

July 13, 2023

The Lord wants you to live in His liberty and freedom.

Matt. 5:44-45a But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven.

When Jesus was speaking to the crowds on the side of the mountain, He began teaching them things that were not exactly what they thought were normal ideas. In Chapter 5, He taught them through the Beatitudes or what I like to call the Beautiful Attitudes. Blessed are the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, and those who are persecuted for righteousness. All of these are attitudes that exude the character of Jesus Himself. In all of these characteristics, Jesus fulfilled the perfect love of the Father.

As He continued to teach them to be salt and light, to remain holy, and to treat each other as God has treated us; He then makes this statement that I'm sure took this "religious crowd" aback. Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you (the Romans). The Jews hated the Romans because of their oppression and rule over them. They despised their arrogance and tyrannical power over them. To them, Romans were the enemy. And now Jesus says to love them and to pray for them....

Are you kidding me? Have you seen how we've been treated? Do you know what they have done? The real fact of the matter is that God knows everything about everyone all the time. And He still says to love them and pray for them.

Do you have people in your life that you feel like they are the enemy? They have mistreated you, abused you, hurt you, betrayed you, or maybe even left you. How can you love them and pray for them? Only through the understanding that they are not the enemy; Satan is the enemy; they are the prize. God wants to reach them and the best way is through the unconditional love that you give to them; even though they have hurt you deeply. We must transfer the hurts to the One who can handle them and forgive as we have been forgiven. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who have trespassed against us.

This is how people will see and know that the love of God is bigger than any person or issue that we face. Children of the Father; let it be so in us!

Dear Lord, help me to love those who have hurt me, abused me, betrayed me, left me. I can only do that as I abide in Your love and grace. You loved me even when I hurt You. Help us all to love like we are loved by You. In Jesus Name, Amen