

## Matthew 5 - Rules of Engagement - Week 5 - March 30th

This week, we are going to finish up our study with what should be one of our favorite topics in the Bible: LOVE. Or, to be more specific, we are going to be talking about The Power of Love. Matthew 5:27 and beyond are about loving one another, what that looks like to the world, and how powerful it is.

For those of you who missed any of the last 4 weeks, remember, you can view them at [www.kollidenow.com](http://www.kollidenow.com). Just click on the VIDEO tab on the home-page.

### **Ok, week 5 - Rules of Engagement**

Let's start with the definitions of Love. There are 4 kinds: Eros, Storge, Phileo, and Agape.

- Eros is sexual love or desire. Eros is passion; the type of passion that absorbs itself into the mind and emotions based on body chemistry. The basic idea of Eros is self satisfaction. Although it is directed at another person, the idea behind it is, "this is what makes me happy." Eros looks for what it can receive, not necessarily give.
- Storge is family love. Simple.

- Phileo is an ardent and passionate affection that we have for people. Normally described as “brotherly love”. Remember in John 21 when Jesus asked Peter 3 times if he loved Him? The first 2 times, Jesus was asking, “do you Agape me?” Peter answered: “I phileo you.” The final time, Jesus met Peter where he was and asked, “do you Phileo Me?” Now, however, that we have Holy Spirit, we don’t have Peter’s excuse.
- Agape = what we normally refer to as the God kind of Love. We see the difference between the two in the life of Peter. Peter couldn’t answer Jesus that he Agape loved Him. He could just affirm that he loved Jesus with a brotherly love. Later, after receiving the Holy Spirit, Peter would be able to genuinely demonstrate the agape - type of love, serving others throughout his lifetime and making the ultimate sacrifice in martyrdom.

AGAPE is best described in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8  
(Amplified):

*4 Love endures long and is patient and kind; love never is envious nor boils over with jealousy, is not boastful or vainglorious, does not display itself haughtily. 5 It is not conceited (arrogant and inflated with pride); it is not rude (unmannerly) and does not act unbecomingly. Love (God’s love in us) does not insist on its own rights or its own way, for it is not self-seeking; it is not touchy or fretful or resentful; it takes*

*no account of the evil done to it [it pays no attention to a suffered wrong]. 6 It does not rejoice at injustice and unrighteousness, but rejoices when right and truth prevail. 7 Love bears up under anything and everything that comes, is ever ready to believe the best of every person, its hopes are fadeless under all circumstances, and it endures everything [without weakening]. 8 Love never fails [never fades out or becomes obsolete or comes to an end]...*

**That type of love seems impossible, and it is, without God.** If you want a deeper study of love, go to my website and under the STUDY tab, find the teaching: Love: The First Fruit. It's an in depth study on the subject of Love and I think you can get a lot out of it.

When I talk about love from this point forward, I'm talking about Agape, and now that we are coming to the end of the spaghetti noodle, let's connect what we've learned so far with Agape - with Love.

#### THE BEATITUDES:

- We've learned that the Beatitudes, are the Constitution of the Kingdom of Heaven. They are the 9 principles of living that we are to abide by on this earth.
- The Lord recently gave me something else about the Beatitudes while I was thinking about this lesson. He called them the Language of Love.

- He is Love, and we speak His language when we live by the Beatitudes. This is the language we speak to the world and He hears it and is glad.
- When we are poor in spirit, when we mourn, when we are meek, when we hunger and thirst after righteousness, when we are merciful and pure in heart, when we are the peacemakers, when we are persecuted for Him, and when men revile, persecute, and lie on us, when we adhere to these 9 principles of living, this is us saying to God, ***“I agree with your way of doing things, seeing things, and feeling things Lord. I see your footsteps Jesus, and I’m going to walk in them, committing myself to look just like You to the world. I know this way brings suffering, but I trust You to bring me through each test of my faith in these 9 areas, stronger in faith and walking in greater intimacy with You.”***
- Because living this way requires so much sacrifice and humility, we are constantly in His face, while on our knees, needing His strength to endure and come out of each testing victoriously.
- These 9 principles then become, not just how we act and react in and to the world, but they become our greatest weapons in staying close to God, staying in His presence, which is abiding in His love because it requires so much sacrifice and humility and those things aren’t really possible for us without an intimate connection with Him.

