

07.13.25

Luke

Chapter 6 - An Uncommon Perspective

Mans: Unnatural Response (vs. 27-31)

Luke 6:27-31: But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. Whoever hits you on the cheek, offer him the other also; and whoever takes away your coat, do not withhold your shirt from him either. Give to everyone who asks of you, and whoever takes away what is yours, do not demand it back. Treat others the same way you want them to treat you.

Well, we read the Gospels and we see just how loving God is to us. The Gospels are all about the good news of God and His love towards us. So, we oftentimes capsulize it in that wonderful verse in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son," and what? They won't perish, right? If you believe in Him, you'll have

everlasting life. How wonderful that gospel is. God so loved the world that He gave His Son. It's the love of God. We oftentimes stop there. Our perception is, "Well, I'm not going to hell, I'm going to heaven." And God says yes, but you want to be with people that want to be there, and you want to be with people that you can live with. Much of the gospel is about us being transformed into the image of His Son. The good news is not just that we've been saved from something. The good news is that we've been saved unto something, and He has actually brought us into this wonderful realm of change in our own lives. I don't know if you've noticed it or not, but people need to change. We're a mess. So, you'll often read in the Gospels, "repent," which means to change your way of thinking. You and I have to change our way of thinking because we're not used to thinking the way that God thinks. God wants us to imitate Him. Ephesians 5 tells us that we're actually to imitate the love of God like Christ, so that we would be a fragrant aroma unto the Lord.

In Luke 6:36, it reads,

"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."

Matthew will put it a little differently in Matthew 5, “Therefore, you are to be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect.” God is calling us to be like Him, and really, heaven is heaven because of who He is. It is a wonderful place because we have been changed into His image. I mean, could you just imagine going to heaven, no matter how wonderful paradise is, if you're living with people that hate each other, you're just going to have Cain kill Abel. But how wonderful heaven is in which we love each other, and we have the love of God within us. This is what is called discipleship. The Bible says in the Great Commission, “Go into all the world and make disciples.” What we're talking about is the Greek word “*mathētēs*,” making reference to making learners of Christ.

Christ says in Matthew 11 that we need to learn of Him, and what that's talking about is we take on the disposition of Christ. We take on the nature of Christ. We take on the thinking of Christ so that we're transformed, once again, into His image. This is what discipleship is about. It is about learning to be like Him. Of course, we know that it's only by His Spirit that our desire could even change into

that realm. But God is calling us to repentance. He's calling us to stop thinking like we think. He's causing us to stop going the way that we would go selfishly and in our selfish endeavors and follow Him in that sense of selflessness.

One of the great passages that we oftentimes quote in Philippians 2 reminds us of this, that though Christ existed in the form of God, He didn't regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but He emptied Himself and he took on the form of a bondservant. Scripture will go on and say, "Therefore, you imitate Him." In other words, take on the form of a bondservant. It's not like us to be unselfish, it's not like us to be caring and benevolent and merciful, but God can change us. So, the whole concept of repentance is God calling us to this.

As we come into the Gospel of Luke, what we have seen, in particular in Chapter 6, is on the whole, even the religious leaders and I would say in many cases, especially the religious leaders, are just literally on the other side of the fence and they're so consumed. Let me just kind of mention a few things as we've gone through this chapter,

we realize that Christ is calling us to an uncommon perspective. The world has a common perspective of the way that they see things. As I've been looking at this, it's clear that we naturally neglect the most important things. I mean, could you imagine, here you have the religious leaders, and they couldn't even see the Lord of the Sabbath, but they could see all the critical things and what that means is that we're actually prone towards criticism, and we're prone towards anger more than anything else. That's our nature. You don't actually have to teach people to be critical and mean. You have to teach them to be gracious and loving. So, it's the nature of man, and you see this all in the passage that the religious leaders, here they've been in religion in all their lives, and the only thing they can turn out as normal because that's what the world is. As you go on in the passage, you begin to realize that God is calling us out of this, and He's calling us into a realm, and in specific, you see in verse 13, (Luke 6:13) “And when day came, He called His disciples to Him...”

