

Title: The Master's Mighty Message – Part 6

Text: Luke 6:32-36

Date: January 4, 2026

Proverbs 3:16 tells us that "Long life is in the right hand of wisdom and true riches and honor in the left hand of understanding." So, if you have your copy of God's Word with you this morning, I hope you do, please turn to Luke 6. We're going to begin looking at verses 32-38 this morning, which is a passage that concludes Jesus' teaching on the radical love that ought to be seen in those who have been born again through faith in him. In verses 27-28 of Luke 6, if you remember, Jesus showed us the reflections of divine love, where he called on us to reflect the very love of God that we've received by loving our enemies, doing good to those who hate us, blessing those who curse us, and praying for those who abuse us. And then in verses 29-31, Jesus showed us the reactions of divine love, where we saw that our commitment to show love to others is to be courageously unending, no matter what they might do, whether they strike us on the cheek, take away our cloak, or borrow something and never give it back. We're not to respond in kind, we're always to react in love.

Now as I stated last week, those are the first commands that Jesus delivers in this Gospel of Luke. And none of what he says is easy. In fact, as I highlighted last time, it is absolutely impossible to do what Jesus tells us to do here apart from the saving power of Jesus Christ and the transforming power of the Holy Spirit within us. What Jesus is telling us here, to put it simply, is a direct challenge to our natural and former ways of thinking, and therefore it is extremely challenging and hard. And so, the question that you have to ask yourself when you come to hard passages like this is the question that is built into every single child who's ever been born. The most famous question, why? Why should I do any of this? Why should I love the way that Christ tells me to love? Why should I love those people who hate me? Why should I do good to them? Why should I bless people who curse me and pray for people who abuse me? What are the reasons for showing this type of divine love towards others? This is an important question because why we do things is often just as important as what we do.

As God reminded the prophet Samuel in 1 Samuel 16:7, "*man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks at the,*" what, "*the heart.*" "*And though the ways of a man may look pure in his own eyes,*" as Proverbs 16:2 warns us, "*it is the Lord that weighs the spirit.*" He discerns the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And therefore, we need to remember that why we do things is often just as important as what we do. And Jesus knows this. That is why throughout this sermon he's been telling us why we ought to desire the inward transformation that only he can bring.

For example, back in verses 20-23, Jesus told us why we ought to find a yearning hope in him. And that is because those who find their yearning hope in him obtain an eternal kingdom, obtain eternal satisfaction, eternal joy, and eternal rewards. In other words, Jesus tells us why. Though Jesus might want us to be physically in the dark this morning, he does not want us to be spiritually in the dark. He wants us to know why he tells us to do what he tells us to do. And so here in verses 32-38, Jesus likewise tells us why we

should demonstrate and reflect his radical divine love towards others. And that is because, as we're going to see this morning, starting this morning, it produces a desirable reputation in us, as verses 32-36 will make clear.

And then second, it produces a desirable response from others, as verses 37-38 will show. And so, we're to reflect Christ's love towards others, even those who are the most hostile towards us. Because when we show his love, it produces a desirable reputation in us and a desirable response from others. And this morning, we're just going to consider that first reason for why we ought to obey what Christ has already showed us and why we ought to demonstrate radical love towards those who hate us. And it is because it produces a desirable reputation that all of us as followers of Jesus Christ should want to have. When we start loving as others, as Christ has loved us, with a relentless, radical, and redemptive love, others start to take notice and they begin viewing us differently in an entirely good way. And we're going to see that this distinct and derived reputation is critical in having a gospel witness to the lost in our day. If we want people to receive Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, if we want them to receive Christ, then we must have the reputation of Christ. And that desirable reputation begins right here with our love. And that's what we'll see today in verses 32-36. The first reason why we ought to love people with a relentlessly redemptive love is because it produces a desirable reputation.

So, with that in mind, please look on your copy of God's Word as I read our passage before us today from Luke 6:32-36. And if you can, please stand with me out of reverence and respect for the Word of God. Luke 6:32-36. Luke, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, writes these words.

"If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."

This is the Word of God whose commandments are sure, though others persecute us with falsehood.

Let us pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you so much for the opportunity we have over these next few moments to look into your Word. Father, I pray that you would show us and drive into our hearts the great reasons why we ought to show the love of Christ towards those who hate us, belittle us, mistreat us, and abuse us. Father, I pray that you would work in us by your Spirit through your Word, a greater Christlikeness, so that Jesus Christ, who is the saving sovereign of all, would be received as their saving sovereign by yet more and more people. May we be tools to that end as we become reflections of our Savior's love.

We ask this in Jesus' name, amen.
You may be seated.

