

## Luke 23:26–34

*Substitution: God Demonstrating His Love by Dying for His Enemies*

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**Main idea:** In expressing His love for His enemies to man and to God, Jesus demonstrated His perfect righteousness that is counted for believers, the motivation behind His sacrifice that fully atones for believers, and His holy character that He produces in believers.

<sup>26</sup> Now as they led Him away, they laid hold of a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, who was coming from the country, and on him they laid the cross that he might bear it after Jesus.

<sup>27</sup> And a great multitude of the people followed Him, and women who also mourned and lamented Him.

<sup>28</sup> But Jesus, turning to them, said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. <sup>29</sup> For indeed the days are coming in which they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren, wombs that never bore, and breasts which never nursed!’ <sup>30</sup> Then they will begin ‘to say to the mountains, “Fall on us!” and to the hills, “Cover us!”’ <sup>31</sup> For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?”

<sup>32</sup> There were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death. <sup>33</sup> And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. <sup>34</sup> Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.” And they divided His garments and cast lots.

**Introduction:** The one act of obedience (cf. Rom 5:18–19). Here is the second great commandment: loving neighbor, even enemy, as oneself.

### 1. Jesus’s expression to man of love for His enemies, v26–31

- Luke the only one to record this (cf. 13:34–35; 19:41–44; 21:20–24)
- Jesus’s general (and ultimately condemning) enemy-love: “daughters of Jerusalem”
- Jesus’s specific (and ultimately saving) enemy-love: Simon the Cyrenian (and Simon Peter), the women who mourned and lamented Him (cf. v49)
- Which enemy love is for you?

### 2. Jesus’s expression to God of love for His enemies, v32–34

- As He is raised up onto the cursed tree (cf. Deut 21:22–23), He prays for others’ forgiveness
- He prays as the Son, expressing the general love of the Father (cf. Eze 18:23, 31–32; 1Tim 2:3–4; Mat 5:43–48)
- He prays as the Son, expressing the specific love of the Father (cf. Rom 5:6–8)

### Conclusion: Responding to the amazing love of Jesus

- A righteous action that can stand as your action
- An atoning action that can wipe out your actions
- An exemplary action that can form your actions (cf. Ac 7:59–60; Rom 9:3, 10:1–2)
- A reassuring action that hints at what His love for us is now (cf. Rom 5:9–11)

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Luke chapter 23 and our portion. This morning is verses 26 through 34, so let us ask for God's help.

To our God, how? We thank you that you have displayed your self to us in Jesus Christ.

And we thank you that you have given him to be, the one who's blood has spoken better than that, of able. And who now speaks from heaven to us help us by your spirit that we would heed the warning, not to refuse him who speaks grant and to the preacher that he would be a servant instrument by which that which you have inscribed in scripture would be faithfully proclaimed.

Grant to all of us. Your children to know these as the words of our Abba. Our father to know these as the words of our good shepherd. Jesus Christ who has laid down his life for his sheep and so make us to recognize his voice. But even more than knowing his voice.

Make us to know him for. We ask it in his name, Amen. So let us rise because we hear the word of God first. Read Luke chapter, 23 verses 26 through 34. These are God's words now as they led him away, they laid hold of a certain man Simon Sirenian.

Who was coming from the country and on him. They laid the cross that he might bear it after Jesus and a great multitude of the people followed him and women also mourned and lamented him. But Jesus turning to them said, daughters of Jerusalem. Do not weep for me, but we for yourselves, and for your children, for indeed, the days are coming in which they will say, blessed are the barren wounds that?

Never bore and breasts. Which never nurse, then they will begin to say, to the mountains fall on us into the hills cover us for. If they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?

There were also two others, criminals led with him to be put to death. And when they had come to the place called Calvary there, they crucified him and the criminals one on the right hand and the other on the left. And Jesus said, father forgive them for they do not know what they do and they divided his garments and cast lots so far.

The reading of God's inspired and inherent, we rejoice to know that he promises to add his blessing to the preaching of it. Please be seated.