- We cannot live out the Beatitudes if we are not abiding in His love, and we cannot abide in His love without living out the Beatitudes. They must become our lifestyle.
- We must learn the language of the Kingdom, the language of Love so that we can speak to the world Him with our lives.

### SALT & LIGHT:

- God is love, and we show His love to the world by being the flavor that points them to Jesus and the light that brings them out of darkness, into His presence.
- If we are not out there, in the world, they cannot partake of our flavor or experience the light that we bring.
- If we are not out there in the world, and notice I said IN the world, not OF the world. We are OF heaven, citizens of God's kingdom, BUT, we live here and we should be out there, showing them the Love of a Father to His children and a Savior to His Bride so that they will desire Him and love Him back in return.

### THE LAW & THE PROPHETS:

- I say again, God is love.
- How we love HIM, is expressed in our adherence to the Law & the Prophets, or basically, our adherence to all of His commandments.

- Jesus came to fulfill the law and the prophets, and remember, that word fulfill doesn't just mean complete. It also means to cause God's will to be obeyed.
- We are not to depend on His grace to cover our habitual sins, rather, we are to walk in His grace, which is His inspiration, His impulse working in us, and His strength, all of which help us endure trials so that we come out of them without giving in to sin.
- He says, "if you love Me, keep My commandments."
- He says, "if you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love."

### ANGER:

- God is love. When we stay away from anger, that deep feeling of wrath, indignation, temper, violent emotion, and agitation of the soul against your Brother, that you just can't let go.
- That type of anger, is the language of Hell, it's the language that separates us from God. It is not the language of love that we should all be speaking with our lives.
- We all get angry, but holding onto anger is what I'm talking about here. It harms your spirit and can provoke your brother whom you are angry with, to fall into this same abyss that leads them away from God.

- I say anger is the language of Hell, and not love, because when it abides deep like this word indicates, it makes us lash out at our brothers and sisters in the Lord.
- Anger makes us call them things like senseless, empty headed, and worthless. Remember, the word Raca? God can interpret our insults against our Brothers, who are His children, as us calling them demon possessed.
- We can't even make an offering when we are treating our Brothers this way, when we are feeling this way about our brothers.
- Whether you have a reason to be angry or not, God tells us to let it go, to walk in love like He did, and take the hit, take the wrong, take the spikes in your hands and feet. That is love.

So, I hope you see how what we've learned in the past four weeks is all connected to love.

### **Now, let's go to Matthew 5:48:**

In the Passion Translation it reads: *"Since you are children of a perfect Father in heaven, you are to be perfect like Him."*

- Thank God that word "perfect" doesn't mean that we won't make mistakes or get things wrong.

- Perfect - brought to its end, finished, wanting nothing necessary to completeness, consummate, human integrity, and virtue. The root word is purpose, eternal, and that by which a thing is finished.
- The Message Version Sums it up: *"In a word, what I'm saying is, Grow up. You're kingdom subjects. Now live like it. Live out your God-created identity. Live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you."*

Why am I starting at the end instead of verse 27 where we left off? Because the end connects verses 27 - 47 to love. It is the sum of everything that was said in these 20 verses. Remember, the word perfect means "brought to its end, finished, wanting nothing necessary to completeness, consummate, human integrity, and virtue. The root word is purpose, eternal, and that by which a thing is finished.



- When God says to be perfect like He is perfect, He is telling us to remember some things:
  1. Remember what Jesus said on the Cross: “it is finished”. He became the perfect sacrifice that gave us eternal access to God. He was the healing balm that made right what Adam & Eve did in the Garden.
  2. So, if we remember that “it is finished”, that we lack nothing necessary to bring us to completeness because He already brought everything to its end, we can then walk in our eternal purpose on this earth.
  3. He is telling us to be like Him, and He is LOVE. And, how does He love? I see His love as more like Aslan than The Punisher? If you haven't read any C.S Lewis or seen the Narnia movies, then you won't know who Aslan is. Try it this weekend. Also, if you're not a Marvel fan, you may not know The Punisher, but the name pretty much speaks for itself.
    1. When I compare His love to Aslan, I'm saying, “when He rebukes, it's just to show us what's wrong in our lives, when He chastens, it's just to instruct us how to live better, and when He corrects, He's just showing us the right way to do things.
    2. His love is not like The Punisher. That type of God rebukes to convict, expose, and shame. He chastens with calamity or even

a whip, and He corrects with judgement.  
That's not how God loves us. That's not  
how we should love other people.