So, after Jesus teaches on the reflections and the reactions of divine love, he then lays out for us in verses 32-38 the reasons for divine love. And the first reason why we ought to reflect his divine love towards others is Jesus says it produces a desirable reputation in verses 32-36. And the reputation that divine love produces that is desirable for us is because it is distinct, and it is derived. That is why it is a desirable reputation, because it is distinct and derived.

So, the first way that divine love produces a desirable reputation in us is it produces a distinct reputation, and that is in verses 32-34. It produces a distinct reputation. And this is important. You see, Scripture teaches that we who have been united to Christ by faith have been made fundamentally different and distinct in our nature from those in the world. As 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a,"* what, *"new creation. The old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."* This happens when we trust in Christ. We are spiritually born again by the Spirit of God from above. We are, as the Bible puts it, regenerated. We are given a new life, filled with new thoughts, new desires, new ambitions, new affections, and a new hope.

And so, though we still live in a sinful, fallen, and unredeemed flesh that daily wants to return to its former ways of living. Our heart, our inner man, has been transformed by God's grace and we as a people who have trusted in Christ are distinct. As 1 Peter 2:9 puts it, *"You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession."* By God's grace, we who have trusted in Jesus Christ have been chosen, set apart, and made distinct from the rest of the world. We are distinct. And God's admonition to us throughout the pages of scripture consistently is that we are to live like it. As Ephesians 4:17 puts it, *"You must no longer walk as the Gentiles walk.... but rather we must walk worthy of the calling to which we have been called."* We are to walk worthy of the Gospel of Christ. Why? Because when we live in a distinctly different way, we are a testimony to the reality and saving grace of God that's found in Jesus Christ.

As 1 Peter 2:12 says, *"Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable,"* why? *"so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation."* Possessing a distinct reputation has a direct salvific effect upon the lives of those who are around us. It is when they see that we are different that they want to know the deliverer that we name. They begin to ask questions, why? And so, we as believers should desire to obtain this distinct reputation in the eyes of others. It's okay as a Christian to be different. In fact, it is a calling. And Jesus makes it abundantly clear that one of the ways that we cultivate this distinct reputation among the lost is by our love.

If we love others with the love that we have been loved with in Christ, then people are going to sit up and take notice. But if we ignore Christ's teachings in this passage, then we will lose any hope of having a distinct reputation and gospel witness to a watching world. And so, Jesus highlights this point for us by giving us three parallel illustrations, all of which underline the importance of what he's already taught us back in verses 27-31. And I won't belabor this.

So, for example, at the beginning of verse 27, if you remember, Jesus said, *"Love your enemies."* Well, now he tells us why. Verse 32, *"If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them."* And then, if you remember again, at the end of verse 27, Jesus taught us, *"do good to those who hate you."* Well, why is that so important? Well, now at the end of verse 33, he says, because

"if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? Even sinners do the same." And then finally, if you remember in verse 30, Jesus said, "Give to everyone who begs from you, and from the one who takes away your goods do not demand them back." Again, why is this so critical? Look at verse 34, "And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount."

See, in each one of these illustrations, Jesus is making the same basic point, which is this, the only type of love that is truly distinct and truly divine, that will cause the world to take notice, is a love that is characteristically and completely unselfish. It's not focused on reward or reciprocation. It just loves freely and with no strings attached. That is divine love. And that is what makes it so different and so distinct. So as Jesus posits here, if you and I, who claim to be followers of Jesus Christ, only love those who love us back, then how is that worthy of recognition? If we only do good to those who have done good to us, how does that make us any different from those around us? And if we only do favors for those who we think will do favors back to us, then how are we any different than the culture that is around us? Think about it. Jesus is calling on us to do something radically different and distinct as his people.

We can't put our heads, as I was thinking about it, you and I cannot put our heads on our pillows tonight and think, I am really showing myself to be a disciple of Jesus because I love my family members and friends. I am kind and I do good to those who are kind and do good to me. And I scratch the backs of people who I know will scratch me back. Listen, that is not the selfless love of God in the Gospel. That is the selfish love of man in his natural state.

And so, Jesus is waking us up here and he is warning us, listen, even unredeemed sinners love in this way. And so, if that is all you are doing, if all you are doing is loving, doing good, and helping those who will do all of those same things back to you, then how in the world are you walking any different? How are you showing that you are my disciples? And in fact, that is the exact question that Jesus repeatedly asks in these three verses when he says the exact same sentence over and over again. That when you are loving like this, what benefit or credit is that to you? You know what word that is in the Greek? It is *charis*, it is grace.

