

# QUESTIONS JESUS ASKED: Whom will you love?

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Michael Swartzentruber, Senior Minister



## Luke 6:27-36

27 'But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. 29 If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. 30 Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. 31 Do to others as you would have them do to you.

32 'If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. 33 If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. 34 If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as

much again. 35 But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. 36 Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

## REFLECT & DISCUSS

1. Read the passage slowly. Then take a deep breath and read it again. What word, phrase, or image stands out to you?
2. Are any of these teachings particularly challenging, troubling, or confusing?
3. This teaching of Jesus is part of his "Sermon on the Plain".
  - a. How do these teachings compare to the more expanded version in Matthew 5-7 (ie, "The Sermon on the Mount")?
  - b. Compare especially Luke 6:36 and Matthew 5:48. How might Luke's "mercy" make sense of Matthew's "be perfect"?
4. In these teachings, "love" is the Greek word *agape*. In the ancient world, this word for love was not as widely used as *eros* (romantic love), *philia* (friendship love), or *storge* (familial love). *Agape* is a type of love that is committed to the well-being of others without regard

**South Elkhorn Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**

4343 Harrodsburg Road, Lexington KY 40513

859-223-1433 [southelkhorncc.org](http://southelkhorncc.org)

to personal cost or transactional benefit. How do you see that love not just as a part of Jesus' teaching, but lived out in his ministry and death?

5. How does Jesus hold his own teaching of *agape* love in tension with his willingness to stand up for those who are exploited, marginalized, and demonized? Are these teachings an invitation for people of faith to just be "doormats" for the greed, hate, and lust for power that are at work in the world?
6. How does thinking about love as an act from a community (not just an individual practice) help you think through those who are challenging for you yourself to love meaningfully or consistently?

7. Some of these teachings have led to troubling applications: some religious people and leaders have thought this meant that it was "godly" to stay in abusive relationships or harmful organizations (to be clear: it does *not*). Can you love people and still erect boundaries to protect your safety? What might love look like in that context?
8. Have you developed any ways of "blessing" (privately or publicly) or praying for hard-to-love people? How do you go about that?
9. What is one teaching from this passage of Jesus that you feel God is calling you to focus on and live out?

## QUESTIONS Lenten Sermon Series

Jesus asked over 300 questions in the gospels. He knew the power and promise of a good question. Lean into the questions Jesus asked, and explore some of the hardest questions you asked.

**March 30 Youth-Led Sunday**

**April 7 Questions You Asked: What About Heaven and Hell?** (Ephesians 1:3-14)

**April 14 One Question Jesus Answered** (Matthew 22:8-11, 34-40)

## LENTEN RESOURCES



Welcome the Lenten season of introspection and

self-examination. Learn more about what Lent can mean and how you can experience it. Find a Lenten guide and more resources in the foyer or online: [southelkhorncc.org/lent](https://southelkhorncc.org/lent)

**MAUNDY THURSDAY April 17, 6:30 PM, Historic Sanctuary**

A contemplative worship service in the spiritual intimacy of the Historic Sanctuary. Nursery provided for children ages 6 weeks to 2 years.

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