

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

(Luke 6:27-36)

Many years ago there was a TV series and more recently a few movies called Mission Impossible. The story line always presented a top secret mission that seemed beyond the realm of possibility. Each one of the episodes began with the well-known words, "if you decide to accept this mission..."

Jesus in continuing His sermon on the plain, tells us of another impossible mission but does not make it optional for us as His followers, rather He commands us to do it. We are commanded to love our enemies.

One has said, "we find it hard enough at times to love our friends very well, how could we ever love our enemies?" Our natural response to those who hurt and abuse us is to hate them and to wish them dead, not love them.

FOUR OBSERVATIONS HELPING US TO PRACTICE THE IMPOSSIBLE

MISSION OF LOVING OUR ENEMIES. Only by the power and presence of Christ in our lives are we able to do this radical thing!

I. Jesus Calls Us As His Disciples To Love Our Enemies. (vv.27-28) (4-Fold)

A. In General we are required by Him to love them. He uses the Greek word "agape" for love.

1. It is not any of the other possible words for "love":

it is not "storge" ...which is a natural affection, for this is very unnatural.

it is not "eros" ...which is romantic love, this is not something you "fall into..."

it is not "philia" ...which is brotherly-friendship relational love, these are not friends.

2. The word "agape" means choosing to love the unworthy, choosing to be a loving person.

3. We all have enemies. Some are public, and others are private.

Public ones: an ungodly politician, a reckless driver, a terrorist, etc.

Private ones: a demeaning boss, an angry neighbor, a scheming co-worker, a spouse...

"Who is your enemy? He or she is the one Jesus is calling you to love.

B. Specifically, DO GOOD to those who hate you. We must love them with our actions.

C. Specifically, BLESS those who curse you. (28a) This command moves us from action to words.

1. The idea of blessing is to return gentle words of grace to those who curse us.

2. To "curse" means to damn or invoke harm upon us.

D. Specifically, PRAY for those who abuse you. (28b) This involves harsh treatment...

Intercede for them by asking God to rescue them from sin. Forgive them.

Prayer is the key. It is so hard to hate someone when we continue to pray for them!

