

Hearing Jesus: Following Him in Love
Luke 6:20-38
Sermon Outline

Introduction: In Luke 6 Jesus is the second Moses, setting before us God's law in its deepest and surprising dimensions. What is this new commandment? And must we keep it?

I) What is this new commandment?

A) What it is not

- Another list of dos and don'ts
- An easily understandable or doable list.

B) What it is

A beautiful, disturbing, even funny revelation of God's new order...

1) Heaped up series of imperatives

Love...do good...bless...pray for...offer...do not withhold....

- Don't sit around waiting to feel charitable

2) Imperatives addressing outward and inward behavior

Love...do good; but also bless...pray for

- "Kill 'em with kindness"????

3) Imperatives aimed at unexpected and unworthy recipients

...your enemies...those who hate you...those who curse you...who abuse you
Do good and lend, expecting nothing in return

- Pushing us into the 'no returns for your efforts' sector

4) Imperatives aimed at every single one of us

vv. 29-30: To the one who strikes thee...Give to everyone who begs from thee...

- Don't expect someone to turn the other cheek for you

II) Why must we keep it?

A) Because God will reward us for it

v. 35: ...your reward will be great

v. 38: Give and it will be given to you....

v.32: If you love those who love you, what benefit (grace, favor from God) is that to you?

Doesn't talk of rewards make us into calculating mercenaries?

- Consider what sort of behavior is rewarded

Doesn't talk of rewards undermine God's grace?

- God's rewards are not earned
- *V. 38: ...good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over...*

B) Because God is this way

v. 35: ...and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful

The Father has always been this way—turning the other cheek

When Jesus turned the other cheek and surrendered his cloak...

Questions for Reflection this Week

- 1) By “turn the other cheek” does Jesus mean that policemen may never use guns? By “give to everyone who asks” does Jesus mean that you must answer every solicitation you receive in the mail? By “lend, expecting nothing in return” does Jesus mean we should dismantle capitalism? If your answer is, “No”, to any of these questions, then what does Jesus mean by these statements? What is he after? What practical difference is he looking for?
- 2) Reflect on the following statement by N. T. Wright: “Think of the best thing you can do for the worst person and go ahead and do it. Think of what you would really like someone to do for you, and do it for them. Think of the people to whom you are tempted to be nasty, and lavish generosity on them” (Luke for Everyone, pg. 73).
- 3) We are rightly told with respect to our enemies to “kill ‘em with kindness.” What corrective does Luke 6:28 give to us regarding the attitude we need to bring to the process? Have you ever sought to be kind to someone in order publicly to humiliate them?
- 4) In Luke 6:29-30 Jesus switches from the plural “you” to the singular “you” (“thee” in the King James Version). He probably does so to make clear that we may never ask someone to “turn the other cheek” for us, as a kind of proxy—as when a wife says to her husband, “Honey, I can’t stand that woman. You talk to her.” Have you ever done this or seen it done.
- 5) Jesus speaks in Luke 6:35 of our being rewarded if we love in the way he commands. Does this notion make you personally or theologically uncomfortable? If so, why?
- 6) What is it about the sort of behavior for which God promises to reward us that makes it immune to a calculating motive?
- 7) God’s rewards are never earned. They flow from God’s free and generous heart. What is the metaphor that Jesus uses in Luke 6:38 and what does it reveal about the heart of God when he rewards us? Thank God for that heart.
- 8) According to Luke 6:35-36 the principal reason we should love in such an astonishing manner is that our God does. Reflect on how often God has “turned the other cheek” in the history of the human race and then in your own personal history. Reflect on how that divine pattern came to its fullest and most astonishing expression when God came to dwell among us in Jesus. Thank him for his grace.