This is where He begins to choose His disciples, and as we look at this, we realize that these men are going to be different than the world. They have a different goal, different desire. God has placed something in their heart, but they're looking for something different. I'm reminded of the Gospel of John that tells us if we're seeking for that truth, we come to the light, and it is that which draws us to Him. So, we see these individuals that are twelve that Christ has chosen.

Then, if you look in verse 20, a very poignant moment comes into the text.

It says,

(Luke 6:20) “And turning His gaze toward His disciples...”

Which is telling us that what is now about to follow is specifically directed towards those that He calls to Himself, or more specifically, those that are called to learn of Him. It's no wonder when we talk about going to all the world and make disciples, that one of our main goals is to stimulate one another to love and good deeds and to follow Christ. We're not trying to make disciples of Family Bible; we're not trying to make you lifelong members.

Although, that would be nice, but we know there are no denominations in heaven and we know that really what's important is your relationship with God. So, what we want you to do is we want you to be devoted to Him, and so we want you to learn of Him. We want to show you what He's like and point to Him because obviously we have failed many times. I have found the closer I get to God, the more I realize how sinful I am. I hate to tell you this, but the more I study Scripture, and especially as I was going through this particular passage, I go, "Wow, I really need to improve." But that's a good thing, isn't it? To me, the wonderful thing about the Bible is that it takes those sins off my shoulders. Like I've oftentimes said, I used to think that every time I read the Bible, I find out that I'm more of a sinner than I thought I was, and that kind of got me depressed and what God has shown me is "No, no. Yes, I do show you that you're more of a sinner, but I'm just getting more stuff off." And what I found is that I'm just getting lighter, which is a phenomenon in and of itself as I get older, and probably a necessary thing, but what you begin to realize is the grace of God. As Hebrews says, "The sins that so easily beset us." God has

taken them off our shoulders, and certainly God is revealing things to us.

As you come to this passage, and He turns to his disciples, He begins to tell them that “If you go the way that I tell you to go, you'll be happy.” And He uses the word “blessed” over and over again. I mean, “Blessed are you, who...” “Blessed are you, who...” and all the way through, He begins to convey those that are blessed or happy, if in fact they do these things. What's surprising is that He's telling us to do things that go against our nature, and that's where the whole repentance thing comes in, because it isn't our nature to think selflessly. But Christ is actually saying, “If in fact you do this, you'll be happy.” And if I were to write out a formula of happiness, I'm not sure I would actually put that in the context.

There's a passage in Luke 18, if you'll turn there with me. Jesus was telling the disciples, “It's going to be hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.” And they're saying to themselves, “Wait a minute. I thought rich men were the blessed people.” And He goes “No, it's going to be really hard for them to enter into heaven.”

So, if you look in Chapter 18, Jesus will actually say,

(Luke 18:24) “And Jesus looked at him and said, “How hard it is for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God!”

(Luke 18:25) “For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

(Luke 18:26) They who heard it said, “Then who can be saved?”

(Luke 18:27) But He said, “The things that are impossible with people are possible with God.”

(Luke 18:28) Peter said, “Behold, we have left our own homes and followed You.”

(Luke 18:29) And He said to them, “Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God,

(Luke 18:30) who will not receive many times as much at this time and in the age to come, eternal life.”

Wow, this is the road to happiness. That's the road to blessing.

So, as He goes through in this marvelous chapter, He begins to say, “Blessed are you who hunger now... Blessed are you who are poor now, for yours is the kingdom of heaven. And those of you who have sacrificed for the gospel, for My namesake, boy, are you blessed.” And I have found through the years, the more I serve, the happier I am. The more I think of myself, the more miserable I am.

So, as we go through the passage, He begins to stir up and creates this sense of, “You want to go My way because this is where happiness is.” He then turns in the text in verse 24 and says, “But you're going to be miserable and you're going to have regret, and you're going to have all kinds of sorrow and anxiety if in fact you pursue your selfish desires.” So, as He goes through, He goes through the “woes”, and we talked about that last week.

(Luke 6:24) “But woe to you who are rich, for you are receiving your comfort in full.”

(Luke 6:25) “Woe to you who are well-fed now...”