Jesus is literally asking, if you only love those who love you back, how does that show that you have received the grace of God at all? If you only do good and help those who help you back, how are you showing that you are saved? If your love is limited to mutually rewarding or reciprocal arrangements, then you are no better than a pagan idolater. Because even sinners limit their love in all of those selfish ways. And so, Jesus is saying, if you want to show the difference that God has made in your life by his grace, then you must show it by your love. That you love others from a higher principle, one that is not confined to self-benefit. That you love people even if they will not love you back.

And that is the first reason why you should love your enemies and do good to those who hate you, to bless those who curse you, to pray for those who abuse you. This is the first reason why you ought to love others as Christ has loved you because it develops that distinct reputation. He loved you, and you can give nothing back to him that he himself does not first already possess. And yet he loves you anyway. You have

returned no favors back on God. And yet he showers his blessings upon you each and every day. Because that's who he is, and that's how we show ourselves to be his people, which is where Jesus goes next. We ought to love as Christ has loved us because it produces a distinct reputation.

And second, it's desirable because it develops a derived reputation. That's in verses 35-36. See, our lives and our loves as believers should be radically different and distinct from the lives and loves of those who are around us. Not because there is something inherently different about ourselves but rather because there has been something inherently different done to us by God's grace. Namely, we have been redeemed. We have been set free from the sin and selfishness that once enslaved us. We've been adopted by God's grace into God's family. We've been given the status of sons. And we are now able to live as children who bear our father's likeness.

As 1 John 3:2 says, *"Beloved, we are God's children now."* And that's why we are to live differently, because we belong differently. As 1 John 2:6, *"we who belong to Christ ought to walk in the same manner in which he walked."* We who have been made sons of God and joiners of Christ ought to live like our Heavenly Father and we ought to live like our Heavenly Brother. We ought to have a derived reputation where people look at us and say, wow, you look so much like your father. You look so much like your brother. And one of the greatest ways that we do that as believers is by our love. We show to a watching world the derived reputation of belonging to the family of God by our love. It is our birthmark. Love is our birthmark.

As Jesus says in verse 35, *"But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return."* This is what makes the love described by Christ here so otherworldly and divine. It is because it is selfless, and it expects nothing in return. This is profoundly challenging. Love your enemies, do good to them, lend to them, and do it all without desiring or expecting to receive anything at all in return. In fact, the moment that our love becomes dependent on the reciprocal actions of another, we have ceased to love as God loves. And we are now operating on the ordinary level of common unredeemed humanity.

And we've all known people like this, types of people like this I'm sure, where everything that that person does for you always comes with a string attached. They're the types of people that you never want to have help you, because you know that you're going to have to pay for it later. We all know these types of people. We've experienced them, and what Jesus is saying is, don't you ever be one of those people. Have you ever asked someone to help you in some way and been bothered when they haven't been able to help you? Have you ever thought about a family member or a friend and thought, after all I've done for you? I did all of this for you back then, the least you could do is bend over backwards and do all of this for me now. You know what that is? Selfishness, reciprocation, cardinal love. And Jesus says, if you want to show yourself as sons and daughters of God, you've got to reject all of that. And you've got to start to love your enemies and do good and lend, rejecting nothing at all in return, ever. Demonstrate God's relentless selfless love to everyone.

Can I just say that the word that I give to you, I also am under. And this has got to be one of the most demanding and uncomfortable commands ever to proceed from the lips of King Jesus when you truly let it sit on you. As C.S. Lewis put it, if you are looking for a religion to make you feel comfortable, I certainly do not recommend Christianity. Why? Because true Christianity calls us by God's grace to an utterly divine

and higher way of living. Now you wouldn't know this by listening to most of today's modern American churches, where the primary message is, come in, be comfortable. Don't worry we won't pray too long; we won't sing too long; we definitely won't preach too long. We just want you to know that Jesus has a great personality, and if you listen to this one point, you can have a great personality too.

This passage rips the facade off of that whole false Jesus in our nation today, because here we see Jesus look upon his own, whom he has transformed by his grace, and he calls on them by all the grace and love of God that he's given to them to do the most demanding things imaginable. Love your enemies relentlessly. Do good to those who are hating you. Bless and desire the absolute best for those who curse you. Pray fervently for those who abuse you. Give expecting nothing in return, with no strings ever attached. And keep on doing this, day in and day out, to develop a distinct and derived reputation for the glory of God.

Because look at what he says in the end of verse 35. This is why we do it. End of verse 35. If we do this *"expecting nothing in return,"* he says, *"your reward will be great."* We'll look at that more next week in verses 37-38. This is our main point, *"your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High."* Wow! That's got to be the greatest title that a believer could ever be called, *"sons of the Most High."* In other words, you will show yourselves to be the children of God in this way. I need to be clear. Jesus is not saying that by loving your enemies in this way, somehow work your way into salvation and beyond being a son of God. No, not at all.

