spoke to people who were "different" from Him. Jesus ate with people who were "different" from Him. Jesus died for people who were "different" from Him.

Jesus loved everyone. Jesus loved His enemies.

- *Jesus loved His enemies who were born into this world hating Him.*
- *Jesus loved His enemies who were born into this world blind in sin with no sense to come to the Light.*
- *Jesus loved His enemies who were born hostile to the perfect love that Jesus wants us to enjoy.*
- *Those enemies are you and me!*

Scripture says, God demonstrates His love for us in this – while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. God, who has no sin, loved us who are sinful and made us His children and heirs of heaven through the perfect love that Jesus showed us by living a perfect life and dying an innocent death so we could live in heaven! **Unbelievable love does unbelievable things.** Aren't you glad that God has that kind of love!

And now, we who are living in God's grace, are living in a world that is crowded with husbands and wives, sons and daughters, workers and bosses, Christians and unbelievers, friends and enemies and Jesus asks us to show unbelievable love to people who cross our path everyday. We are privileged to show **who** we are and **whose** we are every day of our lives!

Friends we can shine forth the love of God that seeks, that saves, and that serves others just as that love sought, saved, and served us!

We are people who are not condemned to hell and, in Christ never will be condemned. We rejoice to take what Jesus says in this text and make those words a part of our life.

- *Christ's unbelievable love is what motivates us to do good even when we are treated spitefully, because that is what Jesus did for us!*
- *Christ's unbelievable love motivates Christians to pray for those who make us angry.*
- *Christ's unbelievable love motivates Christians to forgive a debt someone owes us because we know he/she will never be able to*

pay us back. Why should we do this? Because Jesus forgave us.

- *Only the unbelievable love of Jesus moves us to be patient with those who make us impatient.*
- *Only the love of Jesus for us moves us to forgive the sins of those who don't deserve forgiveness --- because God forgave you and me!*

We live and love because God loved us first and God's Spirit lives in us. That's unbelievable love!

What would **you** do for your enemy? How about something unbelievable - loving others as God loved us!

1146