In other words, you're not willing to forego the pleasures so that you might help somebody, and He says you're the

lesser for it. You're going to have great anxiety and great pain. You're going to wake up one day and you go, "What is my life all about?" And you'll have a miserable and anxious life, because the more you are consumed with the things of this world, the more anxious you become about those things. So, He establishes not only the blessings, but clearly the miseries.

What is convicting to me in the passage that we're going to be looking at today, in verses 27 through 31, is how I often time respond or react towards the way people treat me. He's going to be saying, "Now, I want you to respond differently than you normally would." Well, that's part of discipleship, because we see things differently. We understand that happiness is this way and not that way, and we understand that it's misery if we go our way instead of thinking that joy actually comes from having our own way; we actually believe that misery comes from that. So, we're thinking differently already, but now we have to respond differently, and that's part of discipleship. Here again, I think people are confused about discipleship. They think, "Well, I'm going to really

study and then I'll be a disciple.” Well, it would be good for you to study because you need to know what God says. However, you're only blessed if you do it. So, blessing doesn't come until you do what God tells you to do, as John records in John 13.

So, as we come to this passage, we're going to see, I would say, an unnatural response, and if you get a little uncomfortable, join the club, because I've been uncomfortable all week and misery loves company and I'm so thankful that I can make you miserable with me. It just actually makes my soul feel great, but as we come to this passage and we begin to see reaction and response to things. One of the things I did to make myself feel better, and it's always good to make yourself feel better if you can, but I was reading different passages in the Scripture of individuals that didn't respond to well, and you'll be surprised, Acts 16, Paul was greatly annoyed by this girl that continued to somehow bother him by virtue of the fact that she was a demonic slave girl and she kept yelling out and screaming to him, and the text actually says there in Acts 16 that he was annoyed. Now, what I would say is

that Paul responded and we might even say reacted wrongly. It was not the way to react. Nevertheless, you know, hey, it's Paul. He's an apostle, and it's a reminder that we all fail in many ways.

In Acts 23, I don't want to pick on him too much, but Paul, in anger, actually insults the high priest. The guys around him go, “Wait, wait, wait. Paul, you know, you just insulted the high priest.” He goes, “Oh, sorry. I didn't know he was the high priest.” In other words, he spoke without really thinking, and Scripture is letting us know that we have a tendency to react. James and John reacted towards the Samaritans, who said to Jesus, “You can't go any further. You can't go in our land” and they go, “Well, we'll just call down fire and burn you up.” And I suppose it made them feel good for the moment, but ultimately that was a bad response.

When you look in Luke 10 in particular, as you come to the end of that chapter, you have that interesting event of Mary and Martha, and Martha is angry at her sister because she's doing all the work and her sister is just sitting there doing nothing but listening to Jesus. I can't

believe that she would just do that. How unthoughtful is that? So, she reacts in an angry way towards her sister because she feels like she's being slighted. She's doing all the work. Of course, she's doing all the work for Jesus, and of course, it's love that's making her do that, but she's mad about doing it.

Then you have the 10 disciples, which is interesting, in Matthew 20, which actually became indignant against James and John. Why? Because James and John just simply wanted the positions of supremacy. So, what are you going to get mad about? But they were pretty upset about that because they sought superior positions.

When you go in the Old Testament, I mean, the Old Testament is full of examples. You have Simeon and Levi, who react in vengeance because their sister was in some way violated. So, what do they do? They literally wipe out a whole village. They take man, woman, child because their sister was violated. That's called a reaction, and that's called overreacting.

Then you have David, he gets upset over his grief and he begins torturing and killing people.

Scripture is full of examples of the fact that we don't respond well, we don't react well, and it is our nature.

So, as you come to this, He's teaching and He says, "There's a different way that I want you to respond to the things that happen to you." And He begins to list the people that come into our lives, and if you look within the passage, you see "enemies".

He actually lists, if you look with me in verse 27, he starts off,

(Luke 6:27) "... love your enemies..."