And last week's portion we had Jesus acquitted three times by pilot declaring that he had done nothing deserving of death that he had done nothing wrong and a contrast to what Peter had done. And denying Jesus, three times towards the end of the last chapter and that passage is planted between Jesus on his trial in his trial saying nothing at all to Herod and just a couple of words to pilot and entrusting himself to him who judges, justly, loving God with all his heart and soul and mind and strength.

And now, especially in Luke's account, in these nine verses he holds before us Jesus, loving his neighbors as himself. Jesus, loving his enemies. One of the things that has been used by those who resist God and their hearts and look for reasons to deny the inspiration of the scriptures, One of the things that they have used is the fact that the gospels are four different accounts and that sometimes we and the fault isn't us.

But we have difficulty, just figuring out what came in what order and yet. God, having many things to teach us often from the same incident and know? Where is that more true than the crucifixion of our Lord? Jesus Christ gives us four different accounts that sometimes by the contrast between one account.

And another instead of giving us room to act as judge of him, he calls our attention to something specific in a specific passage. That's think with us and lived. 23 this morning, Luke is the only one of the evangelists, the four gospel writers who tells us about Jesus's response to the women.

After Simon of Cyrene, takes up the cross, Luke is the only one who tells us about Jesus as words. Father, forgive them for they know not what they do. And in both of these, what we have is Jesus loving his enemies. Jesus loving the enemies who are killing him by dying for them and by pleading the merits of his death for them.

And so if we had Jesus loving his father and trusting himself to God, who judges, justly in the first part of the chapter loving the Lord, his God, with all his heart, and soul, and mind, and strength. Then what we have before us and these nine verses is Jesus loving his neighbor as himself and particularly his enemies.

And we'll see that in the two expressions of Christ, first, as he addresses, these women who are mourning him and lamenting him in verse 27 and he addresses them in verses, 28 to 31. And we'll find. Jesus is expression to man of his love for his enemies sound very extraordinary.

I think not, well, understood or commonly understood. And the second one, when Jesus talks to his father, he says, father forgive them for their no, not what they do and it's clearer, but it's an expression to God of the same love for his enemies that we have in verses 28 through 31.

And so we'll consider the passage in under those two headings. And if you have an outline, you'll notice that the conclusion is really a long, third applicational point responding to this amazing enemy love of Jesus. And not just amazing. In this sense that you go to the zoo and see something that's very unique and very interesting but amazing in a way that a mazes, it stops your thoughts,

you try to wrap your head around the love of Jesus and you, you've suffered brain overload, you become amazed, it's an old and good word that has been lightened by overuse, but we mean, it, in its true sense.

Responding to the amazing love of Jesus First. Then Jesus is expression to man of love for his enemies. Not only is Luke. The only one who tells us about Jesus saying, daughters of Jerusalem. Do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children, Luke is also told us about Jesus's grief over what is coming to Jerusalem, three other times.

First there is all the way back and chapter 13.

Chapter 13 Jesus is being rejected. Verse 31, some Pharisees say, get out of here and and Jesus basically says that he's going to keep doing his work until the time comes that that has work is to go to Jerusalem and die. And having said that, he says in verse 34, Al Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones, those who are sent to her, how often I wanted to gather your children together as a hand gathers, her brood, under her wings, but you were not willing.

See your house is left to you desolate and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see me until the time comes, when you say blessed, is he who comes? And the name of the Lord, he looks forward to where we are now. The week that begins with that praise of Jesus.

Hoping that he is the Christ, the king who will deliver them from Rome and concludes with a Roman sign of his cross. That says, behold the king of the Jews and it will have come not by their blessing him, but by their having done to him as they did to all of the prophets and those who were sent to her and Jesus, who grieves over Jerusalem at the end of chapter 13.

And he says, how often I wanted to gather your children together. Now, Luke records for us on the way to the cross saying daughters of Jerusalem. Weep not for me but we for your children Christ is going to his cross. He literally has expired. The strength. He's used up all the strength that he had to carry it.

Simon. The Sirenian now is is carrying it in part in God's providence, so that he may have enough breath and enough ability to interact with these women. And to show that the love that he had expressed at the end of chapter 13 after the Pharisees came and basically gave him the Elijah treatment.

