

An Impossible Love (Part 1)

Sermon Series: **Luke: All Things New**



Series Goal

That Mercy Hill Church would be made new as we follow the One who is making all things new!



Sermon Text

Luke 6:27-31



Big Idea

Jesus loved us even when we were His enemies. And He is now calling and equipping us to do the same with ours.

(1) What Jesus Doesn't Mean

The initial reading of these illustrations in Luke makes me feel like I ought never to speak up for myself, or call the cops, or say "No". But is this the sort of thing that Jesus is after here? Yes...and no. If all you have is yes as your answer on this point, then, when we consider this text in light of the rest of Scripture, you are brought to face one massive problem: Jesus Himself doesn't always do what He here seems to command.

(2) What Jesus Does Mean

How do we bring together the teaching of Jesus in our text with these other examples from His life where He seems to do otherwise? It's not that He is at first reluctant to love His enemies and only finally comes around to the idea at the end of His life. It's that His ever-constant love for His enemies called for different expressions with different people at different times. Love is always the Master Principle of our Savior's life. But, as the Father guides Him, it takes on different forms.

So it turns out that, upon closer examination, even His acts of resistance are acts of great love. Not self-preservation; not self-defense; not self-regard. But love for His Father, His neighbor, and even His enemy. That's why when the Father finally calls Him to lay down His life on the cross, Jesus does so without hesitation...literally.

(3) What All this Means for Me

So does Jesus mean us to take these four illustrations in Luke 6 literally? Yes...and no. No, love for our enemies will not always take on these forms literally. But yes, we must always be willing to lay down our lives literally for them. No, these four illustrations are not to be interpreted as unflinching, inflexible commands, that must be obeyed literally at every point. But yes, they do show us the extent to which we must be willing to sacrifice (literally) should love and the Spirit of God dictate.

It seems to me three things are required if we are to fulfill what Jesus is calling us to here: (1) We need to be *born again*; (2) We need to be *surrendered*; and (3) We need to be *listening*.

Reflection Questions



- Do you have any enemies? Have you ever been ridiculed, abused, taken advantage of? How do you naturally respond to such things? Explain.
- If you're familiar with this text, how have you interpreted and applied these four illustrations in the past? In what ways were they challenging, searching, and confusing?
- How does Christ's love for you as His enemy change your approach to your enemies? How have you seen this work out (literally) in your life?
- Which of the three requirements are most difficult for you? Have you repented and believed in Christ and been born again? Are you a living sacrifice, surrendered to God moment by moment? Are you listening to Him, remaining sensitive to the way His Spirit is calling you to love? Explain.