

**Luke 6:27b-28**  
**December 16, 2018**

**Open with Prayer**

**HOOK:**

If you have been with us over the last several weeks, you know that we are knee-deep in Jesus's famous Sermon on the Mount, aka the Beatitudes. He has just picked his 12 disciples and now He is pouring into them a paradigm of what it means to be His disciple. What does the heart condition need to look like? How are we to respond toward people who persecute us, or who are our enemies, or those who hate us? Now what?!!

**Transition:** We are picking up where we left off last week. Would someone read Luke 6:27b-28?

**BOOK (NIV 1984):**

V.27:

- “But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,

V.28:

- bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.

**Process Observations/Questions:**

Q V.27b: The second command says, “do good to those who hate you.” What does it mean to “do good?” [Let people engage.] Greek for “good” is “kalos,” which describes that which is inherently excellent or intrinsically good, providing some special or superior benefit. “Kalos” is good with emphasis on that which is beautiful, handsome, excellent, surpassing, precious, commendable, admirable. It means we are to treat them "excellently, honorably, and in such a way that they cannot blame us for doing them wrong." This word also means "to speak well of someone."

Jesus did good by teaching, healing, feeding, and comforting people. Using Jesus as the perfect example, His followers are called to meet the needs of others, including those who hate them.

**Observation:** Are you getting that loving our enemies and doing good to those who hate us is achievable because the Holy Spirit enables us with the desire and power to do so? We cannot fulfill these commands in our flesh. It's not our natural response! This paradigm is driven supernaturally. Our part is to follow through with the actions.

Q V.28: What are the next two commands you see in this verse? [bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you]

Q V.28a: What does it mean to “bless those who curse you?” [Let people engage. Bless = eulogeo from **eu** = good + **lógos** = word; see cognates eulogetos and eulogia) means speak good or well. When **eulogeo** is used by men toward men it means to speak well of with praise and thanksgiving (English "**Eulogy**" = an address in praise for one deceased ). To say good or positive things. It is a present imperative which calls for this to be our habitual practice.]

Q V.28b: What does “mistreat” mean? [**Mistreat** (revile, abuse, hurt) (1908) (epereazo from **epi** = against, upon + **epéreia** = threat, insult) means to threaten, spitefully abuse, insult, treat abusively, treat spitefully, accuse falsely (as in 1 Peter 3:16-note), treat in a despicable manner.]

Q: Why does Jesus want us to “pray for those who curse us or mistreat us?” [Jesus is saying something that is counterintuitive in our flesh. We are to pray for God in order to bless the person, to make them happy and/or cause them to prosper. In other words, we are not to pray or call down curses. We can become bitter toward those who continually mistreat us, but it is difficult to be bitter toward someone for whom you are daily praying! God has so constructed our minds that we can have but one thought at a time. Prayerful thoughts are a great antidote for sinful thoughts!]

**LOOK:** How should we treat our enemies? We must love them, do them good, and pray for them. Hatred only breeds more hatred, “for man’s anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires” (James 1:20). This cannot be done in our own strength, but it can be done through the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5; Gal. 5:22–23).

**Close in Prayer**

### **Commentaries for Today's Lesson:**

**Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible Exposition Commentary* (Vol. 1, p. 193). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.**

*People* (vv. 27–28). Jesus assumed that anybody who lived for eternal values would get into trouble with the world's crowd. Christians are the “salt of the earth” and “the light of the world” (Matt. 5:13–16), and sometimes the salt stings and the light exposes sin. Sinners show their hatred by avoiding us or rejecting us (Luke 6:22), insulting us (Luke 6:28), physically abusing us (Luke 6:29), and suing us (Luke 6:30). This is something we must expect (Phil. 1:29; 2 Tim. 3:12).

How should we treat our enemies? We must love them, do them good, and pray for them. Hatred only breeds more hatred, “for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires” (James 1:20). This cannot be done in our own strength, but it can be done through the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5; Gal. 5:22–23).

