



## Condemned to Death, How Did Jesus Love His Enemies?

**Isaiah 53:3: (NASB) *He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face he was despised, and we did not esteem him.***



Love your enemies. Once you dig down to the deepest meaning of this phrase it is perhaps one of the most daunting tasks ever put upon anyone. Jesus not only taught us in detail how to love our enemies, he showed us in living color how to profoundly care for them. He literally walked the walk - all the way to Calvary. As we look back upon the death and resurrection of Jesus, we will pause and consider his applying the principle of selfless, sacrificial love and then transforming it into a timeless reality. How did Jesus show devotion to those who were devious and hostile, attachment to those who antagonized him, and affection for those who became his adversaries?

Today, we will tell the story of Jesus' resurrection largely through the eyes of those who stood against him. What did they see in his character, his teachings and his actions? What did they do to specifically act against him? What did they walk away with when their experience with Jesus ended? And probably the most important question of all - how can we better apply Jesus' unconditional love for EVERYONE in our every day, as we try to follow him?



### "Victor's Crown," (Verse one) Darlene Zschech and Kari Jobe



You are always fighting for us  
Heaven's angels all around  
My delight is found in knowing  
That you wear the victor's crown  
You're my help and my defender  
You're my Savior and my friend  
By your grace I live and breathe  
To worship you

At the mention of your greatness  
In your name I will bow down  
In your presence fear is silent  
For you wear the victor's crown  
Let your glory fill this temple  
Let your power overflow  
By your grace I live and breathe  
To worship you

Hallelujah  
You have overcome  
You have overcome  
Hallelujah  
Jesus you have overcome the world

The message is - Jesus HAS overcome the world. How did that happen?



## Jesus taught us four specific principles of love:

Luke 6:27-28: (KJV) <sup>27</sup>But I say unto you which hear, (1) Love your enemies, (2) do good to them which hate you, (3) <sup>28</sup>Bless them that curse you, and (4) pray for them which despitefully use you.

# JUDAS

First, to lay out the overall theme of loving your enemies we will look at Judas. **Love your enemies.**

Judas had become an enemy, a betrayer of Jesus. We may argue that he really did not expect this whole conspiracy to fully unfold. We might say that he knew Jesus had the power to overcome any enemy at any time, for Judas had witnessed Jesus feeding thousands from so little, walking on water, healing all manner of disease. He even saw Jesus control weather and raise Lazarus from the dead!



Surely Jesus could foil the plotting and schemes of the Pharisees. Judas betrayed him - for a bag of money. How could such a thing unfold?

**His heart was dark as evidenced at the home of Mary, Martha, and the newly raised Lazarus, just a short time before his betrayal:**

John 12:2-6: (KJV) <sup>2</sup>There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. <sup>3</sup>Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. <sup>4</sup>Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, <sup>5</sup>Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? <sup>6</sup>This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

Jesus taught that *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.*

**Let us further observe the "abundance" of the heart of Judas:**

Matthew 26:14-16: (KJV) <sup>14</sup>Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, <sup>15</sup>And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. <sup>16</sup>And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

We do not have much dialogue recorded in Scripture from Judas, but the little that we have tells quite a story. "What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you?" speaks volumes. The only words of Judas to Jesus after this bargaining statement were two simple words of betrayal. *Hail, Rabbi!*

Jesus also spoke and acted out of the abundance of his heart. Next, we drop in on Jesus and the twelve in the upper room. Jesus already knows what is going to happen. Jesus knows who will betray him.

**With this knowledge, Jesus' words and actions unfold in a clear and unmistakable way:**

John 13:2-5: (NASB) <sup>2</sup>During supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray him, <sup>3</sup>Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come forth from God and was going back to God, <sup>4</sup>got up from supper, and laid aside his garments; and taking a towel, he girded himself. <sup>5</sup>Then he poured water into the basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded.



Out of the abundance of his heart, Jesus acted and washed his would-be betrayer's feet, along with the other eleven.

**Shortly afterwards, Jesus' words again reflect the abundance of his heart:**

John 13:21-27: (NASB) <sup>21</sup>When Jesus had said this, he became troubled in spirit, and testified and said, Truly, truly, I say to you, that one of you will betray me. <sup>22</sup>The disciples began looking at one another, at a loss to know of which one he was speaking. <sup>23</sup>There was reclining on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved... <sup>25</sup>He, leaning back thus on Jesus' bosom, said to him, Lord, who is it? <sup>26</sup>Jesus then answered, That is the one for whom I shall dip the morsel and give it to him.

The words of Jesus did not betray the betrayer. He instead fed him.

