

# The Disciple's Love

(Matthew 5:43-48)

- Introduction:
1. The Scribes and Pharisees had perverted the Law of Moses to suit their own desires and actions.
  2. This happens today as well as in the first century.
  3. In particular, the Scribes and Pharisees had perverted God's command concerning love.
  4. As Jesus clarified the teaching of the Lord on this subject, it must have been as startling to those who heard him speak these words as it is to us today.
  5. Let's examine the kind of Love the Lord demands of his disciples.

## I. What The Law Actually Said

- A. (Leviticus 19:18; 9-10,33-34).
- B. God's love is one that reaches out beyond our friends and family and encompasses even our enemies.
  1. Consider the book of Jonah.
  2. (Romans 5:6-10).
- C. But how do we come to love like that? Is it possible?
- D. It's easy to "love your enemies" until you really have some.

## II. Understanding The Command To Love

- A. How can love be commanded?
  1. It can't if it is based on "feeling."
  2. It can if it is based on "commitment."
- B. (Matthew 22:37-40).
- C. Love is more a decision of the "will" than it is our "emotions."
- D. Love has been defined as "active good will."
  1. This definition, can indeed be commanded and obeyed.
  2. It is difficult, but not beyond our reach.

## III. Perfection Commanded

- A. (Matthew 5:48).
- B. Sinlessness is out of the question (Romans 3:10,23).
- C. Perfection and maturity in context is speaking of one's love.
  1. Is it possible to love our enemies?
  2. Is it possible to do good to those who spitefully use us?
  3. Is it possible to pray for our enemies?
  4. Is it possible to do good for the just as well as the unjust?
- D. Certainly! And this is the kind of maturity that Jesus is commanding.

- Conclusion:
1. Even today, we still hear the same thing being said..."Love your neighbor and hate your enemy." Seek revenge, get even, pay back, etc.
  2. Yet the call of discipleship lifts us beyond such a base way of life and challenges us to possess the love of God; A love that actively pursues the good of not only our

friends, but our enemies.