**Martin, J. A. (1985). *Isaiah*. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 220-221)**

a. *True righteousness revealed by love* (6:27–28).

6:27–28. Jesus mentioned seven aspects of unconditional love. These actions, not done naturally by human nature, require supernatural enabling—and are thus proof of true righteousness:

- (1) **Love your enemies.**
- (2) **Do good to those who hate you.**
- (3) **Bless those who curse you.**
- (4) **Pray for those who mistreat you.**

**Stein, R. H. (1992). *Luke* (Vol. 24, pp. 206–207). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.**

### **Context**

Having completed the parallelism of the beatitudes and the woes, Luke now turned his attention back to the last beatitude, which speaks of the times “when men hate you ... because of the Son of Man” (6:22). The entire section is devoted to this theme and contains the following subdivisions: 6:27–28—four commands concerning love of one's enemies.

### **Comments**

**6:27 But I tell you who hear me.** “You” is emphatic: *But to you I say who hear*. Because the woes of 6:24–26 were not directed to the disciples (see comments on 6:24), Luke included these words to help his readers recognize that what follows is not a set of conditions needing to be met in order to become disciples but rather directions to those who are already disciples.

In 6:27–28 we find four commands in synonymous parallelism, in which the same thought is repeated in poetic rhythm. The importance of these commands is evident in that they are Jesus' first direct commands in the Gospel. Luke may have included four commands concerning enemy

love in order to match the four reproaches in 6:22. (For Luke's love of "fours," see comments on 6:22.) We find a sharp contrast in the four commands to normal attitudes toward enemies. At Qumran one was to love all the sons of light (fellow members of the sect) and hate the sons of darkness. We find a more positive remark toward enemies in the *Testament of Joseph* 18:2, "If anyone wishes to do you harm, you should pray for him, along with doing good" (cf. also Exod 23:4–5). But Jesus' positive emphasis on loving your enemies is unique in its clarity as well as in the numerous examples given to explain what this love entails.

**Love ... do good ... bless ... pray.** The synonymous parallelism that follows the first command helps to explain and clarify what loving one's enemies means. The last three commands reveal that the command to love one's enemies does not appeal to the emotions but to the will. Jesus did not command his followers "to feel" in a certain way but to act in a certain way. Emotions can be elicited but not commanded. Actions and the will can be commanded. Thus, the command to love one's enemies is not directed to how believers are to feel but how they are to act. Often loving feelings follow loving actions much like a caboose follows an engine. Jesus' commands, however, are addressed to the engine of the will and not the caboose of feelings. Love involves doing good. (Cf. how the centurion's love for Israel resulted in his building a synagogue, i.e., his doing good [7:5], even as the good Samaritan's love of his neighbor [10:27–37] resulted in his doing good to the needy man, who as a Jew was his enemy.)

**Do good to those who hate you.** Although the Greek wording is different, this is essentially a synonym for "do good" in 6:33, 35. The expressions "enemies" and "those who hate you" are used interchangeably in 1:71. We find two good examples of the fulfillment of this command in Acts 7:54–60 and 16:28–32. This command, for Luke, did not mean that Christians were prohibited from defending themselves by legal means against non-Christians (cf. Acts 16:37–39; 22:25–29; 25:10–11).

**6:28 Bless those who curse you.** There are numerous examples of blessing only those who bless you and cursing those who curse you (Gen 12:3; 27:29; Judg 17:2), so that this command represents a sharp contrast. The contrast between Jesus' words and the common way of thinking is heightened in Matthew by his "You have heard that it was said.... But I tell you" (5:43–48). Romans 12:14 may indicate that Paul knew of this command (cf. 1 Cor 4:12; Rom 12:19–20; and also 1 Pet 3:9). Justin Martyr used the word *curse* seven times in his *Dialogue with Trypho* (16, 93, 95, 96, 108, 123, 133) to describe the treatment of Christians by Jews in his day.