



Chapter 5:43-48

- Matt. 5:43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'
- Matt. 5:44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,
- Matt. 5:45 that you may be sons of your Father 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.
- Matt. 5:46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?
- Matt. 5:47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so?
- Matt. 5:48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Context

In these verses Jesus concludes His instruction in which He contrasts the teaching of the Pharisees with His own teaching. Remember, when Jesus says, "*you have heard that it was said*" He is quoting the Pharisees interpretation of God's Law.

Observations & Discussion

1. Compare vs. 43 with Leviticus 19:18: what did the Pharisees **add** to God's commandment? Why do you think they did so?
 2. Read vs. 44. In view of what Jesus says is there anyone, anywhere, that you as a Christian should hate? Is there anyone that you do hate—or perhaps strongly dislike?! If so how do you think Jesus wants you to act toward that person?
 3. Compare vs. 44 with what Jesus said in Matthew 22:37-40; based upon Jesus' words what would you conclude is the “spirit of the law”?
 4. What did Jesus say would communicate to the world that we are God's children? Find another verse where Jesus explicitly says that this one characteristic would be the mark of His followers?
 5. Based on our scripture this week how is our love as Christians supposed to be different than the love expressed by non-Christians?