So, He's talking about those that oppose you. There are going to be people that oppose you. How do you respond to people that oppose you? "Well, I'm going to oppose you back." Well, that's not exactly what you should be doing. There are going to be people that hate you, which actually, to understand the word hate is not only to understand that there's going to be people out there that detest you, but there are going to be people that love you less than you love them. That could actually be the same word as hate, and sometimes that hurts even more, because they're not always upfront about it or the way

that they do it is inappropriate. But there are going to be people that don't love you the way you love them, or even marginalized your relationship, and this is going to hurt you. The question is, how do I respond to that? He's going to deal with people that curse you. Those are the people that speak ill of you. Those are the people that actually wish bad for you. There are people that actually want bad for you. Think about that. You've probably run into a few. So, there are going to be people that will mistreat you. There are people that are abusive in the things that they do. There are going to be people that hurt you, that wound you. So, He begins to list them. How do you respond to those people?

Well, we pick up in verse 27, and He's going to tell us how to respond. Now, fasten your seatbelts, because you're not going to feel like responding this way. Praise God for the Spirit of Christ within us that moves us to submit to His will; not only that moves us to do it, but when we hear what the truth is, moves us to want to do what He wants us to do.

So, it reads this way,

(Luke 6:27) “But I say to you who hear...”

Which is an interesting phrase in and of itself, which is basically describing those who were listening with some facsimile of attentiveness. That's who He's talking about. Of course, you go back, who's He turned His attention to? Disciples. So, it's like He's gathered these guys around, and He goes, “Ok, you said you want to follow Me, right?” And then you just see them nodding their head. “Ok, this is what it means. So, when you have difficulty and you have these enemies coming at you, I want you to love them.” Now, the word that He uses is a common word, “*agapaō*,” which seems to have the drive of charity in this particular setting. It's not as much that you're fond of that person, but that you're going to be charitable towards them. You're thinking in those terms. What He begins to talk about, really in the context, is your disposition towards them, and that's part of God moving us out of the realm of feeling and reaction and into the realm of disposition. You have to lay the foundation of having the right feelings towards somebody. Look, if your little granddaughter comes up and kicks you in the knee, it's

your granddaughter. You love her. You know, some stranger comes up and kicks you in the knee, you're going to react a little bit differently, but because if you're dispositioned towards your granddaughter, you're going to hold yourself back. I hope. I don't want to hear of any of you beating up your little granddaughter, but I would hope that you would say, "You know, that's my granddaughter. She didn't mean it." As 1 Corinthians 13 says, "Love doesn't take into account a wrong suffered." Well, love is really the disposition that you have.

In this particular passage, I want to emphasize something. All of these are in what is called the imperative, which means it's a command by God, "You want to follow Me? You must love your enemies. Not an option. Love." I told you that you weren't going to like this. You must love your enemies. So, what it's telling us is that your love is not based on the excellence of the person that comes to you but is solely based on the command. I want you to think that one through. It has absolutely nothing to do with who that person is; it has everything to do with what He told you to do. So, what you're doing is you're

responding, instead of reacting, in a way that is pleasing to God because you're a disciple. You're a learner of Christ. I'm so glad that in the crucifixion of Christ as He was spat upon as He was nailed to the cross, that He didn't react, but He responded, "Father, forgive them." And as Peter will say, while being reviled, He didn't revile in return, but He gave a blessing instead. Now, that is not natural, that is not something that I would normally do. So, He starts right off the bat and takes the central realm of responding.

In the Old Testament there are a number of examples of this, but in the Old Testament, one that literally pops in my mind almost immediately is Moses. If you remember in Numbers 12, you have Miriam and Aaron that are questioning the authority of Moses, and they're fundamentally saying, "Who died and made you boss?" And what's interesting about the whole text is that Moses doesn't speak for himself. He lets God speak for him. This is probably going to be one of the hardest things that you ever do, to respond in the way that God tells you to respond. But you said you wanted to be a disciple, didn't

you? You said you wanted to be a learner of Christ, and you knew that it wasn't just academic, didn't you? I mean, you knew that He was going to want you to follow, right?

(Luke 6:27) “But I say to you who hear, love your enemies...”

Now, the next phrase of this is,

“... do good to those who hate you.”