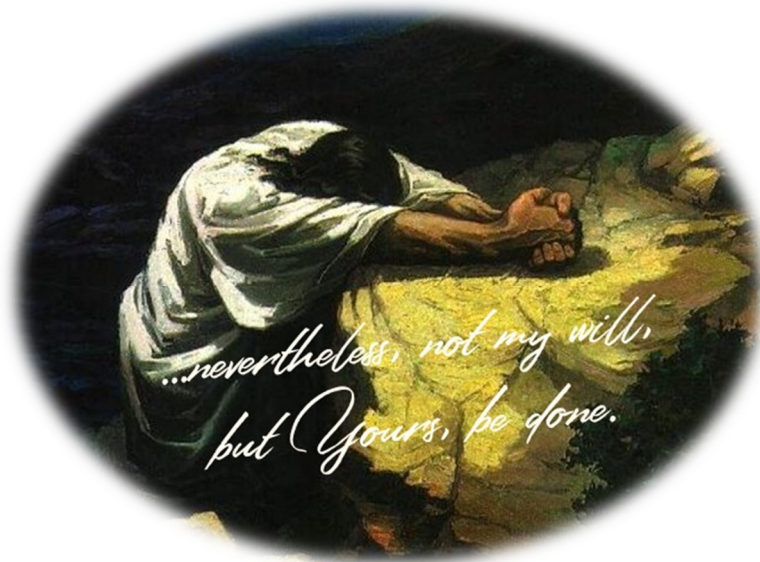
***Jesus loved his enemies.***

So, when he had dipped the morsel, he took and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. <sup>27</sup>After the morsel, Satan then entered into him. Therefore, Jesus said to him, What you do, do quickly.

The words of Jesus did not beg or plead for reconsideration. He did not stare Judas down or stand in his way. No, Jesus allowed Judas to follow that which Judas had already decided to follow.

**Next, we find ourselves in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus just finished praying his "nevertheless" prayer, and he perceived his time of suffering was about to begin:**

Luke 22:42: (KJV) *Saying, Father, if You be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless, not my will, but Yours, be done.*



Jesus warns his followers.

**Combining Matthew 26:47-50, Mark 14:41-46 and Luke 22:45-48:**

Mark 14:41-46: (NASB) <sup>41</sup>And he came the third time, and said to them, Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough; the hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. <sup>42</sup>Get up, let us be going; behold, the one who betrays me is at hand!

The abundance of Jesus' heart had room to not only warn those who followed, it also had room to warn he who would betray. ***Love your enemies.***



### We continue:

<sup>43</sup>Immediately while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, came up accompanied by a crowd with swords and clubs, who were from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. <sup>44</sup>Now he who was betraying him had given them a signal, saying, Whomever I kiss, he is the one; seize him and lead him away under guard. (Matthew) <sup>49</sup>Immediately Judas went to Jesus (Luke) <sup>47</sup>to kiss him (Matthew) <sup>49</sup>and said, Hail, Rabbi! (Luke) <sup>48</sup>But Jesus said to him, Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?

Jesus' final warning - "Do you betray me by showing your friendship?"

### Love your enemies.

(Matthew) And (Judas) kissed him. <sup>50</sup>And Jesus said to him, Friend, do what you have come for. Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and seized him.

**Love your enemies.** Jesus began his walk towards Calvary by doing this very thing. He loved his enemies.



### "Outrageous Love," (Verse one) Krissy Nordhoff

When I think about the road  
Traveled by my Savior's feet  
When I think about the cross he bore,  
The pain and suffering  
And knowing where the path would lead  
He willingly obeyed  
He could've called ten thousand angels  
To carry him away

Outrageous love  
It wasn't the nails, you see  
That held him to the tree

Outrageous love  
It was more than history,  
He was there for you and me

It was not the nails that held him to the tree, it was his outrageous love.

### ➤ What did Judas walk away with after all was said and done?

Some historians believe Judas was known to be a Zealot. Zealots believed Messiah would take his throne by force. Judas could have been trying to force Jesus' hand to rule and defeat Rome. But Jesus made a clear statement, *Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword.* Judas was trying to bring the kingdom in his own selfish way.

### ➤ What can we learn from the bad judgment of Judas and the teaching and patience of Jesus?

We do not want to push God's agenda. We want to be patient and wait on Him. Jesus had such love and self-control. He called Judas "Friend" even when Judas betrayed him. The betrayal must have been heartbreaking for Jesus.





## With loving our enemies in mind, how did Jesus show devotion to those who were devious and hostile?



Paying close attention to the example Jesus set at this time in his ministry will yield profound lessons in the highest form of what a Christian character can look like. His steady yet powerful approach to the tumult that surrounded him teaches us not only what loving our enemies looks like, it teaches us the key on HOW to love them!

### How did Jesus show devotion to those who were devious and hostile?

Luke 6:27-28: (KJV) <sup>27</sup>But I say unto you which hear, (1) Love your enemies, (2) do good to them which hate you, (3) <sup>28</sup>Bless them that curse you, and (4) pray for them which despitefully use you.

Jesus not only taught us, but he showed us how to love our enemies.

## THE PHARISEES, SADDUCEES AND PRIESTS

Let us focus on point 4: **pray for them which despitefully use you.** We will take a look at the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Priests. All of them hated Jesus, for this one man would change their preferred world unless they could stop him.

We will touch on specific descriptions of those who hated Jesus by quoting from Tom Ruggirello on April 10, 2017, CQ Episode 965, "How Were Politics Part of Jesus' Crucifixion"?

