

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

Luke 6: 27-38

Brothers and sisters, peace to you. This is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord that we have come again to our time of Bible reading. We continue with Luke chapter 6; today we read verses 27–38. From verse 27 onward, the Lord Jesus is speaking to the people around Him who were listening to the word.

Verse 27: “But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,”

So from this verse to the end of the chapter in verse 49, these are words spoken to those who were listening, and also to us today who read the Scripture. In this large section there are three main parts. The first part, from verse 27 to 36, positively speaks of how to get along with people—how to love all, even to love enemies. From verse 37 to 42 it also speaks of how to get along with people, negatively—how not to judge others. Finally, from verse 43 to the end, it speaks of two kinds of trees and two kinds of foundations. The trees are connected to life, to the individual’s condition; the foundations are connected to building, even more to how the church operates.

Jesus came down from the mountain with His disciples and entered among the crowd. He first spoke some words to the disciples that they should hear, then He began to teach the multitude. On one hand it was spoken to the crowd, and on the other hand it was also for the disciples to learn.

“Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you!” The love Jesus uses here is the Greek *agapē*; *agapē* love is love from God. God’s love is unconditional love, love that does not count the return, sacrificial love—somewhat like the love of parents for their children. And the object is your enemies. Your enemies—you are to love

them unconditionally, love them without expecting anything in return; those who hate you—you are to treat them well.

Verse 28: “bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.”

The words Jesus speaks here seem impossible for people to do. Normally we are accustomed to an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth; however people treat us, we treat them the same. Or even more, some ethical teachings, seemingly of a higher level—like those taught by Confucius and Mencius—would have you train your personal cultivation: if others treat you badly, you can endure it, you can refrain from striking back. But what Jesus requires here far exceeds that—not only is it not an eye for an eye or a tooth for a tooth, not only is it enduring what others do to you, but it is even more active: bless those who curse you; pray for those who spitefully use you.

Verse 29: “To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either.”

Jesus seems to be telling these crowds here that whatever comes upon you, regard it as permitted by God—for the purpose of enlarging your capacity, so that you may possess a better character. So when someone strikes you on one cheek, this is God allowing the circumstance to come upon you to expand your capacity, and you offer the other cheek as well—only you yourself decide, being willing to cooperate with God’s will to further enlarge your capacity. If someone unreasonably takes away your cloak, perhaps this is also permitted by God; with your cooperation, you are willing to let him take your tunic as well.

Verses 30–32: “Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods, do not ask them back. And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise. But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.”

In other words, Jesus here requires that all who follow Him live out a higher moral standard than ordinary people. When others love you, you love them back—this is human nature. If you only do this, what credit is that to you? Because even sinners do the same.

Verses 34–35: “And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.”

Jesus specially charges us here to love our enemies—from the heart love them, like God loves us. Then we are to do good to our enemies—not only have love in the heart, but manifest it outwardly in behavior. And when someone borrows from you, you lend to him without expecting repayment—if we can do this, our reward will be great. What reward? “You will be sons of the Most High”—the Most High is God; we can become sons of God. Because God is such a God—He is kind to the unthankful and evil. God created the universe and all things; the sun shines on the evil and on the good; He sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

Verse 36: “Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.”

I believe most Christians, like me, every time we read this passage feel tremendous pressure in our hearts. If we are very honest in facing ourselves and facing God, we must say we simply cannot do it. Not to mention enemies—even toward many of the friends around us we often cannot do it; even toward our closest family

members we often lose our temper without reason. Since this is so, why does Jesus place this passage here? I think these standards of outward behavior are deliberately set forth by Jesus before us, seemingly as a mirror, so that when we compare ourselves a little with what we can do, we will know we are truly far from God's standard—we can hardly do any of it at all.

Precisely because we cannot do it, we cannot but be poor in spirit; we cannot but hunger and thirst for righteousness. May our life slowly grow and slowly live out this life; then we will truly mourn for our real spiritual condition and become those who mourn.

Our natural human life has no way to achieve such a condition. But thank the Lord—after each one of us believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, we have within us a divine, uncreated, Godly, eternal life. If we let this life live out from us, we can live out such a scene.

Although our present measure of life has not yet reached that degree, precisely because of this we know we ourselves are poor; we know we ourselves need to become those who hunger and thirst; we need to become those who mourn. May through God's life growing in us day by day, one day we can live out such a condition.

Verse 37: “Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.”

Positively we are to love our enemies; negatively we are not to judge others, not to condemn others, to forgive others. In this section of teaching, Jesus' words always carry a promise: If we do not judge others, we will not be judged; if we do not condemn others, we will not be condemned; if we can forgive others, we will be forgiven.

Verse 38: “Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”

Many times we come before God asking Him to grant us grace to help us overcome various difficulties. Jesus here reminds us: When you come to ask the Father, have you given the same to those who have need? If you give, it will be given to you. God’s return is always far richer than what we give out. You give one portion; He gives you ten portions—how does He give ten portions? With good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, poured into your bosom.

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You! You tell us to love others; You tell us not to judge others. Lord, we confess these things to You; we know them, yet we cannot do them. We humbly come before You, asking You to be gracious to us. There are many spiritual matters, spiritual principles, spiritual lessons—we seem to have heard them, seem to know them, yet in life we have no power to practice them. Help us, and remind us in all things: when we encounter situations, do not let our natural man react first; when we encounter situations, help us pause a little, stop a little, first come before You, and in spirit ask of You.

Whenever we pray to You, Lord, respond to us in grace; lead us in grace. Let us be able to put down the old self and learn to let You lead us in all things: how to face our dearest people around us, how to face colleagues we work with, even those who often oppose and are enemies to us. We are willing to place all kinds of circumstances in Your gracious hand, asking You to personally lead us and instruct us. Also help us learn in all things to slowly have produced in us some character that matches Your disposition; You tell us to be merciful, just as our Father is merciful. We pray to You—this is what we long for; also ask that You would slowly produce in us such character that matches Your disposition. Bless my life today. We pray in the holy name of the Lord Jesus Christ.