

PEACE: LOVE YOUR ENEMIES



WORD OF THE WEEK LUKE 6: 27-36

"But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who ill-treat you. If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic. Give to everyone who asks you, and if any one takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you.

If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' love those who love them. And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' do that. And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' lend to 'sinners', expecting to be repaid in full.

But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

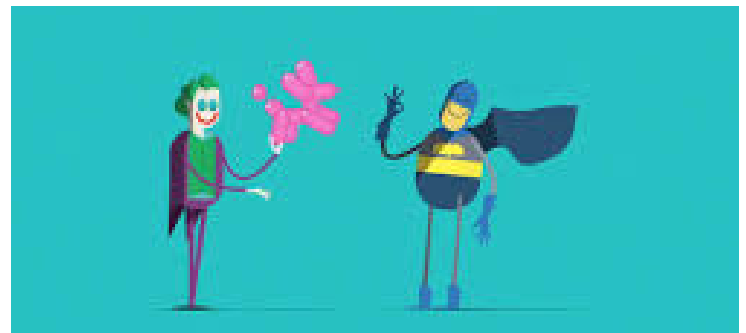


PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

Lord Jesus, following Your example and command, we pray for our enemies today.

Send Your love flowing through us, and forgive us for holding on to anything that could hinder our prayers. We release any unforgiveness, thoughts of revenge, or hateful emotions. Then give us wisdom as we seek how to bless, to love and to pray for our enemies.

Amen



WHAT'S ON?

Friday: Breakfast with God
Friday and Saturday: Year 10 and 11
Flame Congress (London)



Something to think about...

A man who had reached his 100th birthday was being interviewed by a reporter. "What are you most proud of?" the reporter asked. "Well," said the man, "I don't have an enemy in the world." "What a beautiful thought! How inspirational!" said the reporter. "Yep," added the man, "I outlived every last one of them."

Is that your approach to dealing with your enemies? Is it just to avoid and ignore them, hoping that you outlive and outlast them? Maybe you secretly hope and plan and pray for bad things to happen to them. Or maybe you take a more active stance towards your enemies: gossip about them and spread lies about them.

Can you think of a situation when you have done this? Maybe it is resolved now, or maybe it is still ongoing. As we continue to think about this theme this week, keep this person or people in mind and pray for them, even when it is difficult to do so.

"Love. Peace is the unconditional acceptance, genuine love, and earnest nurturing of ALL God's children. To have peace you must seek the best even for your enemies. To have peace you must really love!"



"It's true, God the Father is merciful, and you? Are you merciful, are you merciful with people who have hurt you? Or who do not love you? Pray for the ones who hurt me? Yes because it changes lives."



Something to talk about...

Talk to the person next you to about what loving our enemies looks like.

1. Do good- We are called to do good to those who hate us. How can we do good to those who hate us?
2. Bless those who curse you- This calls us to respond to those that say horrible things to or about us, with loving words, words of kindness. How easy is this to do? Is this something we have done?
3. Pray for those who mistreat you- The actions and words of some people are not things to be forgotten about, so we are called to pray to God for their conversion, so that they realise that they have not acted or spoken to people in the right way. Is there someone that might be praying for our conversion? Have we, or are we, being unkind to someone and we need to change our ways? Is there someone we should pray for, to help them realise that they are not acting in the right or kind way?

Something to do...

List at least six ways you can demonstrate love to those who are not easy to love. Think of one person in particular and make a plan to show love for that person this week. Write it down somewhere and take it home with you. Share your plan with someone at home. During the week, keep a note of your daily efforts to love and the results. At the end of the week, ask yourself how this activity has changed you.