

Spiritual How-to's

Be A Revolutionary – Love Your Enemies

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Intro. According to the dictionary, a **revolutionary** is one who **“takes up the cause of bringing change in an existing system.”** **“Revolutionary = marked by or resulting in radical change – sudden, complete or marked change.”**

Can you **remember** any **revolutionaries**?

Che Guevara – Marxist Cuban physician

Mahatma Gandhi – Indian lawyer, freedom fighter

Pancho Villa, Patrick Henry, Chief Joseph???

Revolutionaries come from all walks of life and change their world. Most famous are:

Henry Ford, Galileo, Isaac Newton, Hitler, Malcom X, Eva Peron, George

Washington, Martin Luther King, Jesus Christ

I. When Jesus walked on the earth and taught the people, that is exactly what He was seeking to do – make a radical, sudden and complete change to the current system of doing and behaving. **He was introducing His kingdom values and causing others to pick up the cause and affect a revolution.**

A. Matthew 5:43-48 we find the 6th time He says, “You have heard it said... but I say to you...”

1. In this He is presenting a **counter-revolution.**

2. This is what **you have heard**, but I’m showing you something revolutionary!

3. This is what **you have practiced**, but now I’m showing you something radically different.

4. This is how **the culture responds**, but this my revolutionary response.

B. In Matthew 5, Jesus, teaches us all revolutionary new way of thinking & behaving.

1. About anger 5:21-26

2. About Lust 5:27-30

3. About divorce 5:31-32

4. About telling the truth 5:33-35

5. About retaliation 5:38-42

C. And now today’s topic. A totally revolutionary and counter cultural way of treating others.

II. Jesus – “You have heard it said, “You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy”. But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for/bless those who persecute you.”

Matthew 5:43 ESV THIS IS REVOLUTIONARY!

A. The OT did NOT teach hate your enemies. This was a misrepresentation of OT.

1. In OT God hated evil & those who did evil were deemed God’s enemies.

2. Therefore, it was natural to hate them

- B. **This hate was NOT commanded by God.** Jesus was correcting this wrong thinking.
- C. It is easy to **hate our enemies. We're wired to do that.** That's what everyone does.
- D. But we are instructed to **bless them or pray** for them. THIS is revolutionary!
- E. Last week we talked about not getting even, and here Jesus tells us to **"Unselfishly seek the best or higher good for your enemies."** AMP
- F. Why? Because we are children of God. Matthew 5:45

III. As His children, we then should be like Him.

- A. **He makes the sun rise** on the evil and the good. Matthew 5:45
All receive the warmth of His love. All receive His grace & care whether they are good or evil.
- B. **He sends the rain** on the just and the unjust. Matthew 5:45
 All receive His provision and refreshing. Just or unjust.
- C. **He never withholds His love** and light, His provision or refreshing.
 1. As His kids, He expects the same from us.
 2. This doesn't make us His sons, but it does make us **KNOWN as His son/daughter**
- D. **God shows His love without preference**, or distinction. To all.
 And that love blessing is intended to bring unbelievers to repentance. Acts 14:17;
 Romans 2:4
- E. **God hates evil, but He still brings blessings** to them. WOW. This is revolutionary!

IV. How can we live this way?

- A. **Proverbs 25:21-22** – if your enemy is hungry give him something to eat, if he is thirsty, Give him something to drink
- B. **Romans 12:20-21** – repeats Proverbs 25, but adds, "for by doing this you will heap burning coals on his head."
 1. Many believe this was referring to an **Egyptian custom**
 2. **A penitent person carries a bowl of burning embers on his head to show his shame & guilt.**
 3. **The point is to give sun and rain (show love, like God does) to that "enemy" and let Him carry around his shame & guilt.**
- C. Verse 21 reminds us, **"Do not be overcome with evil** (what your enemy has done) but overcome it with doing good to him."
- D. **It has been said, that love expresses itself through prayer.**
 1. Reflect for a moment on the Jewish holocaust.
 2. How many stories are retold of the vicious evil that was overcome by praying Jews?
 3. Consider the stories of those who stood on opposite sides of the aisle morally or politically and have been able to become friends.
 4. Remember the last dying requests of those who pleaded for the forgiveness of their killers. (Stephen, Jesus and others)

E. Praying for our enemies forces us to bend our will for revenge to the love of God.

1. This is a process but with practice becomes common practice.
2. The love of God changes us in that process.

F. Through prayer, God helps us to see from His perspective.

1. He helps us to feel empathy
2. He empowers us to release forgiveness
3. He reveals the hatred in our own heart
4. He uses our enemy to shape us
5. He uses us to shape our enemy

V. THIS IS REVOLUTIONARY. This would change the world. This would cause a radical change to our existing system, wouldn't it?

***** Would you accept this challenge to be a revolutionary by blessing your enemies?**

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