



Title: Supernatural Loving

Date: April 3, 2022

Scripture Text: Matthew 5:43-48

Sermon Series: Inside-Out

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

We are continuing our walk through the Sermon on the Mount from Matthew 5-7. Up to this point in chapter 5, Jesus has given the Beatitudes (Blessed are those who...) and He has made five comparisons between the teachings of the Pharisees (you have heard that it was said...) compared to God's original intention (but I say to you...). Today's sermon focuses on the sixth and last comparison. Let's look at what it means to love supernaturally.

I. The Instruction of Judaism (Matt. 5:43)

Jesus is quoting from [Lev. 19:18](#) when He mentions to "love your neighbor", but God does not teach us to 'hate' our enemies. That phrase was added later. Even though it sounded 'religious', it distorted the truth. Jesus expanded on what it looks like to love your neighbor in [Luke 10:25-37](#) with the story of the Good Samaritan.

- Read the story of the Good Samaritan in [Luke 10:25-37](#).
 - What was the motive of the priest and Levite for passing by on the other side of the road and not helping the injured man?
 - What did the Samaritan do that showed that the injured man was his neighbor?
- Who are examples of neighbors for you?
- Describe a similar situation that might happen today that would give you an opportunity to *love your neighbor*.

II. The Correction of Jesus (Matt. 5:44)

Jesus shows that, as His disciples, we are not to stop at loving our neighbor. We are also to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. This is where supernatural loving comes in. We cannot love as Jesus commands on our own. We need help from the Holy Spirit to accomplish this.

- Read [1 Cor. 13:4-8](#). List the 15 characteristics listed for love.
- All 15 characteristics of love are verbs, i.e., action words. To love as Jesus commands, includes action/showing/demonstrating love.
 - List examples of how supernatural love can be demonstrated.
 - Why are these so hard?
 - What can we do to make it easier to love and pray for our enemies?

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III. The Application for Christians ([Matt. 5:45-48](#))

Jesus states that if we only love those who love us and be nice to those who are nice to us, we are no different than non-believers. But, as His disciples and with His enabling, we can sincerely love our enemies. And as we practice this supernatural love, we are able to be perfect just as our heavenly Father is perfect.

The phrase '*be perfect*' is wider than moral perfection: it indicates 'completeness', 'wholeness', a life totally integrated to the will of God and thus reflecting His character. The conformity to the character of God is now affirmed as the goal of a disciple of Jesus.

- Practically speaking, what does it look like for a Christian to be 'perfect' as described in [vs. 48](#)?
- How is supernatural loving a reflection of the character of God?
- What percentage of your time would you say is doing the same as those who are non-believers ([vss. 46-47](#)) compared to the percentage of your time living supernaturally?
 - What can you do to live (and love) more supernaturally?

Remember, supernatural living is not about what YOU can do, but what God can do through YOU. Dependence, reliance and trust in God and His enabling is where supernatural living begins for the Christian ([Eph. 3:20-21](#)).