*Who were the Pharisees? Pharisee means "separated ones." In their conceit, they separated themselves from the Gentiles and other Jews who were not keeping the rituals of the Law as they were. They had the oral law of traditions they created, because they said there was not enough detail in the Mosaic Law.*

For most of Jesus' ministry, it was the Pharisees who hounded him. Jesus consistently responded to their questions and traps with sound, Law-based reasoning that they could not refute. **Love your enemies.** Jesus loved them by showing them the Law and fulfilling the true meaning of the Law.

*The Chief Priests: The Romans would not allow the Jews to appoint their own high priests, so they appointed who they thought would be more subservient to Rome. Because Annas was a very strong-willed and dominant man, the Romans took him out and said, "We will replace you with Caiaphas," who was his son-in-law and more able to be controlled. Even though Caiaphas was the official high priest, Annas, because of his dominant personality, was still the key figure. He was still the chief, and Caiaphas was under him.*





There was a power struggle going on. The chief priests and scribes (learned men capable of teaching the Law) were also deeply dissatisfied with the power and teaching of Jesus: **Jesus loved those who despitefully used him** by NOT STOPPING the Good News.

Matthew 21:14-15: (NASB) <sup>14</sup>And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them. <sup>15</sup>But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he had done, and the children who were shouting in the temple, Hosanna to the Son of David, they became indignant.

They were indignant at the goodness of the miracles.

*"Sadducee" probably comes from the term "house of Zadok," who was a high priest during the reign of David and Solomon when the first Temple was built. You could not be a priest if you were not in that lineage. They became disinterested in the Temple (and the Law) because they were affected by Greek philosophy. They were into the politics and the running of the state.*

The Pharisees hated the political bent of the Sadducees and these two groups were always at odds. The Sadducees showed up at the beginning of Jesus' ministry to see the spectacle and stayed relatively uninvolved until later in his ministry.

**Jesus dealt with them plainly and addressed the issue:**

Matthew 16:1, 4: (NASB) <sup>1</sup>The Pharisees and Sadducees came up, and testing Jesus, they asked him to show them a sign from heaven. (After discussing their ability to read the weather, Jesus said) <sup>4</sup>An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and a sign will not be given it, except the sign of Jonah. And he left them and went away.

**Jesus loved those who despitefully used him** by unapologetically standing against the ungodly things they stood for.

As his ministry progressed, Jesus presented an irresolvable problem for any of these groups listed, so they decided to do the unthinkable - they joined forces against Jesus. Jesus was perceived in their minds as a bigger enemy than they had ever perceived each other to be. The Pharisees even involved the Herodians.

*The Herodians were primarily a political body attached to the house of Herod. They were members of the royal court of Herod, and by being in the royal court of Herod, they represented the interests of Rome.*

Matthew 22:15-17: (NASB) <sup>15</sup>Then the Pharisees went and plotted together how they might trap him in what he said. <sup>16</sup>And they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, Teacher, we know that you are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and defer to no one; for you are not partial to any. <sup>17</sup>Tell us then, what do you think? Is it lawful to give a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?

*This is really an ingenious evil, because they were trying to portray an honest dispute between themselves and the Herodians. They saw this as a no-win question for Jesus.*



**Matthew 22:18-22:** (NASB) <sup>18</sup>*But Jesus perceived their malice, and said, Why are you testing me, you hypocrites? <sup>19</sup>Show me the coin used for the poll-tax. And they brought him a denarius. <sup>20</sup>And he said to them, Whose likeness and inscription is this? <sup>21</sup>They said to him, Caesar's. Then he said to them, Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's. <sup>22</sup>And hearing this, they were amazed, and leaving him, they went away.*

They had no answer to their unsolvable question to Jesus. He stumped them by pure logic.

**Jesus loved those who spitefully used him** by pointing them upwards for they were all lost and leaderless.

**The Sadducees came up with their own attack to discredit Jesus AND the resurrection doctrine:**

**Matthew 22:23-24:** (NASB) <sup>23</sup>*On that day some Sadducees (who say there is no resurrection) came to Jesus and questioned him, <sup>24</sup>asking, Teacher, Moses said, If a man dies having no children, his brother as next of kin shall marry his wife, and raise up children for his brother.*

**Jesus loved those who spitefully used him** by again answering in a way that let them know just how little they knew. He told them what the kingdom would look like, and they had no recourse. They walked away bewildered.

Jesus loved those who despised him, and as their hatred towards him grew his love towards them also grew.

**It now came down to their final frenzied attack to condemn him to death:**

**Matthew 26:57-68:** (NASB) <sup>57</sup>*Those who had seized Jesus led him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were gathered together... <sup>59</sup>Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus, so that they might put him to death. <sup>60</sup>They did not find any, even though many false witnesses came forward.*



**Jesus loved those who spitefully used him** by letting their anger play out. How do you condemn someone who has done no wrong?

*But later on two came forward, <sup>61</sup>and said, This man stated, I am able to destroy the temple of God and to rebuild it in three days. <sup>62</sup>The high priest stood up and said to him, Do you not answer? What is it that these men are testifying against you? <sup>63</sup>But Jesus kept silent...*

Jesus' silence was deafening. They had nothing and could fabricate nothing. Their whole plan was teetering on the edge of disaster. **Jesus loved those who spitefully used him** by allowing this moment of clarity to shine before them. They would have no recourse unless Jesus himself gave it to them.