Doing something good. The little word “do” is really talking about the business that you’re in, the things that you're trying to accomplish, and what Jesus is saying is, “I want you to think, ‘I want to accomplish good for that person that hates me.’” Now, that's a totally different response as well. That somebody is demonstrating that you are detestable in their sight, or clearly they demean you in some way to say that you're insignificant to them. Nevertheless, your thoughts towards them is, “How can I do good for them?” Remind you, imperative, not an option, “I want you to do good to them.”

He goes on and says,

(Luke 6:28) “bless those who curse you...”

Actually, the word “bless” here is actually where we get the word “eulogy” when we talk at a grave site. Eulogy, “*eu*”- meaning “good,” “*logeō*”- meaning “to speak”. So, when you give a eulogy, you speak well of that person and what He's saying is that “They may curse you and they may speak bad of you, but I don't want you doing that to them. I want you to respond in such a way that they sense that you have their best interest at heart.” And there is this sense of not only making something good out of this whole concept, but it's actually wanting good for that person and making it vocal. You know somebody does something bad towards you and you kind of get off in a little corner, maybe with a friend, or maybe with your spouse, and you go, “Man, I sure hate that person.” Well, that would be the opposite of what He wants you to do. Now, I think we feel a little bit better because we didn't say it out loud towards that person, but the passage doesn't allot for where you say it. It just simply says, “But you need to love them, and you don't have an option not to.”

One of the things that oftentimes irritated me about my own father is that I felt in many respects that he was way too naive. I remember sitting down with him from time to time and saying, “Dad, do you have any idea what this guy's doing to you?” And my dad would say something like this, “I'm sure he doesn't mean that.” I'm going, “Dad.” And I'm trying to draw pictures, arrow going through people. He's not getting it. “What is that? A blessing somebody's shooting?” But it is a good trait, because God has called us for this purpose. Peter will make this statement, and you begin to realize that Peter realizes something that he didn't realize, that God has called us for the purpose of giving a blessing instead of a curse, and that's what we are; we're those avenues by which people are blessed. I think some Christians actually get it mixed up. They think, “I know what my job is, to curse the bad people.” James and John tried that, and Jesus says, “No, that's not it.”

(Luke 6:28) “bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.”

Those are people that are abusive and insult. Now, let me also say this, and I want to clarify this because I know I'm going to have some people talk to me afterwards, so maybe this will shorten the line, this is all in what is called the present tense. If in fact it was in the imperfect tense, this would be people that were abusive continually. That's not what He's saying. He's saying somebody's going to abuse you sometimes; they're going to in some way insult you; they're going in some way slander you; they're going to hurt you. He says, "When they do that, don't respond in a negative way. Don't come back fighting." But He's not talking about somebody that's continually abusive, and what we try to do is we try to pull people out of abusive relationships. But in this context, it's always in what is called the present. When it is an event that happened, what is your first reaction? How do you first respond? What He's telling you is you need to first respond in a way that would be, "I'm going to pray for these people. I'm going to wish good for them. I'm not going to hate them back and I'm going to try to do that, which is good for them."

(Luke 6:28) “bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.”

(Luke 6:29) “Whoever hits you on the cheek...”

That's the famous one, isn't it? Well, once again, if it was in the imperfect in the text, it would, and it actually is used in the imperfect many places where it talks about many blows were given to this person, that would be the imperfect where it's continually given, but He's talking about somebody actually striking you once, not unlike that particular scenario in which Paul found himself and the high priest called for him to be slapped on the cheek, right? Then, he reacted inappropriately. The picture is basically that. When somebody comes and they slap you. Now, this is not only in the realm of the physical, this is also in the realm of the emotional. In other words, have you ever had those days in which somebody came up to you and they struck a blow to you emotionally, one that you weren't expecting? Now, the reason why it says slapped you in the face when it's dealing with that, it actually uses the word “jaw” there, is that's the place of our pride. So, what they did was they hit a blow to your

pride. We use the phrase, “saving face,” and Scripture is saying, “Don't save face. Turn the cheek.” The immediate response is, “What am I going to do to somehow bolster up my pride again? What is it that I can do to somehow demonstrate that this person didn't take advantage of me?” And Jesus says, “Let it go.” That's what you're going to do. You're just going to totally let it go, so that you're not once again looking to get even, you're looking to give mercy. Now, it doesn't necessarily mean in the passage that you're going to say, “Ok, I've got another one.” That's not what it's saying, but what it's saying is that you're willing to make yourself vulnerable one more time, that though this person took total advantage of you, you never saw it coming, but you're willing to let it go one more time. You need to think that way. Once again, it's a strange way of thinking that God has called us to. When He called you to be a disciple, did you think He was going to ask you to respond this way? Who does this, besides Jesus? But that's Who we're following.

