



# Love the UNLOVABLE

The world teaches us that if people hurt you, you are to hurt them back, detach yourself, or worse, “cancel” them. Yet the Bible teaches us differently: Jesus teaches us to love our enemies and to love the unlovable (Luke 6:27-28). But how can we love the unlovable?

## Respond In Love

In Luke 6:27, 31 and 35, Jesus tells His followers to respond in love towards their enemies, and the word used for “love” in this verse is “agapao”, which translates to “unconditional love”. It is not a suggestion, but a command. This means that if we don’t love our enemies, we are disobeying Jesus!

In the Bible, Stephen is an example of those who loved his enemies. Though falsely accused and sentenced to be stoned to death, Stephen responded in love and prayed for his enemies (Acts 7:60). Present in that trial was Saul of Tarsus who agreed to the stoning of Stephen. Later, as Saul was on his way to persecute more Christians, he encountered Jesus, who responded to Saul by showing him mercy (Acts 9:3-6). That began Saul’s transformation into the apostle Paul!

What do you think would win over your enemy today?

## Reach Out Intentionally

Luke 6:27-30 shows us how love is demonstrated by actions. Jesus teaches us to do good, to bless, and even pray for our enemies! We are to do whatever it takes to win them over in love. This verse, however, is not to be misused so that people can abuse us. If we are wronged and abused, we are still to seek justice according to the law of the land. This verse applies to our personal conflicts. Our part is to reach out and love as best we can, and we are to leave room for God to avenge us because only God can grant perfect justice (Romans 12:19-21, Proverbs 16:7).

Jesus pursued Paul this way; He used Ananias to be an instrument of love to an enemy such as Saul (Acts 9:11-15). Ananias obeyed God in faith and reached out to Saul (Acts 9:13-19), and through this event Saul proclaimed Jesus as

### this week’s memory verse

“This is My commandment, that you love one another,  
just as I have loved you.”

JOHN 15:12

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the Son of God, the Messiah. Paul's own encounter with Jesus caused him to admonish love for one another, even loving the unlovable (Romans 12:14;17).

Who do we need to reach out to and reconcile with?

## Represent Christ

We are most like Christ when we allow God to love others through us (Luke 6:35-36). When we love our enemies, we are not like doormats, but doors so that our enemies can also know God. We represent Christ by the way we love our enemy (Matthew 5:45,48). We love our enemies not because we want to be children of God, but because we are already children of God. To love the unlovable is rooted in the heart of God. The Apostle Paul having received mercy and love from the church testifies of God's radical love. He was saved by the grace of God, and experienced love from those who represented Christ to him (1 Timothy 1:12-15).

What are the practical ways we can represent Christ's love to the unlovable this week?

Jesus was also surrounded with unlovable people. He was betrayed by His friends, He was beaten and mocked by soldiers, and was crucified by His own people, yet on the cross He still loved and prayed for His enemies (Luke 23:34). We were once enemies of God, but Jesus sacrificed Himself on the cross to reconcile us to the Father (Romans 5:10). Because of Jesus' love for us, we too can love the unlovable.

### discussion questions

How do I respond towards difficult people?

Who do I need to reach out to and reconcile with?

What are practical ways I can represent Christ's love to the unlovable this week?

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