*...And the high priest said to him, I adjure you by the living God, that you tell us whether you are the Christ, the Son of God. <sup>64</sup>Jesus said to him, you have said it yourself; nevertheless, I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven. <sup>65</sup>Then the high priest tore his robes and said, he has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses? Behold, you have now heard the blasphemy; <sup>66</sup>what do you think? They answered, he deserves death! <sup>67</sup>Then they spat in his face and beat him with their fists; and others slapped him, <sup>68</sup>and said, Prophecy to us, you Christ; who is the one who hit you?*



*Jesus loved those who despitefully used him* by answering more than they had asked for. There were no charges, so his revealing answer opened the door to the false charge of blasphemy. This was the very thing he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane about that he did not want to bear! Perhaps it was here in this moment that Jesus saw the heart-wrenching but blessed answer to that garden prayer and to its “nevertheless” ending.



**“At the Cross,” (Verse two) Chris Tomlin**

There's a place where sin and shame  
Are powerless  
Where my heart has peace with God  
And forgiveness

Where all the love I've ever found  
Comes like a flood  
Comes flowing down

At the cross, at the cross  
I surrender my life  
I'm in awe of you  
I'm in awe of you  
Where your love ran red  
And my sin washed white  
I owe all to you  
I owe all to you

Here my hope is found  
Here on holy ground  
Here I bow down  
Here I bow down

Here arms open wide  
Here you save my life  
Here I bow down  
Here I bow

- What could all of these religious leaders have walked away with?

They walked away with a lot of hate, rage and satisfaction in abusing Jesus. He was their threat. They could not see the goodness, miracles and godliness.

- What can we learn from Jesus' love for those who despitefully used him?

We can learn submission to the Father's will. Also, ignominy means disgrace. Jesus lived with grace. He bore disgrace through grace.

**We will touch on the following Scriptures, but we encourage you to read and meditate on the entire chapter of Isaiah:**

**Isaiah 53:1-3:** (NASB) <sup>1</sup>Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? <sup>2</sup>For he grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of parched ground; he has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to him. <sup>3</sup>He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face he was despised, and we did not esteem him.

The son of God was not esteemed. The fortitude Jesus displayed by standing alone against so many enemies is amazing.





## Jesus truly loved his enemies. How did Jesus show attachment to those who antagonized him?

To be attached to someone usually implies some kind of positive experience that binds two parties together. For Jesus, at the end of his earthly life, the experience he had with the public could hardly be categorized as such. In spite of those he died for mercilessly antagonizing him, Jesus remained firm in his attachment - *he loved them too much to let go.*

Now let's focus on Jesus' attachment to Pilate and to the people who would shout for his death.

Luke 6:27-28: (KJV) <sup>27</sup>But I say unto you which hear, (1) Love your enemies, (2) do good to them which hate you, (3) <sup>28</sup>Bless them that curse you, and (4) pray for them which despitefully use you.

## PILATE AND THE PEOPLE

Point 3: **Bless them that curse you.**

The hatred of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Priests was just getting warmed up. Getting Jesus to the point of passing him to Pilate was an accomplishment of sorts, but to finish their grisly crime they would have to remain not only vigilant in their anger, they would need to make it contagious.



They approached Pilate with no firm accusation to present, just a determined anger. Jesus had spoken to them only enough to verify their hypocrisy. He would talk to them no more. He would, however, converse with Pilate. Pilate was to this point uninvolved and tended to be unbiased.

Jesus would show his love for Pilate by respecting his position:

John 18:33-40: (NASB) <sup>33</sup>Therefore Pilate entered again into the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus and said to him, Are you the King of the Jews? <sup>34</sup>Jesus answered, Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about me? <sup>35</sup>Pilate answered, I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests delivered you to me; what have you done? <sup>36</sup>Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then my servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, my kingdom is not of this realm.

Jesus spoke spiritual truth to a man who had no spiritual mind. Yet, what Jesus said was the best and most honest answer he could give, for he was telling Pilate that he was resigned to the torturous present to be able to bring a glorious future.

<sup>37</sup>Therefore Pilate said to him, So you are a king? Jesus answered, You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice. <sup>38</sup>Pilate said to him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews and said to them, I find no guilt in him.



Pilate again addresses the mob of Jewish leadership with honesty. He heard the grace of Jesus' words and felt the honesty of their message. He would now lobby for his release, for Jesus was innocent, and he knew it.

*<sup>39</sup>But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover; do you wish then that I release for you the King of the Jews? <sup>40</sup>So they cried out again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.*

Pilate would now have Jesus whipped, perhaps to draw sympathy from those who mercilessly accused him. It is so sad to realize that an attempt to draw sympathy from a group of heady and merciless accusers comes at the expense of a man of humble and righteous background.