(Luke 6:29) “Whoever hits you on the cheek, offer him the other also; and whoever takes away your coat, do not withhold your shirt from him either.”

The word “withhold” within the passage is actually referring to you as an inferior responding to a superior. So, it's an interesting context because it seems to be more directly referring to those in authority coming and demanding things of you. I guess sometimes the government may come to your door and start taking things to pay bills or to get things that they want. He says, “Do not resist them.” He's talking about not resisting those that have the authority to do such a thing because we know according to Romans 13, all authority is ordained by God, right? And that they're messengers of God. So, by faith we realize that God is going to take care of all of this. So, it's very clear that God is calling us to die to ourselves in this. Why is this such a wonderful thing for us? Well, I actually believe God will bless us for doing this because He blesses those who walk by faith, who trust Him. You say you trust Him, but then you still react, and Jesus says, “Trust Me by responding the way I tell you to

and see if I don't reward you.” It actually does work, but I have to admit I'm very slow to learn these.

(Luke 6:29) “Whoever hits you on the cheek, offer him the other also; and whoever takes away your coat, do not withhold your shirt from him either.”

And then he states this in a very general way,

(Luke 6:30) “Give to everyone who asks of you...”

Once again, not in the imperfect. That is to say, I guess you could have some people at your door 24/7. You know, you give them something; they're always there asking for more.

“Give to everyone who asks of you, and whoever takes away what is yours, do not demand it back.”

In other words, don't exact it back.

When you go into the passage of 1 Corinthians 6, in which he's basically making reference to taking their brother to court, “Don't take him to court, don't demand it back.” Or as Jesus will say to the one young man that says, “Tell my brother to give me the inheritance,” He says, “Leave him

alone. What am I? Your judge in this? Don't let this be greed in your life. Let it go.”

(Luke 6:30) “Give to everyone who asks of you, and whoever takes away what is yours, do not demand it back.”

And then He summarizes all of this in the text,

(Luke 6:31) “Treat others the same way you want them to treat you.”

The standard by which you have set other men to treat you, this is the standard by which you set. Now, I think that what's interesting about that is that in some ways we all have different sets of standards. But I would say this as a follower of Christ, as a believer of Christ, I want, and I should, as a disciple of Christ, the best for that person. Which means that the best isn't always giving them what they want, but it's giving them what is best. So, the passage puts it in this particular thing.

In fact, there's sort of a parallel passage in Leviticus 19, if you turn there with me, that even goes to the heart of the matter, and that's really what we're talking about in this

text. What is the heart that Christ wants us to have? In many respects, He's actually taking it right out of Leviticus 19.

(Leviticus 19:13) “You shall not oppress your neighbor, nor rob him. The wages of a hired man are not to remain with you all night until morning.”

Look, you hired him. You know that he's tight. Don't sit on his income.

(Leviticus 19:14) “You shall not curse a deaf man...”

“Well, he didn't hear me.” It doesn't matter.

“... nor place a stumbling block before the blind...”

“Who saw me do that?”

“... but you shall revere your God...”

In other words, it's God who you're serving, not because somebody saw you or didn't see you or heard you or didn't hear you.

It goes on and says,

(Leviticus 19:15) “You shall do no injustice in judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor...”

That's an interesting phrase. We live in a world where because somebody's poor, they're automatically good. That's not true.

“You shall do no injustice in judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor nor defer to the great, but you are to judge your neighbor fairly.

(Leviticus 19:16) ‘You shall not go about as a slanderer among your people, and you are not to act against the life of your neighbor; I am the LORD.

(Leviticus 19:17) ‘You shall not hate your fellow countryman in your heart...”

People do some horrible things towards us, and this verse just keeps coming back. I cannot hate him in my heart. Now, that's going to be a test of who you're following.

