

## The Care and Feeding of Enemies

Matthew 5:38-42

### III. A Disciple’s Righteousness (5:17-48)

#### A. The Kingdom Standard: Must exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees (5:20)

	SCRIBAL RELIGION	KINGDOM RIGHTEOUSNESS
Concept:	R = Outward conformity to God’s Law	R = Inward conformity to God’s character
Role of Law	Means of gaining God’s (and man’s) approval	1. Reveals God’s character 2. Exposes Man’s heart
Approach	1. Interpret the Law 2. Work harder	1. Explain Law’s intent 2. Invite repentance and faith 3. Transform hearts
Standard:	Comparison to Traditions	Perfect fulfillment of Law
Results	1. Focus on details 2. Promote comparison 3. Feeling of uncertainty	1. Focus on character 2. Promote compassion 3. Feeling of resolution
God’s Response	Resistance	Grace

#### B. Six Contrasting Illustrations (5:21-48)

1. **Murder:** Replace anger/abusive speech with reconciliation and nurture of persons and relationships
2. **Adultery:** Replace lust with purity of heart expressed in love that cares for (not uses) the other.
3. **Divorce:** Replace hard-hearted hostility with servant-hearted faithfulness.
4. **Oaths:** Replace deceitful evasion with reliable promise-keeping (integrity).
5. **Retaliation:** Replace the imp`ulse for revenge with gracious generosity.
6. **Enemies:** Replace vindictive \_\_\_\_\_ with God-like \_\_\_\_\_.

#### C. The Kingdom Standard: Be “\_\_\_\_\_” as your heavenly Father is perfect.

### Illustration #6: Treatment of Enemies

#### I. Jesus’ Teaching re: the Disciple’s Treatment of Enemies

##### A. Tradition: “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’” (5:43)

1. The origin: Leviticus 19:17-18
2. The corruption of pharisaic tradition
  - a. What it *omits*: “\_\_\_\_\_”
  - b. What it *ignores*: the inclusion of “\_\_\_\_\_” in the scope of loving one’s neighbor (Lev. 19:34; Exo. 12:49)
  - c. What it *adds*: “\_\_\_\_\_”
    - 1) Possible basis for the tradition
      - a) An inference from the Israelite “Holy Wars”
      - b) An inference from the Imprecatory Psalms
    - 2) What it contradicts: explicit statements regulating conduct toward \_\_\_\_\_ (Exodus 23:4-5; Deuteronomy 23:7; Proverbs 25:21-22)

B. Jesus' Correction: "But I say to you . . ."

1. The Requirement: Love your neighbor = Love your \_\_\_\_\_

a. Neighbor = a human being in \_\_\_\_\_ that I know about and can \_\_\_\_\_ about.

b. Love (*agape*) = \_\_\_\_\_ (and \_\_\_\_\_ to effect) the good of another (Luke 6:27-28, 35)

1) Actions: Do \_\_\_\_\_ (Rom 12:21)

2) Words

- \_\_\_\_\_ those who curse you (1 Pet 3:9)
- \_\_\_\_\_ for those who persecute/abuse you (Acts 7:60).

2. The Reason: to \_\_\_\_\_ what God is \_\_\_\_\_

a. The love we are to emulate is \_\_\_\_\_

b. The love we are to extend goes beyond what is \_\_\_\_\_.

1) \_\_\_\_\_ persons are capable of caring love.

2) We are called to display "\_\_\_\_\_-natural" love.

C. Summary: "You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." (5:48)

1. "Perfect" (*teleos*) = fulfilling the \_\_\_\_\_ for which we were \_\_\_\_\_.

a. As the \_\_\_\_\_ of God, we are to be \_\_\_\_\_ Him.

b. As the \_\_\_\_\_ of God, we are to reflect the \_\_\_\_\_ of our heavenly Father.

2. The call to perfection is a call to recognize our \_\_\_\_\_ and turn to Christ in faith to bridge the \_\_\_\_\_ between our position in Him and our experience/practice.

## II. Kingdom principles

A. Rather than pursue a superficial righteousness in which my success is measured by comparing my external behavior with that of others, I am called to pursue the perfection of heart that characterizes God and for which I was designed. As an image-bearer, God calls me to both \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ him in my \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

B. God expects me to respond to others as He has \_\_\_\_\_.

C. In the relationship between a disciple and his "enemy," the actions of each are consistent with their \_\_\_\_\_.

- Kingdom rebels are "\_\_\_\_\_ enough" people. They strive to get their needs met by \_\_\_\_\_.
- Kingdom citizens are "\_\_\_\_\_ enough" people. Because their needs are met, they are free to respond to others by \_\_\_\_\_.

D. As I seek to respond to my enemy in love, the focus of my actions and prayer is to partner with God in meeting the spiritual need that is \_\_\_\_\_ in his mistreatment/hostility toward \_\_\_\_\_.

E. As I release my grip on my "right" of restitution and respond to my enemy with love, I can trust God to supply what I need and "\_\_\_\_\_."