Titus 3:5 says, *"it is not by works of righteousness that we have done, it is according to his mercy that God saved us."* The mercy that is available to all through faith in Jesus Christ, apart from our works. That's how you become a son or daughter of God. You've got to trust in Jesus Christ. And it is when you are placed into him, into the only begotten Son of God, you are adopted into God's family and begin to reflect his character. So, this is important to remember because you cannot bear the likeness of the family until you become a member of the family. And the only way that happens is by receiving the forgiveness and grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

So, Jesus is not saying that by loving this way you become sons of God, but rather by loving this way you show yourself to be the sons of God. You will possess a derived reputation that matches God's own character. For as Jesus reminds us at the end of verse 35, what is your father like, you who claim him as your heavenly father? End of verse 35, *"for he is kind."* *"He is kind to the ungrateful and the evil."* Question, up until the day of final judgment, how does God treat the ungrateful people in this world? How does God treat the evil people of this world? How does God treat the unrepentant people? Answer, with infinite mercy and immeasurable kindnesses.

Think about it. We actually started thinking about it during Sunday school this morning. Though billions do not honor him, nor give thanks to him for his great benefits, nevertheless, seed time and harvest, summer and winter, they never cease. God's mercies are new every morning. You're here this morning. His loving kindness never comes to an end. His compassion never fails. So, it ought to be for all those who profess to be his children. God treats the ungrateful, evil, and unrepentant with mercy and kindness, and

therefore as his sons and daughters, we are to follow in his footsteps. We should exemplify our father's behavior and never tire in doing good to others in great kindness and love.

As Jesus says in verse 36, the last verse, he says, *"Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."* We're to be kind, beloved. We live in such a harsh world, such a blunt world, such a cruel world. We are to be kind. We are to be merciful, even to the most ungrateful and the evil of enemies. We are to be, as Ephesians 5:1 says, *"imitators of God, as his beloved children."* Kind, merciful, loving as those who have received his kindness, mercy, and love. This is who God is known as, and this is how we should be known as also. Not as relentlessly harsh individuals, but as relentlessly kind individuals who are tender in heart and compassion and gentle and good and merciful in actions and in speech to others. Even our enemies.

For as one person so aptly put it, to return evil for good is devilish, to return good for good is human, but to return good for evil is divine. As the Apostle John wrote in his epistles, *"whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.... Whoever does good is from God."* Therefore, it is when we love like this that we show ourselves to be sons of our Heavenly Father. And so, I think that that has got to be at least in part, part of the reward that Jesus has just talked about here in verse 35. To have people look at us and say, you look so very much like your father. Isn't that what we live for? To glorify God with our lives, to please our Heavenly Father and to look like him.

I know not everyone had this experience growing up, but for me I looked up to my dad as a child. My dad was my hero in a lot of ways, and he still is. Now I knew it wasn't perfect, what father is, but in my eyes, he was strong, brave, kind, good, faithful, loving, patient, thoughtful, funny. He was someone that I greatly admired. And so, when the older ladies would come up to me at church and say, oh you're starting to look so much like your dad. That does something to a young man. You stand up a little bit straighter, you pull your shoulders back and you feel pretty good about yourself. Why? Because there is nothing greater in the mind of a son than to be like his father whom he admires.

And listen, that can and should be said of us towards our Heavenly Father. When we as Christians start loving others and selflessly giving and doing good to all, it's not about us. It's about looking like our father so that all the world will take notice. And when we do, they're going to start thinking, that person's a Christian, aren't they? Boy, I can tell. Why? Because they look so much like their Father in Heaven. And they'll be drawn to know more. By our love, we can draw them to ask and to want to know more.

As Dietrich Bonhoeffer once wrote, your life as a Christian should make non-believers question their lack of belief in God. And love is the way that we do it. This is what Jesus is talking about in Matthew 5:16 when he said, live in such a way that they see your good works and give glory to who? *"Your Father who is in heaven."* Love with the selfless, relentless love of God. Develop a distinct and derived reputation and watch the world sit up and take notice.

Perhaps there is someone that you have been striving to reach with the Gospel of Jesus Christ this week. You have shared so many messages, so many words of encouragement, so many words of truth. May I posit a solution. If you are dealing with someone that does not want to hear the message of Christ this

week, strive to show them in a very concrete way the total selfless love of Christ in one particular grand action. And see what the Lord might do with that. This is a challenging and motivating truth. Divine love, faithfully lived out, produces a desirable reputation. A reputation that is distinct from the world and derived from our Father in Heaven. And therefore, in light of this, I just want to make three simple applications from this passage as we close.