Not go up. You bald head now, but get out of Jerusalem, the love that he had for Jerusalem. Then is primary in his heart as he's going to his cross. They're going to be destroyed for what they have done to him and instead of weeping for himself and receiving their weeping for him, he's grieving for what's going to come to this place and these people, and their children, and some 40 years time,

Chapter 19 because the second place we saw him grieving over them. This is after they have said and verse 38 blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord. This is the time the week that he was looking forward to back in chapter 13 that says in verse 41, remember his on his way down from Bethany.

When the the entry, the praise of the triumphal entry was given says in verse 41. Now as he drew near, he saw the city and whipped over it. Was he crying children in our passage in chapter 23? This morning. There are women, who are crying, because they see the suffering of Jesus, and especially the suffering to which Jesus is going back in chapter 19.

Jesus was crying as he entered the city because he saw something that was coming. Yeah, he was going to die on a cross in a few days, but that's not what he was crying for. As you drew near, he saw the city and wept over it saying, if you had known, even you especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace.

But now, they are hidden from your eyes for days, will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side and level you and your children within you to the ground. And they will not leave in you one stone upon another.

Because you did not know that time of your visitation. And then again in chapter 21, you remember the the disciples having heard the prophecy about the destruction of Jerusalem and assuming that, that was the the end of the world. And they've asked him and Jesus was differentiating. But between when Jerusalem would be destroyed, which was 40 years later and the end of the world, which is now at least 1900 and 72 years later, or 71 says, but when you see, Jerusalem, surrounded by armies, this is chapter 21 verse 20, then know that it's desolation is near.

Then, let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let those who are in the midst of her depart and let not those who are in the country. Enter her for. These are the days of vengeance

that all things which are written, may be fulfilled, but woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies.

In those days for there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. And they will fall by the edge of the sword and be let away captive into all nations and Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. Now, you and I know that even when, by God's mercy to us, having joined us to Jesus, through faith, and having made us right with him and righteous before his eyes, even after having grown in Christ by by God's grace and the Holy Spirit applying Jesus to us, and whatever selflessness, the ability to live out of love, for God, and service unto him and love for our neighbor and service unto them.

That when we come into pain and when we come into trouble, and when there is worse set, before us our selflessness quickly evaporates, we very quickly become focused on our own suffering and our own trouble. And how are we going to have credited for us? Loving God, with all our heart soul, mind and strength desiring.

His praise his glory, and loving our neighbor as ourself caring about their pain and their trouble as much as about our, how are we going to come to have that righteousness before God? And this is a question that, you know, the medieval papist monks, you know, had no answer for it.

Really with yourself a whole bunch of times or you know go really hungry and and as you go hungry you wrestle with all the wicked desires of your heart, realizing that you're not doing anything good. Anyway, there's nothing that a man can do. There's nothing that you personally can do to have before God the righteousness that you need before.

God. Jesus Christ in the moment that he is going to the cross. His selflessness does not evaporate like yours in mind. His selflessness is magnified and the Holy Spirit comes to us. In this particular account of his crucifixion through Luke and he shines a light on the perfect righteousness and obedience of Jesus Christ that even with Simon carrying the cross.

Because the back is too bloodied and the lungs are our already suffering. So that they he can't get his breath and his his his pain is beyond its threshold and there's no strength left in his body for it. And yet his heart is full of love for Jerusalem and for its children for the mothers and for the babies, this is the love that we must have counted for us.

And this is that one act of obedience by which the many are made righteous, never forget that Jesus is not merely paying for our sin. He's not just receiving the punishment that we deserve, as he goes to his cross, where the Bible lays the emphasis, sometimes it emphasizes both but where the Bible lazy emphasis, sometimes is not on his suffering for our sin, but for his, on his offering, the obedience that we don't have for ourselves.

So Romans chapter 5,

I'm gonna read in verse from verse 17 for if, by the one, man's offense death reigned through the one. That's the first atom, much more, those who receive abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness, will reign in life through the one Jesus Christ. Therefore, as through the one man's offense, judgment came to all men.

