

WHOM ARE WE TO LOVE?
(Matthew 5:43-48)

- I. The Legal PRINCIPLE (5:43a; cf. Lev. 19:18)
 - A. Commands AFFECTION for your neighbor
 - B. Commands CONCERN for your neighbor's WELL BEING
 - C. Demands SHOWING your love in your ACTIONS
 - 1. Easy to do for those you LIKE and who LIKE you
 - 2. Harder to do for those you DISLIKE and who DISLIKE you

- II. The Traditional PERVERSION (5:43b)
 - A. The perversion by OMISSION
 - 1. Omits the qualifier "AS YOURSELF"
 - 2. Omits the expansion to the "STRANGER" (Lev. 19:33-34)
 - B. The perversion by ADDITION: "and HATE your enemy"
 - 1. Possibly from God's command to Joshua to EXTERMINATE the
Canaanites
 - 2. Possibly from the "imprecatory PSALMS"

III. The Divine PERSPECTIVE (5:44-48)

A. Love your ENEMIES (5:44a)

1. With FORBEARANCE (Rom. 12:17)
2. With PEACEABLENESS (Rom. 12:18)
3. Without seeking personal REVENGE (Rom. 12:19)
4. With KINDNESS (12:20)

B. Pray for your PERSECUTORS (5:44b)

1. For God's BLESSING on their lives
2. For their SALVATION
3. For their SANCTIFICATION
4. For your own PATIENCE
5. For God's JUSTICE

C. Manifest your SONSHIP (5:45)

D. Exceed your FELLOW MAN (5:46-47)

E. Emulate your HEAVENLY FATHER (5:48; cf. 5:20)