Such a contrast in leaders. We have Pilate, trying to strike a deal for an innocent man's life, rather than just insisting on it as was his right. We have the Jewish leadership, blindly and foolishly calling to save the life of a thief over a man they knew to be innocent. And then we have Jesus - already beaten and bloody, yet honestly and calmly stating his coming Lordship over all as he acquiesced to further torture and ignominy. Jesus lived his love for his enemies,  ***blessing those who curse*** .

Pilate would come out again and famously say, "Behold the man!" His proclamation would be met with what would grow to be a deafening chant - crucify him! Crucify him!

John 19:8-15: (NASB) *<sup>8</sup>Therefore when Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid; <sup>9</sup>and he entered into the Praetorium again and said to Jesus, Where are you from? But Jesus gave him no answer. <sup>10</sup>So Pilate said to him, You do not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you, and I have authority to crucify you? <sup>11</sup>Jesus answered, You would have no authority over me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered me to you has the greater sin.*

It is almost as if Jesus is saying to Pilate, "I know who you think you are but who you really are is a small and sinful man before God. It is He who looks down upon you and your actions." Jesus puts Pilate's authority in place with grace and yet with force.

*<sup>12</sup>As a result of this Pilate made efforts to release him, but the Jews cried out saying, If you release this man, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself out to be a king opposes Caesar. <sup>13</sup>Therefore when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out, and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. <sup>14</sup>Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, Behold, your king! <sup>15</sup>So they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him! Pilate said to them, Shall I crucify your king? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.*

Pilate again tries to find a way to release the innocent man, this time by lauding Jesus as their king as if to say here, have this man as your leader - he is good, and he is innocent of any crimes.

Matthew 27:20-23: (NASB) *<sup>20</sup>But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to put Jesus to death. <sup>21</sup>But the governor said to them, Which of the two do you want me to release for you? And they said, Barabbas. <sup>22</sup>Pilate said to them, Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ? They all said, Crucify him! <sup>23</sup>And he said, Why, what evil has he done? But they kept shouting all the more, saying, Crucify him!*



Mob violence always begins with an instigator. In this case, there were many who prodded and riled the crowd into a frenzy of mindless shouting and fury. The simple and vital question of furnishing the proof of wrongdoing was overwhelmed in a sea of clamor and hatred. Jesus stood before and gazed upon these restless masses bound, bloodied and dressed mockingly as a king. He wore a crown of thorns. **And Jesus loved them, and he blessed those who cursed him - all of them.** He absorbed their vitriol and cursing as this was what he had come here to do. He would save them...all of them.

**Matthew 27:24-26:** (NASB) <sup>24</sup>When Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd, saying, I am innocent of this man's blood; see to that yourselves. <sup>25</sup>And all the people said, his blood shall be on us and on our children! <sup>26</sup>Then he released Barabbas for them; but after having Jesus scourged, he handed him over to be crucified.

Pilate gave in to a raucous crowd and in so doing, he sentenced innocence to death. It is hard to say why he had Jesus whipped. The bottom line was that he added physical injury to the insult of being sentenced to death by crucifixion with no evidence. Death by crucifixion - was that not torturous enough? Apparently, it was not enough for the insatiable appetites of a crowd gone mad. Through it all, Jesus accepted the pain, suffering and injustice and continued to love them in spite of it.



**"Victor's Crown," (Verse two) Darlene Zschech and Kari Jobe**



You are ever interceding  
As the lost become the found  
You can never be defeated  
For you wear the Victor's crown  
You are Jesus the Messiah  
You're the hope of all the world  
By your grace I live and breathe  
To worship you

Hallelujah  
You have overcome  
You have overcome  
Hallelujah  
Jesus you have overcome the world

- Pilate and the crowd - what did they see and why did they not act on it?

They saw innocence, but it did not stop them from the mob mentality and frenzy. They allowed it to get out of hand.

- What can we learn from how Jesus blessed them that cursed him?

Jesus was willing to die for them in spite of their evil and hatred.

**Love your enemies.**

**Isaiah 53:4-6:** (NASB) <sup>4</sup>Surely our griefs he himself bore, and our sorrows he carried; yet we ourselves esteemed him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. (Jesus looked upon the crowd and bore their sorrows.) <sup>5</sup>But he was pierced through for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon him, and by his scourging we are healed. <sup>6</sup>All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on him.



Jesus voluntarily took it upon himself because he loved his enemies.

Every one of us has *gone astray*. His shoulders were strong enough and his will was perfect enough to bear it all.

**Jesus' love overcame Judas, Israel's spiritual leaders, Pilate and the people. What about the Roman soldiers?**

The fact is most of the soldiers in the service of Rome basically hated the Jews. To them Israel was a nuisance, a little country of religious Zealots who had to be forcefully kept subservient to Roman rule. Torture and crucifixion were handy, and I am sorry to say even entertaining tools for them to use to keep the peace. Peace through intimidation - that was something Jesus came to put an end to. How did he show affection for those who hated him?



**"Amazing Grace" (Verses one and two) Judy Collins**

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
Was blind, but now can see

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,  
And grace my fears relieved;  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed!