Resulting in condemnation. Even so through one man's righteous act, the free gift came to all men resulting in justification being counted righteous before the holy eyes and the just eyes of God through one man's righteous. Act. The free gift came to all men resulting in justification of life, for as by one man's disobedience verse 19.

Many were made sinners. So also by one man's obedience, many will be made righteous. Do you hear the emphasis of the apostle there and Romans chapter 5? It's not although it's completely necessary and we've actually heard and thought about the peace that we have through his blood through the atonement.

That puts away our sin for in Colossians 1:20 in our reading. A few moments ago, the emphasis and remains five verses 19 through 20 is, how Jesus is offering and act of obedience, that becomes our obedience through faith and him that we are made righteous not just by having our slate.

Wiped clean, our account wiped clean before, God. But in Jesus Christ, when you believe in him, what has counted for you is, if you had loved God, like Jesus loves God. And if you had loved your neighbor, like Jesus loves his neighbors and if you had loved your enemies, as Jesus had loved his enemies.

And here he is showing the greatness of that love daughters of Jerusalem. Now, there are among the daughters of Jerusalem, particularly those who are weeping and lamenting over him. Here, there are

those who will be converted. There is saving love of enemies here. And we know that that's the that's the only kind of saving love.

There is, we'll look at that little further. When we see how Jesus's love is saving, love for his enemies and reflects God's, excuse me, saving love for his enemies. But there's also just that general love for his enemies here. Dollars of Jerusalem. Generally you see Jesus grieved over the city Jesus longed for the city.

Jesus is the perfect expression of that general love of God, that Matthew 5 talks about who will look at that in a little bit where it tells you that the reason you should love your enemies. So that you would be children of your father in heaven. So he loves the daughters of Jerusalem, generally.

But there are those whom he is loving not in a way that will condemn them. But in a way that will save them. So first there is Jesus'. General enemy love. Now for those who do not come to faith in Jesus Christ For those who hear Him say, don't weep for me.

Weep for yourselves For those who hear him. Say father, forgive them for they do not know what they do and they still don't come to faith in Jesus Christ. God leaves them to themselves like he left Pharaoh to himself and the hardening of his heart is we're reading in that section of Exodus right now and God's providence.

If you hear about this love of Jesus and you don't turn from your sin and you don't trust in him and you don't adore him as your God and trust in him as God who came and died for you and offered even this obedience for you that general enemy.

Love of Jesus Christ will not help you in the last day because vengeance belongs to the Lord. And he commands us to love our enemies. Giving food to those who are hungry and drink to those who are thirsty. And in this case, the application would be loving those who are going to bring the wrath of God upon themselves through the wrath of Rome, part of the instruction that God gives there.

At the end of Romans 12 is that in. So doing you will heap burning coals upon their heads. Now, these who are murdering the son of God, like the people who first heard the gospel preached at Pentecost, conclusion to the sermon, you crucified him. You are guilty for doing this.

Those who murdered this on of God, if they don't believe in him, think through it kids. If they don't believe in him, will it be better for them? Because the one whom they murdered was one who had loved them so much, or will it be worse for them?

When you sin against your mommy or your daddy and you repent from that sin and your forgiven and your reconciled, you look back and you realize that the one that you've been sitting against loves you. So dearly does that love? Make the sin that you committed against them smaller, or are you even more ashamed and more grieved that you'd sin against a mom, who loves you like that, or against a dad, who loves you?

Like that wasn't an infinitely more for those enemies of Christ. That the one whom they were murdering was loving them like this, not crying for himself as he was going to his cross. But actually crying for them about what was going to happen to them in some 40 years because he knew that what was going to happen, then was because what they were doing now, and his heart was broken for what they were, bringing upon themselves and upon their children.

Wonderful parallel there and act too, we can't go now. But the promise is for you and for your children. So there's this general enemy love, but there's also this very specific enemy love. And Jesus is laying down his life for his sheep. There are he's not laying down his life for the goats.

He's not dying generally for all sinners everywhere. He's dying. Generally for his elect, sinners everywhere. And there are some of those here Simon. We don't know the commentators speculate. Oh, they, they must have known that Simon was connected to Jesus, because they would want him to share in Jesus' shame by carrying Jesus's cross.