Before I get into the next verses, that talk about adultery, divorce, not being people of our word, and loving our enemies, I want to address something I said last week. I made the statement that we should look at what we consider the little sins in our lives, the ones we take lightly since most of us are Vikings, out there raping, pillaging, and murdering. I want to change that a bit and say that we should look at the things we consider little or inconsequential sins in our lives like gossiping and lying, the same way we would look at things like murder. Why? Because most of us aren't killing people, we must look at murder as really bad. Imagine what the Body of Christ would look like if we looked at gossip the same way we did murder? If it became just as rare among us?

So, I'm not here to bring judgement, that's not my job, but we are supposed to let the Word judge us and provoke us to change. His Word is supposed to bring conviction of our sin so that we can move away from that sin. So, don't feel condemned by what I talk about next. If it applies to you, use it as a teaching moment like I did for those things that applied to me. If it used to apply to you, and you've asked for forgiveness already, then stomp on any

feelings of guilt and shame, and don't remember what He doesn't.

Also, in these verses, Jesus goes beyond the wrong of our actions to the wrong of our heart motives. So that even if we are clean of any wrong actions, we still can't walk around like self righteous Pharisees. Our hearts are also important to Him. There isn't one person on this ZOOM who isn't going to have to get something cleaned up in their lives or in their hearts. So, if you're feeling some type of way, you're not alone.

VERSES 27 - 28 talks about adultery. Jesus is telling us that it's not just that act that we should be careful not to commit, but if we even look at a person with lust, we have committed the act in our heart.

- Did you know that the root word for adultery in the Greek is a metaphor for one who is faithless toward God, or ungodly.
- Adultery is unlawful and its morally harmful to the person whom the adultery is committed against.
- In the Hebrew, adultery is looked at as one being drawn away to idolatry, to worshipping other gods.
- It's an unloving act against your spouse and your God, and everyone else connected to your family.

- This is true whether you've done it or thought about it. And I want to stress that last part. We condemn people who commit the act, but God looks at lusting for someone the same as committing the act. Thank God there is forgiveness for both.
- But God tells us to be perfect like He is perfect. So how do we do this when temptation comes?
- Look at verses 29 - 30: "If your right eye offends you, pluck it out, and if your right hand offends you, cut it off. It is better to live without that eye and / or that hand, than for the whole body to be cast into hell."
- So, in other words, that thing that is causing you to walk outside of love, to commit this unlawful act that is harmful to you and your whole family, get rid of that thing that is causing you to fall. Cut it off and throw it away.
- If it's the computer, become accountable to someone who can look at your browsing history.
- If it's your secretary, help him or her find another job and hire someone that you could never be attracted to.
- If it's television, stop watching those types of shows. I started watching Korean and Chinese dramas and comedies because there's no nudity and the language is cleaner, much cleaner.
- So, find something else to watch, something that won't drive you to temptation.

- Be perfect as He is perfect. We have it in us to walk in perfection because we have Holy Spirit in us.
- Love walks in perfection.

VERSES 31-32 are talking about divorce. The Jewish men had gotten into the habit of getting divorces for reasons other than adultery. This is an unloving act for many reasons:

- First, God hates divorce, and for them to take what He hates so lightly as to divorce for frivolous reasons was an affront to Him.
- Second, when they divorced their wives for those frivolous reasons, you cause not only HER to commit adultery, but also the person who marries her. That sin spread to 3 people because that person would to stay committed to their marriage.
- Love doesn't cause others to sin.
- Love doesn't take God's laws lightly.

VERSES 33-37 talks about the act of making a promise with an oath. Their ancestors were taught, "never swear an oath that you don't intend to keep, but keep your vows to the Lord God." Jesus however says not to bind yourself by taking an oath at all. He says not to swear by heaven, earth, Jerusalem, or even their own heads.

He says, instead of making a vow, just a simple “yes” or “no” will suffice. He says that anything beyond that “yes” or “no” springs from a deceiver.

I love the message version which says, “you don’t make your words true by embellishing them with religious lace. In making your speech sound more religious, it becomes less true.”

What does this have to do with love?