**We will look at Jesus' affection for those who dripped hatred towards him:**

Luke 6:27-28: (KJV) <sup>27</sup>But I say unto you which hear, (1) Love your enemies, (2) do good to them which hate you, (3) <sup>28</sup>Bless them that curse you, and (4) pray for them which despitefully use you.

**Point 2: *Do good to them which hate you.***

**Let us backpedal for a moment. One dramatic example of Jesus literally fulfilling this aspect of loving his enemies was in the garden when Judas betrayed him:**

John 18:2-10: (NASB) <sup>2</sup>Now Judas also, who was betraying him, knew the place, for Jesus had often met there with his disciples. <sup>3</sup>Judas then, having received the Roman cohort and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. <sup>4</sup>So Jesus, knowing all the things that were coming upon him, went forth and said to them, Whom do you seek?

Judas leads the religious leaders and Roman soldiers to capture Jesus, and Jesus knowing full well their intentions, does not just go along. Instead, he asks them whom they seek. Why? They need to say it. They need to be voluntarily and fully committed to their sinful choices.



**TO THEM WHICH HATE YOU**





<sup>5</sup>They answered him, Jesus the Nazarene. He said to them, I am he. And Judas also, who was betraying him, was standing with them. <sup>6</sup>So when he said to them, I am he, they drew back and fell to the ground. <sup>7</sup>Therefore he again asked them, Whom do you seek? And they said, Jesus the Nazarene. <sup>8</sup>Jesus answered, I told you that I am he; so, if you seek me, let these go their way, <sup>9</sup>to fulfill the word which he spoke, of those whom you have given me I lost not one.

Perhaps another reason Jesus made them ask was to exhibit God's ability to crush this illegal and immoral action. They were literally blown over at the power of Jesus' acknowledgment of his identity. God could have destroyed every last one of them in the same manner that Elijah called down fire upon the soldiers of Ahab, but He did not. Why? Jesus needed to show evidence of his love for them and that could only be revealed if they were allowed to continue. **Do good to them which hate you.**

<sup>10</sup>Simon Peter then, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear; and the slave's name was Malchus.

Luke 22:51: (NASB) But Jesus answered and said, Stop! No more of this.

Matthew 26:52: (NASB) Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword.

Luke 22:52: (NASB) ...And he touched (Malchus') ear and healed him.

**Do good to them which hate you.** What better example could there be of practicing what you preach than this? Jesus not only healed the injured man, he commanded that all violence in this matter be halted immediately. Think about it - Jesus protected EVERYONE ELSE from violence throughout his whole night of trial, except for himself. Just another proof of how **he loved his enemies, he did good to those who hated him** with selfless and sacrificial love.

**Jesus continued to teach, even in the midst of the power of darkness taking hold:**

Matthew 26:52-56: (NASB) <sup>53</sup>(Jesus said) ...do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and He will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? <sup>54</sup>How then will the Scriptures be fulfilled, which say that it must happen this way?

His lessons were simple and powerful - you have NO POWER unless God permits your evil and that permission is for the sole purpose of your eternal welfare!

Luke 22:52: (NASB) <sup>52</sup>Then Jesus said to the chief priests and officers of the temple and elders who had come against him, (Matthew 26) Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as you would against a robber? Every day I used to sit in the temple teaching and you did not seize me (Luke 22:53) but this hour and the power of darkness are yours. (Matthew 26) <sup>56</sup>But all this has taken place to fulfill the Scriptures of the prophets. Then all the disciples left him and fled.

The tumult of this experience left Jesus entirely alone to face the evil that was coming. He provided his disciples a way out, and they took it as they ran in fear. Jesus would now face the darkness of Satan's devious designs by himself. The best man would win. Jesus would win. His love would outshine all evil for all time, but the road to that victory would be filled with pain and cost him his life.



That road to victory passed directly through Calvary. Along the way to Calvary the ignominy and torment only increased. We have already dropped in on Jesus' interactions with Pilate but let us go back to that time once more and look in on the treatment Jesus received from the Roman soldiers before he went before Pilate.

## THE ROMAN SOLDIERS

John 19:1-3: (NASB) *<sup>1</sup>Pilate then took Jesus and scourged him. <sup>2</sup>And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and put a purple robe on him; <sup>3</sup>and they began to come up to him and say, Hail, King of the Jews! and to give him slaps in the face.*



These few verses give us a deep and troubling insight into the Roman rule and therefore the mindset of those who upheld it - the everyday soldier. These men were the enforcement arm of a harsh and immovable law. In contrast to the Jewish Law, Roman law permitted a kind of slavery that was a grandfather to the oppressive slavery in early America.

In Rome, if one slave disobeyed or gave the master of the house a reason for suspicion, all household slaves could be executed. The Romans saw the Jews as little more than those slaves so their toying with the very real human lives of Jews was common. It was sport to not only crucify, but to crucify with creativity, to torture for fun and to harass and abuse simply because you could. Such was the attitude of the men into whose hands the life of Jesus was placed.

We now go to the cross. We now go to the final six-hour piece of this drama in which Jesus repeatedly and faithfully healed when he was abused, loved when he was hated and cared when he was shunned. The cross would be the final spectacle and it would be the final stop on his road to the light and salvation of victory.