Maybe it says he was coming in from the country. It seems to be kind of random as far as Rome is concerned. Those who are familiar with Roman cruelty and with mob mindsets like the one that has led to this crucifixion you know that they don't need a special reason for which guy, they grab out of the crowd.

We're in the midst of hot, wicked murderous cruelty and we are equal opportunity abusers. It might not have been specific on the part of Rome, but whether or not it was, it was specific. I'm a part of Jesus. How do we know? Well, in marks account of this, he says, Simon the daddy of Alexander and Rufus how on the world does Mark, know, Alexander and Rufus.

And why would it matter to the people that Marcus writing to that? The guy had two kids named Alexander and Rufus and the Bible considering the ground that it covers as a pretty short book. It seems pretty obvious that not only was Simon almost certainly converted by this but that the promise was for him and for his children too.

And he had two kids named Alexander and Rufus who came to faith as our daddy told them about God who became a man and he was coming in. He was in town from Cyrene for the passover and and he was just joining the crowd. Apparently didn't have hadn't participated in the the mob violence that had led up into this point and boy they they saw him coming in, they grabbed him he looked like a strap-on guy.

Could could carry the this cross and it turned out. It turned out that it was the righteous one dying for sinners. The first thing I ever heard him say was daughters of Jerusalem. Wheat, not for me. I hadn't even been whipped and his cross was heavy on me. I wasn't even going to die on it.

But my stomach was sick with what was about to happen on this cross. That was on my shoulders. And he was saying, don't weep for me because he was dying for me, and he was dying for them. And my dear children, Alexander and Rufus, he was dying for you.

Now we don't know exactly what words, this father used about the Christ to had died for him and whose enemy love, he had heard expressed in these words.

But we have good reason to believe that. This was if he wasn't converted yet, certainly an experience by which Jesus revealed, who he was and what he was doing and the love behind it. And that was saving love if you want to come and stand at the judgment before this Jesus who didn't remain dead.

But rose again from the dead and ascended into heaven, and sits on the throne and all of us will stand before him. And you have heard of his love for his enemies and you will either stand before him as an enemy who was not righteous or as an enemy, who has been loved and who has believed in him who loved you and who are made righteous.

You've had his neighbor love and enemy love counted for you. As if you had done it, like, Simon and Alexander and Rufus. And some of these women about whom we here again not just in verse 27 that they were mourning and lamenting him. And God blessed the tender heartedness that he gives to women so that they may be loving and nurturing.

And some of you women say, you don't know what I was thinking when I heard those cries in the middle of the night and I say no, but you have been constituted differently than men for the good of your babies, as Jesus alludes to here, and it's his perfect love for that child.

That you were thinking about murdering in the middle of the night that has counted for you. When you believe in him, some of those thoughts, those are the horrifying thoughts that you think about before the judgment seat of Christ and how can a murderer. Like I am be. Can it righteous?

Because a lover of God and neighbor and enemy. Like Jesus was condemned for the wicked and offered to you that he would become your righteousness.

And so there isn't just the general enemy love that condemns those who don't believe in him. There's the specific enemy love. That is for those for whom he is dying. Which one is for you? Which one is for you? Do you know this Christ? Do you see his love?

Do you acknowledge what he was doing? And do you look to him to be all of your righteousness? Do you look to his shed blood to wipe out all of your sin? So that the only thing left is his righteousness because it was bad for Jerusalem. Jesus, hadn't done anything to Rome.

Rome through the mouth of pilot had just said, as far as we're concerned, not guilty, that's not what it was going to be like in 70 AD. When God judges Jerusalem by the hand of Rome, he lets Jews do what they do. Best. This isn't antiseptic just read your old testament.

They rebel with God as their king, they rebel against their own kings and judges they rebel with other kings that get over them. They rebel and they gonna do that in AD 70. And you want to see a frightful response rebell against first century Rome. This is what Jesus is talking about in verses, 30 and 31.

When he says, then they will begin to say to the mountains fall on us into the hills. Cover us, that's language, that will be said in 70 AD and it'll be set again. When Jesus appears in the clouds with his glory. The book of Revelation tells us four if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry here?

