

ASKING FOR A FRIEND

HOW DO I MOVE ON?

MATTHEW 5:43-47

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LOVING YOUR FRIENDS IS NORMAL. PRAYING FOR YOUR ENEMIES IS SUPERNATURAL.

I'm struggling with hatred and bitterness in my heart. What should I do?

Matthew 5:43-47

You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'⁴⁴ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,⁴⁵ so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.⁴⁶ For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?⁴⁷ And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?

Loving your enemies is

- Not rationalizing what they did.
- Not making yourself forget what they did.
- Not digging down in your own strength and finding forgiveness.
- Not enabling them to take advantage of you or others.

Loving Enemies

Q: Why should I love my enemies?

- Because it showcases who you really listen to – 5:43-44 *You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'⁴⁴ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,*

Matthew 5:11-12

Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

- The blessings of God's favor outweigh the pain of persecution.
- Because it reflects your Rescuer – 5:45 *so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.*
- Because it frees you from co-dependency – 5:46-47 *For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?*

Q: How should I love my enemies?

- Release them to God.
- Pray for them.
 - Why? We're probably thinking about them anyways.
 - Proactive prayer is the exercise that flushes bitterness from your heart.
- Do whatever is in your power to point them to Jesus Christ.

Colossians 3:12-14

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³ bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.