

The image features a central dark brown circle containing the word "Easter" in a white, elegant script font. A simple gold cross is positioned behind the letter 't'. Below "Easter", the words "sermon series" are written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. The circle is set against a background of a bright yellow sun with rays emanating from the right side, and a dark brown, curved shape at the bottom that resembles a crown of thorns.

Easter
sermon series

Scripture Reading:

MATTHEW 5:43-48



⁴³ “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? ⁴⁸ You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.



The graphic features a central dark brown circle containing the word "Easter" in a white cursive font. A gold cross is positioned behind the letter 't'. Below "Easter" is the text "sermon series" in a white sans-serif font. The circle is set against a background of a bright yellow sun with rays, partially obscured by a dark brown horizon line. A crown of thorns is depicted in a light gray color, arching over the bottom of the central circle.

Easter
sermon series

What was
the singular most important reason
for God giving mankind
the law?



Why do we preach **the cross**?



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1. It shows man that his failure is so overwhelming that **a God had to die in order to satisfy the justice** required by a holy God against His enemies.



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1. It shows man that his failure is so overwhelming that **a God had to die in order to satisfy the justice** required by a holy God against His enemies.
2. **Us!**



How did Jesus **interact** with his enemies?



Love has a couple of **components**:



Love has a couple of **components**:

1. The **heart** – either wicked or regenerate



Love has a couple of **components**:

1. The **heart** – either wicked or regenerate
2. The **words** or **actions** that follow from the type of heart present.



Do you know that love does not always
"turn the other cheek", or go the extra mile?



Do you know that love does not always
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1. Did Jesus try to woo the **Pharisees** toward His way of thinking?



Do you know that love does not always
"turn the other cheek", or go the extra mile?

1. Did Jesus try to woo the **Pharisees** toward His way of thinking?
2. Did He run after the **Rich Young Ruler?**



Now we can be
absolutely certain
that Jesus acted in love
in **each** of these circumstances.



MY POINT(s):

- Jesus – being full of the Holy Spirit – acted in love in **every situation**, albeit each one looked quite different in its expression.
- Love and its playing out stem from a **regenerate heart** that continues to be transformed by the renewing of ours minds.



Proverbs 27:6

Faithful are the wounds of a friend.



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Romans 5:10

For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.



Romans 7:15-22

For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶ Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. ¹⁷ So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. ¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.



Romans 7:15-22

¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. ²¹ So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. ²² For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being,



2 Timothy 4:6-8

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.⁷ I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.⁸ Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.



Galatians 2:20

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.



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Matthew 5:43-48

1. To demonstrate its impossibility without the Gospel.
2. To illustrate the Gospel's conflict with the world.
3. To illustrate the Gospel's conflict with religion, including the Pharisees' version of the Hebrew scriptures.
4. To show the other-worldliness of this Gospel to all of His creation.



What possibilities are there when we live this
“Love Thy Enemies” command out?

A. We create an environment **ripe for repentance**

- **Proverbs 26:20** – For lack of wood the fire goes out, and where there is no whisperer, quarreling ceases.
- **Proverbs 15:1** – A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger



What possibilities are there when we live this
“Love Thy Enemies” command out?

B. Without retaliation, **we give our enemies no further ammunition to attack us with**

- “Their guilt is their own and is not muddied by our additional sin and they must answer to the Lord for it.” (Violassi)



What possibilities are there when we live this
“**Love Thy Enemies**” command out?

C. The goodness of God – enacted to the violator by the child of God – is **a tool God can use** to offer repentance to the enemy.



D. “When we are not overcome by the enemy, we don't give control over to our flesh or Satan. We can then, once again, see God's hand of grace in His promises kept to us as sons and daughters of God. These become markers, trophies, great landmarks of remembrance for us that we see the fruits of our obedience played out as well, and especially, God's faithfulness to perform His word to creation.”



Suffice it to say that **when we love our enemies:**

- A. It is a **command of Jesus** and inferred in that command is the ability to do so.
- B. It is **for our benefit and for the watching world** looking for “flesh and blood” Christianity, not the prostituted version exhibited by many churches.



Suffice it to say that **when we love our enemies:**

- C. It is for **our enemies benefit**, freeing them from the encumbrances of revenge, on our part, and allowing them to see something of Gods grace that will hopefully lead them to repentance.
- D. We preach the cross and must embrace it as Christ's call to die to ourselves, doing that which only appears right **when eternity is in view**.



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- The enemy **repents**



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- We **act** – not react – in obedience.



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- We see **victory over our flesh** and see the victory in regeneration.



We find **victory** when:

- The enemy **repents**
- We **act** – not react – in obedience.
- We see **victory over our flesh** and see the victory in regeneration.
- We win, even if our enemies do not repent **as God's justice is carried out.**



God will have the last word;
will we
help or **hinder**
that certainty?