What he's saying there? He's saying I haven't provoked Rome at all, but my back that you see and the cross that is on Simon's back. And what you are about to see happen to me is being done to me. Who haven't provoked Rome at all, but come 40 years.

It won't be green wood for which there's no fuel for the fire of the Roman theory. It'll be dry. Wood. It'll be wood that has been prepped and seasoned by many rebellion after many rebellion until there's a big rebellion and the order comes down from Caesar and Jerusalem is going to receive the full fire of all of the power of the Roman Empire that's going to be dry wood that

And that is the tiniest little picture of verse 30 pointing us by the language of the hills and the mountains falling on us forward to revelation. That is the tiniest little picture of what it would be like to appear at the judgment without Jesus Christ.

And both for those who won't believe and for those who will Jesus shows his enemy, love need to hasten on. That's Jesus is expression to, man, specifically, to those daughters of Jerusalem of his enemy. Love his love for his enemies. He also expresses it to God. Beginning in verse 32, there were also two others, criminals led with him to be put to death.

And when they had come to the place called Calvary there, they crucified him. And the criminals one on the right, one on the right hand, the other on the left. Then Jesus said, father forgive them for they do not know what they do, and they divided his garments and cast, lots, who's Jesus talking about when he says, father forgive them for.

They do not know what they do. When he tells us is the ones who do not know what they do. Who's that everyone else in the whole picture?

The crowd, the rulers, the soldiers, the criminals. He's got a crowd in front of him. He's got soldiers, beneath him. Talk about not knowing what they do gambling over his clothes so that they don't have to tear them. That is the height of ignorance of what's happening. If you feed above their heads, those who mock him, and even those on his right and on his left, Luke doesn't tell us about both of them.

Mocking him at one point will think about that? Lord willing a little bit to next week's passage. Jesus has been raised up on a tree. And Jesus, of course, is Bible better than you do. He knows Deuteronomy 21:22 and 23. He knows the one who is hung on the tree.

Is a curse. And in the moment that second Corinthians 5:21 is being the that second Corinthians 5:21 describes, he who knew no sin became sin. All right, he goes from the tree being on Simon to now. Jesus being on the tree Deuteronomy 21:23 kicks in according to the fulfillment of the scripture and he doesn't cry.

Father, forgive me because he is on that cross, that sinners might be forgiven as he's raised up, he prays for others, forgiveness, by putting the statement in between the criminals being put on the right and the left before the statement in verse 34 and the soldiers dividing, his garments and casting lots, after this statement, it takes us right to that first point right at the beginning and and we'll see next week that the three hours get counted after what we have in this week's passage.

And so as he acknowledges, not just the fury of Rome, which is actually going to be greater in 70 AD than it is his crucifixion. He's just got done saying that, but as he acknowledges the have God that that which if it came on just one, unrepentant sinner would be for unending.

Agony is going to be exhausted. Upon him for three hours in just three hours and not just for the one. But for the innumerable multitude of that, those elect four whom he is dying. That's what's coming down upon him and he says, father forgives them again, there's a general enemy love here.

Ezekiel 18. This is one of the places in Ezekiel, you know, this is God. Talking to Israelites, most of whom are going to perish. And their sin verse 23, says, do I have any pleasure at all that? The wicked should die. Says the Lord yally and not that he should turn from his ways and live.

And then again versus 31 and 32 cast away from you, all the transgressions, which you have committed, get yourself a new heart, and a new spirit for. Why should you die? Oh, house of Israel? He's there talking about conversion, not just repeal of exile, not just national salvation for.

I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies says the Lord y'all away. Therefore, turn and live. The first Timothy chapter 2.

Verse three for this is good and acceptable. In the sight of God, our Savior who desires all men to be saved. And to come to the knowledge of the truth for there is one God and one mediator between

God and men, the man Christ Jesus. Now, you have to distinguish between the revealed will of God and the secret will of God, the secret will of God.

That is accomplishing, the salvation of specific. People takes no pleasure in their death. But what God reveals about his character is that even those who are destroyed even those, who suffer hell, the pleasure of God that he has in his son, the pleasure of God that he has in his justice, the pleasure of God that he has in his holiness.