“... you may surely reprove your neighbor...”

People say, “Well, am I not allowed to say anything?”
What does the text say?

“... you may surely reprove your neighbor, but shall not incur sin because of him.”

And that would be hatred and wanting bad for him and saying bad things about him. You cannot incur sin.

(Leviticus 19:18) “You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD.”

Clearly, He's given that which is the standard that God has given us.

If you look with me in Luke 9, I just want to remind you of just a couple of things as we close in this.

(Luke 9:22) “saying, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised up on the third day.”

(Luke 9:23) And He was saying to them all, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.”

Now the question is, what exactly does this look like? And in many respects what we're reading is, “This is what it looks like: You're not taking into account a wrong suffered. You're coming back with something that is honorable, something that is beneficial towards that

person, though they threw something at you that was hurtful.” The way that you're responding is just totally different than the way that they have treated you.

It goes on and says this,

(Luke 9:24) “For whoever wishes to save his life...”

This is what I would call self-preservation. “They hit me.” You don't have the right to self-preservation. He said, “Do not.” You're basically called not to protect yourself. We have a phrase called “self-defense”.

The passage says,

“... he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.

(Luke 9:24) “For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.

(Luke 9:25) “For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself?

(Luke 9:26) “For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him...”

Now, in many respects, Peter gives us a picture of this, and if you look with me in 1 Peter 2, you'll see this. In this text, you're a servant, you have a master that has taken advantage of you. Obviously, he's a twisted individual. Scripture actually uses that word.

It says,

(1 Peter 2:18) “Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are (twisted) unreasonable.”

(1 Peter 2:19) For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly.”

Not justly, but unjustly. You didn't deserve it.

(1 Peter 2:20) “For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God.”

(1 Peter 2:21) For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps.”

What's the example? What does this look like?

(1 Peter 2:22) “WHO COMMITTED NO SIN...”

Ok, He didn't do anything wrong; you probably didn't do anything wrong.

“... NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH.”

You weren't lying or being a false representative.

(1 Peter 2:23) “and while being reviled, He did not revile in return...”

People were throwing insults at Him. He didn't insult them back.

“... while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously;

(1 Peter 2:24) and He Himself bore our sins...”

Our sins, not His sins. Our sins.

“...in His body...”

I don't know if you get the full understanding of this, but to me, to follow Christ is a lot harder than I thought, and I'm going to need the Spirit of God to do this because I can't do this.

(1 Peter 3:8) “To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit;

(1 Peter 3:9) not returning evil for evil or insult for insult...”

I mean, isn't that kind of summing it up?

“... but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.”

The way that you inherit a blessing is to respond in a way that gives a blessing in the midst of the curse. You want the blessing of God upon you, the glory of God to rest upon you, as Peter will say? Then what you must do is respond as Christ would, and when you do this, you'll have the blessing of God upon you. That's why He says, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

(1 Peter 3:10) “For, “THE ONE WHO DESIRES LIFE, TO LOVE AND SEE GOOD DAYS, MUST KEEP HIS TONGUE FROM EVIL AND HIS LIPS FROM SPEAKING DECEIT.

(1 Peter 3:11) “HE MUST TURN AWAY FROM EVIL AND DO GOOD;

HE MUST SEEK PEACE AND PURSUE IT.

(1 Peter 3:12) “FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE TOWARD THE RIGHTEOUS,

AND HIS EARS ATTEND TO THEIR PRAYER,

BUT THE FACE OF THE LORD IS AGAINST THOSE WHO DO EVIL.””

Pretty clear, isn't it? Yeah, I wish I didn't have to study that one.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we give You thanks for Your lovingkindness towards us and we ask Your forgiveness the way that we fail in so many ways. When You tell us to have Your mind in us, I don't know what that means. I mean, the depth of that, how You think, but I can tell You this, I'm so thankful that You didn't come back at me when I mistreated you, when I thought of You as insignificant, when I despised You by not obeying You or listening to You or caring for

You, that You just kept loving me and never stopped wishing good for me. Lord, we come to You today and we ask that You change our heart. We come repenting, wanting to change our way of thinking, but we know that unless Your Spirit moves us through these words, we're not going to change.