- If our walk is just based on religious talk that we never follow through with, no one will follow us, which means they won’t see Jesus in us.
- If our modus operandi, our way of doing things, is full of deception, then who will believe our talk about the realness and goodness of God?
- When our reputations are damaged, we damage His reputation to the world.
- Deception and religion keep us away from God, who is love.
- When we are walking in deception and religion, we are not walking in love, and if we are not walking in love, can we call ourselves His children?
- Our righteousness is supposed to exceed that of the Pharisees and religious scholars, but if we walk in religious and deception, we become just like them. John the Baptist called them a Generation of Vipers. Is that how we want to be known?

- No! So just let your “yes” be yes and your “no” be no.

VERSES 38-47 are all about loving your enemies. How do we love our enemies?

- “If someone strikes you, stand there and take it. Don’t hit back at all.
- If someone takes you to court and sues you for the shirt off your back, gift-wrap your best coat and make a present of it.
- If someone takes unfair advantage of you, use the occasion to practice the servant life. A mixture of the Message Version & the Passion Translations says it like this: *“no more tit for tat stuff. Live generously, share what you have with those who ask for help, and don’t lose your heart to the one who comes to borrow from you.”*
- We are told to Love our enemies. To let them bring out the best, not the worst in us. To bless them when they curse us, to do something good to the one who hates us, and to pray for the ones who persecute us.
- Why? Because that is how the Lord says our identity as God’s children will be revealed. It’s not in what we say, but what we do to those in the world that reveal our identity. And we are not some superhero that has to keep their identity a secret. If the world doesn’t know us as one of His, then something is wrong with the way we are living.

- If you watch the Marvel movies, think about how Tony Stark revealed to the world that he was Iron Man. That's how we should be about our identity as children of God.
- Loving our enemies shows the love of God to them.

When our lives agree with what I've just laid out in verses 27-47, verse 48 is what happens, and I'll read it again, but this time in the Amplified Version: "You, therefore, will be perfect (growing into spiritual maturity both in mind and character, actively integrating godly values into your daily life, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

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And that, my friends, is the end of the noodle. Now, I have some questions for you. Please don't be shy about answering them. I think there's value in hearing the stories of our brothers and sisters in the Lord. Their testimony can give us strength.

1. What do you think is the most difficult Beatitude to live out and why?
2. What are some things you can do when you feel like your salt has lost its savor and your light is underneath the bed rather than on a lamp stand?
3. When you read or hear the verse, "if you love Me, keep My commandments," what feelings does that invoke in you?
4. Have you had a deep, abiding anger in your heart against someone in the past? How did you handle it?
5. Have you ever had to turn the other cheek? Describe the reason you had to do this and how it felt?

## MY ANSWERS:

1. For me, it's the persecution one. I'm 49 and I have been overweight my whole life, so through all of school, including college, I've had to deal with nasty comments, looks, and wrong behavior from the people around me. At one point in my life I was almost 500 lbs. So it was difficult for me to get around, to fit in the seats in some of my classes, and people saw that and I was ridiculed for it. That's a type of persecution, and I got used to it. I just took it, but my reason wasn't because I loved Jesus, it was because I secretly thought that I deserved to be treated that way. That's not how God wants us to deal with persecution. So, for me, when I'm persecuted, I have to try hard to remember that it's not something I deserve, that I don't have to be ashamed of who I am, despite how I'm being treated, and to take the abuse with a loving heart toward myself and those who are persecuting me.
2. Read the Bible, pray, meditate, put on some music and worship Him, confess any sins that I've been holding onto, repent, and receive His forgiveness.
3. Honestly, my first feeling is guilt. I forget that I've been forgiven and that He doesn't even remember my sin. I have to quickly remind myself of those things so that I don't let the enemy rob me of the assurance that I do indeed love Him.

4. Whenever I feel my anger for someone getting to that point, I pray for them and I declare God's love for them, and I pray for their destiny to be fulfilled. I don't mention in my prayer anything about how they offended me and how I feel about it. I fight in prayer to rid myself of those feelings so I'm not robbed of my blessing to be with Him instead of separated from Him.
5. I can't talk about specifics, but yes, I've had to turn the other cheek and it doesn't feel good. It hurts, it pricked my pride, and provoked me to want to fight back. Turning the other cheek is an act of love for the one who hurt you, and toward God who also turned the other cheek many times while He was on this earth. It took a while, and I had to keep telling myself that I forgave those who hurt me, and eventually it became true.

THE END: Remember, all of the lessons can be viewed online on my website: [kollidenow.com](http://kollidenow.com). If you got anything out of the series that you think might be beneficial to someone else, I encourage you to share with your family and friends how to access the videos.

Let's pray.