Even the pleasure of God that he has in his rats. So far as it is, the perfection of his holiness expressed upon sin is not a pleasure in the suffering of those who endure it. There's a mystery here because we are not God, and we do not have this secret will, and revealed will in, and of ourselves.

But he describes himself in terms of loving his enemies, generally not in the saving way. But generally that as imitated in us when we love our enemies. And yes, even those who are not going to be saved, which praise God, because you don't know, do you? Which ones are going to be saved, but you're cold to love them all.

That's the application made. In Matthew 5, I said we'd get back to this. Matthew 5 verse 43, you've heard it was said, you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. Well, you so love your neighbor as from the Bible. You so hate your enemy as a kind of thing that wicked Bible commentators just say, it's just his neighbor neighbors aren't enemies.

Therefore, hate your enemy and that'll especially highlight. How much more you love your neighbor? See how we can rationalize the wickedness? That's not the love of Christ. Is it? And it's not the love of Christ because it's not an appropriate expression of the general love and goodness of God, even to the wicked whom he will glorify himself with pleasure in his holiness and pleasure and his justice and pleasure in his wrath.

And yet take no pleasure in the destruction of the wicked, how does that work? I don't know. Entirely with the scripture tells us all of it and you have to say everything. The Bible says,

And so he says you've heard it that it was said, you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy but I say to you love your enemies. Bless those who curse you do. Good to those who hate you. Pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, while you have a rapidly increasing opportunity, to do all those things, Don't you American Christian in 2021 and where is it going to come from?

It's going to come from the righteousness of him. Who is the perfect expression of God is God himself, added humanity to himself, loving his enemies, even in our passage this morning. And that's not just counted for you, but that's the character that gets worked out in you, as you get conformed to him.

And so step one in obeying, this is to recognize that this happens by recognizing Jesus's, love for you and resting in Him, and the spirit making you to be like him and read those again. Love your enemies. Bless those who curse you do. Good to those who hate you, pray for those who, spitefully use you and persecute you.

So you find out yet another thing that is being done to the church. What am I gonna do about this? I want to bless them. You're good to them. Pray for them. What that you may be sons of your father in heaven. For him, makes his sunrise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

For, if you love those who love you, what rewards, have you to not even the tax collectors, do the same. And if you greet your brother and only, what do you have, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so therefore, you shall be perfect just as your father, in heaven is perfect.

And so there's this general love that. Jesus is expressing when he says, father forgive them for they know, not what they do. But he's not just expressing a reflection of the general character of God, is he? Because he's in the midst of dying for specific. People never has a prayer been prayed with more direct evidence of its efficacy then when Jesus prays for the forgiveness of sinners in the middle of dying for their sins,

He prays as the sun notice. He doesn't say my God. Forgive them says father forgive them for, they do not know what they do. You are the father. I am the son, the exact imprint of your nature. The image of the invisible. God the brightness of his glory. He's not fighting the father's hatred.

He is cooperating and the father's. Love, he prays as the sun, expressing the specific love of the Father. Who would go back to Romans 5? A little earlier in the chapter, probably precious to many



of you for when you were still without strength in due time, Christ died for the ungodly for scarcely for a righteous man.

Will one die yet? Perhaps for a good man, someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love towards us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us, much more than having much more than having now, been justified by his blood. How shall we be saved from wrath through him?

Okay, we went too far. Well, we were still sinners Christ died for us. It says, this is God demonstrating his own love Well, how do we know where do we see God? Jesus tells Philip if you've seen me, you've seen the father because Jesus is saying, father, forgive them, for they know, not what they do because God, so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that the ones believeing in him.

That's the correct translation. Would not perish. That have everlasting life.

He prays as the sun expressing the greatest clearest demonstration of the love of God towards us because God, the Father is loving us and God, the sun is loving us and God the spirit who upholds Christ in his human nature, communicating to him the strength of the divine Jesus not cheating by being half God halfman, but still being fully man.

The father and the son, and the spirit are loving the elect and we hear that expressed and father forgive them for we for they know not what they do. So how should you respond? First of all, consider the love of Jesus for his enemies and the fact that that is offered to be counted for you.