**Matthew 27:39-44: (KJV)** <sup>39</sup>*And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads,* <sup>40</sup>*And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.* <sup>41</sup>*Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said,* <sup>42</sup>*He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.* <sup>43</sup>*He trusted in God; let Him deliver him now, if He will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.* <sup>44</sup>*The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.*

**Luke 23:36-37: (KJV)** *And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar,* <sup>37</sup>*and saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.*

How did Jesus react to the crowds? How did he handle the shame of his physical exposure and the constant pounding of the people's unbridled disgust and insult?

### The Apostle Peter tells us:

**1 Peter 2:22-23: (NASB)** <sup>22</sup>*who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in his mouth;* <sup>23</sup>*and while being reviled, he did not revile in return; while suffering, he uttered no threats, but kept entrusting himself to him who judges righteously;*

Jesus reacted to the crowds and soldiers with silence. He did not beg them for mercy; he did not lash out at them or belittle them or appeal to them in any way. The things he was being accused of were false and those revilers who passed by did so with insult on their tongues and malice in their hearts. Jesus saw them, heard them and loved them. **He did good to those who hated him,** for they themselves were the prize that his death would ultimately win.



### "Outrageous Love," (Verse two) Krissy Nordhoff

When I think about three whole days  
Not knowing what to do  
Wondering if all the words  
He'd spoken were still true  
I can't imagine all the joy they felt  
When they'd gathered there that day  
And they'd gotten to the tomb to see  
The stone had rolled away

Outrageous love  
It wasn't the nails, you see  
That held him to the tree

Outrageous love  
It was more than history,  
He was there for you and me





**Matthew 27: 54:** (NASB) *Now the centurion, and those who were with him keeping guard over Jesus, when they saw the earthquake and the things that were happening, became very frightened and said, Truly this was the Son of God!*

The power of the events did get to some of those people who were so calloused, so angry and so evil at that time.

- What can we learn from the example of mob mentality that the people so easily displayed?

Things can go bad fast and mistakes will be made. We must be on the alert to make sure we do not ever get involved in that type of thing.

- How do we get closer to doing good to those who hate us?

What would Jesus do? Think about, "How can I honor God and act as Jesus did?" Focus on the example.

**Isaiah 53:7-9:** (NASB) *<sup>7</sup>He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so he did not open his mouth. (We saw that plainly in the example on the cross. Jesus absorbed the difficulty.) <sup>8</sup>By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due? <sup>9</sup>His grave was assigned with wicked men, yet he was with a rich man in his death, because he had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in his mouth.*

Joseph of Arimathea, who was a rich man, came forward and gave Jesus his unused tomb. *He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in his mouth.* The prophecies are wonderfully fulfilled. He perfectly loved his enemies and bore the burdens before him.

**Thus far, we have seen Jesus love his enemies through his experiences.  
Where did that love take him?**

We began this conversation by stating that Jesus walked the walk of loving his enemies. As we have seen, his love was true, complete and profound. Because he was so far above and beyond reproach, the END RESULT of his love would be his resurrection. This would prove to be the lynch pin of the entire plan of God for all mankind. His resurrection would be the thing that changed everything.



**"Outrageous Love," (Last Verse) Krissy Nordhoff**

Outrageous love  
It wasn't the nails, you see  
He was there for you and me  
(Repeat)

We have been focusing on the love of Jesus. It was not the nails that held him to the tree. It was his love for God, his enemies and for all mankind.

You see, there are a myriad of prophecies that speak of worldwide restitution, worldwide peace and harmony - *these* are the real story of the cross. *These* are the real story of Jesus' love for his enemies.







Daniel 2:44: (ASV) *And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.*

Because he is risen, there is a very specific context being set out in this prophecy of Daniel. We have *those kings* - what kings? The kings of the earth. We have the God of heaven setting up an indestructible kingdom that breaks the previous kingdoms in pieces here on the earth.

Think about how much sense this makes: Jesus died for Adam and therefore for us, and that means he came to restore what was lost - a perfect life and a perfect earth!

Colossians 1:18-20: (NRSV) *<sup>18</sup>He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. <sup>19</sup>For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, <sup>20</sup>and through him God was pleased to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.*

Let us notice the elements here: We have Jesus and the church who are his called-out ones. Then, it says that God through Jesus and his sacrifice reconciled and made peace with ALL things. This is much more than the true church - the blood of the cross is about much more than me - it is about us - all of us! **Jesus loved his enemies!** It is about all mankind!

Acts 3:20-21: (NASB) *<sup>20</sup>and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, <sup>21</sup>whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.*

God through Jesus (our risen Lord) is not only reconciling all things to Himself, He is restoring all things. When you restore something, you return it to its former state. Peter, here in Acts, says that the prophets spoke of this restoration, well, what did they say?