First, if you are here this morning and you are not a Christian, please listen. Jesus is not calling you to imitation. He is calling you to salvation. This type of love is not a love that you work up from within, it is something that flows out of a heart that has received it from on high. You cannot live like a child of God until you have been adopted into his family. And the good news is this, the very mercy and love that Jesus commands here from his people is the mercy and the love that he offers to you today.

Praise the Lord. Let there be light.

But you are not saved. You are not saved by loving your enemies. You are saved by trusting in the one who loved his enemies perfectly, even to the point of dying on the cross. Jesus Christ bore the sins of the ungrateful and the evil. He died for rebels like you and like me. And he rose to give new life. And he offers it to you. He offers forgiveness, adoption, and a new heart to all those who come to him. And if you will turn from your sins and trust in Christ today, God will not merely pardon you, he will make you his very own child. Then and only then will this type of love and life and love be possible for you. So, trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as the one who perfectly accomplished and performs this love on your behalf.

Second, for you who are in Christ, this passage speaks to the very heart of our daily living. Christ is calling on you to examine your relationships. Christ is calling on you to examine your reputation this morning. Your reputation at home, your reputation in the workplace, your reputation in your neighborhood, in your church, in your community. Do you have the reputation of being loving, kind, merciful, and selfless to those who, yes, do not deserve it just like you didn't either? Or do you have a reputation of being irritable, harsh, bitter, and selfish? Who has wronged you? Who has disappointed you? Who has taken from you and never repaid? Who has spoken harshly, acted selfishly, or treated you unjustly? Jesus looks at you today and says, love them, do good to them, expect nothing in return, be kind and merciful like your Father in heaven. Not because they deserve it, but because you've received it. And I just want to remind you that Christ never commands what he doesn't supply. The same Father who is kind to the ungrateful and the evil has poured his Spirit into your heart, and you are not being called this morning to manufacture this divine love. You're just being asked to reflect it. And so, look to Christ, abide in him this week, and let his radical love flow through you.

Final application. To us as a church, I want you to consider as members of Grace Chapel, what reputation do we want our church to have? Do we want our community to look at us as they watch us individually throughout the week, knowing that we are followers of Christ and members of this church? Do we want them to look at us and say, Grace Chapel is a group of isolated, miserable, penny-pinching theologians who don't invest in the future and only invest in others when they know that there will be some intentional return? Or do we want them to look at us and say, Grace Chapel is a community of truth? Sons and

daughters of God who shower the radical, redeeming love of God upon others around them and invest richly in the future and in others without limits and without constraints. Do you know the difference between those two reputations comes down to one thing, what do you love and how do you love it? It's love. It all comes down to radical, relentless, redemptive love.

Beloved, the way that our church is going to have an impact for eternity and for the glory of God in our day and in our generation and for generations to come is by carefully heeding Christ's words that he gives in this passage of being selfless, not selfish. And as Colossians 3:14 says, *"above all, putting on love which binds everything together in perfect harmony."* So, for the glory of God, for the good of the lost, and for the joy of belonging to him, let us obtain individually and together this most desirable reputation. Let us be known as sons and daughters of the Most High by how we are kind, gentle, merciful, selfless, and loving towards all, even to the ungrateful and the evil, even to those who can never give a single thing back. For so our loving Father has loved us.

This is the Word of God from Luke 6:32-36, which I consider a great privilege to be able to share with you today, which I now commit to your further study and faithful obedience until Jesus, the Son of the Most High God, returns.

To that end, as the men come forward for communion this morning, let's pray.

Father, we thank you so much for the opportunity we've had today to sit under the preaching of your word. Father, we thank you that even as we sat in darkness, your word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. And I thank you, Father, for reminding us this morning, once again afresh, why Jesus Christ is the light of the world. It's because he shows us the truth of who you are. And when we look upon you in the face of your Son Jesus Christ, we see a face of kindness, of mercy, and of love. Father, we thank you for the salvation and the adoption that you give to sinners who don't deserve it. We thank you, Father, for so many people in this room that we can confess, and we will confess in these next few moments that we have trusted in Christ, that we have been brought into your family, that we can truly call you our Father. Father, I pray that we who have received such kindness and mercy and love would show that to those around us so that we might be of some earthly good as we reflect the love of Christ, and we reflect the character of our Father to a lost and dying world. Father, I pray that by our love we would cause unbelievers to question their lack of belief in you. Give us grace to show this love this week by your power and by your grace.

We ask this in Jesus' name, amen.

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