So righteous action that can stand as your action, consider that this love of Jesus, for his enemies was and act of the triune God. Through the person of the son in his humanity to pay for your sin, that he wasn't just showing what he would go through. In order to love you, he was actually paying the penalty suffering, the wrath of God for your sin.

If you believe in him in the third place, way to respond to this amazing love of Jesus. As to remember that, this is what's supposed to be produced in you. We won't take the time to go to acts and to Romans but not too many weeks and months from Luke 23.

There'd be a man named Steven who's being stoned and with the last breath that he has in his body, he will pray for the forgiveness of those who are stoning. Him. Why where did that enemy love? Come from is not. Is it not the love of Jesus being reproduced in this servant of his who has been justified in him?

And now is being made like him. And when Steven is being stoned, there is a young Pharisee, guy named Saul, who's holding coats because you know, long flowy. First century things aren't good for truck and rocks, but this man who attended synagogue in the synagogue of the freedmen, which would have been the same as Steven as his own church, we don't have time to go.

Look at that. Now and had heard, Steven talk about Jesus over and over and over again. Proving that Jesus is God, proving that Jesus is the Christ. And top Pharisee, guy couldn't withstand his arguments and then he saw the Savior's character as he held the coats and then after he was converted, he realized that it was all true.

And then he writes in Romans, 9, and Romans 10 about how he wishes that he could go to hell. So that the Jews who keep almost killing him could be saved and that his heart's desire and prayer to God is for their salvation. Well, he didn't get that from Steven.

He saw it and Steven he got it from the same place and you can have it in you. Your question. What would your experience of these months and years and which we find ourselves be like if not only was the love of Christ for his enemies, counted for you.

But by his grace and by his spirit reproduced in you, how freed you would be to suffer for his sake. Yes, but also to love your enemies, like he did and even to love your enemies, with a hope that some of them are ones he died for and hadn't saved.

Yet like that Pharisee holding the coats, like, some of the Jews that Paul was hoping would end up getting converted, because he wrote a letter to Gentiles and our Gentiles who got converted in there. Be Jews who got jealous and they would get converted to problems 9, through 11.

And finally, and this may be for you, the sweetest of all, this is, how Jesus was loving you and you were his enemy before. His righteousness had been counted for you before. You had been renewed before the spirit. The third person of the Trinity with whom he has lived in everlasting, eternal love came to dwell in you.

If Jesus loved you and the way that he was loving the daughters of Jerusalem and even more than that Simon and Alexander and Rufus when you were his enemy, how does he love you? Now, that ought to melt us who at times. Lose sight of the infinite depth of the love of Jesus for us and we feel far from him and our hearts are cold towards him, not because anything is changed in him.

But because we are still growing, and we are backsliding and he comes to us this morning and he reminds us in the way that Romans 5 continues to apply, much more than having now, been justified by his blood. We shall be saved from wrath through him. For if we were enemies, we were reconciled to God.

Through the death of his son. Much more having been reconciled. We shall be saved by his life.

And not only that but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom we have now received the reconciliation. Behold, the love of God in Jesus Christ who didn't just love his enemies. Generally in that way, that reflects the character of God, but loved those specific enemies for whom he died.

And if you are his through faith, consider what love. He must have for you now. Having been justified having been glanced. It cannot be less.

Your congregation let us respond to the amazing love of Jesus. Let us pray.

Lord, we thank you that we will have unending ages to plumb the depths of this. Love the your spirit has told us about in these two unique parts of his account of Luke's account and we praise you that even with an eternity to plumb the depths, we will never be able to exhaust the subject, but we are not yet in eternity and we are in a time when we have enemies and we are in a conduction condition when we don't love them.

Well, And so we pray that you would receive Christ's love as our obedience that you would buy his atonement wipe out, our disobedience that by your spirit, you would reproduce as character in us and that you would continue to give us fresh and increasing views of his love that.

We would know that if this is how he loved us, when we were sinners, when we were enemies, how he loves us. Now that we have been made righteous for him. So do this ongoing work by your spirit, we ask in his name, who earned it, even Jesus and your people here.

Say amen.