Let us look at a few of the many prophecies that paint the picture of the earthly restoration that comes because Jesus was faithful, died and was raised:

Isaiah 51:3: (NRSV) *<sup>3</sup>For the LORD will comfort Zion; He will comfort all her waste places, and will make her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song.*

What a beautiful picture! The perfection of Eden was lost, and Isaiah is saying that the waste places of earth will look like it. Redemption brings restitution and restitution brings gladness, thanksgiving, and song. How do we know? The prophecies tell us. **This is a result of Jesus loving his enemies!**

Micah 4:1-5: (KJV) *<sup>1</sup>But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. <sup>2</sup>And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.*



These are specifics about the future of earth. There will be many nations. They will ALL be seeking after God which indicates that they must go through a learning curve. They will walk in godly paths with the restored and newly faithful nation of Israel leading them as their example. Israel will be the earthly example to the world.

*<sup>3</sup>And He shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. <sup>4</sup>But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it. <sup>5</sup>For all people will walk every one in the name of his God, and we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever.*

God will teach the world the ways of peace: swords into plowshares, spears to pruning hooks, no more war, rather they will all dwell in peace, each with the ability to provide for themselves, and all the while living under God. This is the direct result of the sacrifice of the cross, the ransom payment for Adam and his sin. This is the way God intended for this world to be!

While those now faithful to Jesus will have an inheritance in heaven (there is a heavenly call) the "everybody else" will have an inheritance on earth once they prove their faithfulness to Jesus in the Judgment Day.

Praise be to God for His unspeakable gift! **Thanks be to Jesus for loving his enemies.**

**No wonder the Scripture says:**

Philippians 2:8-11: (NASB) *<sup>8</sup>Being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup>For this reason also, God highly exalted him, and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, <sup>10</sup>so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow... <sup>11</sup>and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*



We discussed Jesus loving Judas, even amidst the betrayal and the strength of character that took. We talked about his character in managing the Pharisees and the Sadducees, the chief priests and the Herodians. And we looked at the character it took to stand before Pilate and before the people who were screaming for his crucifixion - **and he looked at them and he loved them.** And we talked about the Roman soldiers who just wanted to make him hurt - **and he loved them.**

What a comprehensive picture of the simple yet profound work of Jesus. Adam sinned, therefore we all sin and justice required satisfaction. Jesus came, lived perfectly, gave that life up and therefore satisfied justice. Now he reigns on high and all of the world under the curse of Adam will be given a new lease on life - why? Because that is what justice demands **and that is what loving your enemies brings!**

Isaiah 65:21-25: (NRSV) *<sup>21</sup>They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. <sup>22</sup>They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. <sup>23</sup>They shall not labor in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they shall be offspring blessed by the LORD-- and their descendants as well. <sup>24</sup>Before they call I will answer, while they are yet speaking I will hear. <sup>25</sup>The wolf and the lamb shall feed*



*together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox; but the serpent-its food shall be dust! They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, says the LORD.*

In the beginning in the Garden of Eden, all was in place. It got out of place, which God overruled, and that is why Jesus came as a sacrifice and a ransom for Adam and therefore for all the world of mankind. He took all that was out of place and graciously, lovingly and justly put it back in place. This is yet another example of a clear picture of an amazing earthly setting. Building houses, planting vineyards, personal responsibility, no labor in vain, the Almighty guiding and directing the affairs of earth. The wolf and the lamb feeding together.

The sacrifice of Jesus and his **love for his enemies** is what bought this future!



**"Victor's Crown," (Verse four) Darlene Zschech and Kari Jobe**

At the cross the work was finished  
You were buried in the ground  
But the grave could not contain you  
For you wear the Victor's crown

Hallelujah  
You have overcome  
You have overcome  
Hallelujah  
Jesus you have overcome the world

Every high thing must come down  
Every stronghold shall be broken  
You wear the Victor's crown  
You overcome  
You overcome

Isaiah 53:10-12: (NASB) <sup>10</sup>*But the LORD was pleased to crush him, putting him to grief; if he would render himself as a guilt offering, he will see his offspring, he will prolong his days, and the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in his hand. (God was pleased to crush him because the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in his hand. He was pleased in the offering and satisfaction of justice, so His creation could get back to what it was intended to be.)* <sup>11</sup>*As a result of the anguish of his soul, he will see it and be satisfied; by his knowledge the righteous one, my servant, will justify the many (all), as he will bear their iniquities.* <sup>12</sup>*Therefore, I will allot him a portion with the great, and he will divide the (spoils) with the strong; because he poured out himself to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he himself bore the sin of many and interceded for the transgressors.*

We saw Jesus bear the burden of those who hated him, we saw him love in the face of turmoil, threat, torment and ignominy.

No wonder Revelation 21:4 says: <sup>4</sup>*And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*



Some say, "Easter," but it is "Resurrection Sunday." It is the resurrection of Jesus which means the redemption of the world. The price has already been paid - the package just needs to fully be delivered. Jesus did it by loving his enemies. Let's take his example and love our enemies. Let's walk in his footsteps and learn to love even when we might be hated. Think about the sacrifice of Jesus and the power of loving your enemies.

*So, condemned to death, how did Jesus love his enemies?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!*



Join us next week for our April 9, 2018, podcast,  
"Am I a Double-Minded Christian?"

