

## Luke 6:27-38

<sup>27</sup>“But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, <sup>28</sup>bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. <sup>29</sup>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. <sup>30</sup>Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. <sup>31</sup>Do to others as you would have them do to you. <sup>32</sup>“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. <sup>33</sup>If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. <sup>34</sup>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. <sup>35</sup>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. <sup>36</sup>**Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.**

<sup>37</sup>“Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; <sup>38</sup>give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

## Sermon – Sunday, February 20, 2022 – Epiphany 7

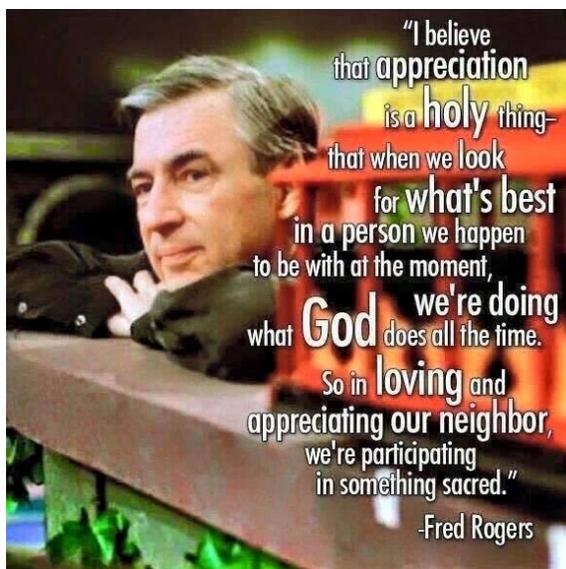
This morning's Gospel from Luke is chock full of powerful statements.

We are to love our enemies, do good to those who hate us, <sup>28</sup> bless those who curse us, and pray for those who abuse us. Is that a bit overwhelming, or what? But Jesus really means it. He says 'love your enemies' more than once.

Jesus, here in Luke's Gospel is in the midst of the 'Sermon on the Plain', similar to the 'Sermon on the Mount' in the Gospel of Matthew. This is the 7th Sunday of Epiphany; Epiphany, the season of our Lord revealing himself. So what is He revealing here? <sup>31</sup> Do to others as you would have them do to you, lend expecting nothing in return. Be merciful he says. He does promise that our reward will be great.

**<sup>36</sup> Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. Jesus says.**

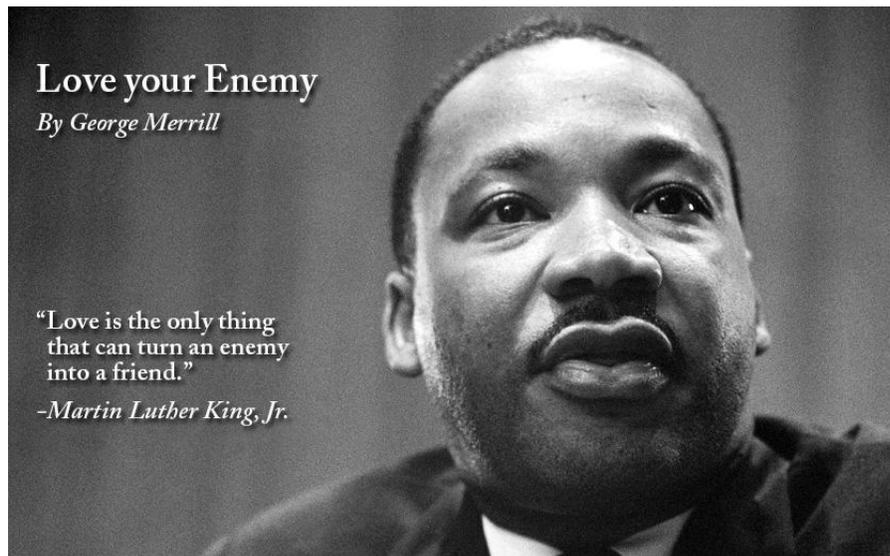
That is the key. Our Lord, above all, is merciful. Because we are drenched in that mercy, we respond with mercy. Because we are forgiven every time we repent, we forgive. Because we are loved, we love. That is why we do the impossible and love our enemies, because that is the way of the Divine. When we dispense forgiveness, mercy and kindness for everyone indiscriminately, we echo our Lord and scatter grace – it is almost sacramental. Fred Rogers says it this way:



Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you.



Martin Luther King Jr had much to say about loving our enemies while passionately advocating for civil rights. He is gone but his words remain:





There's another reason why you should love your enemies, and that is because hate distorts the personality of the hater. We usually think of what hate does for the individual hated or the individuals hated or the groups hated. But it is even more tragic, it is even more ruinous and injurious to the individual who hates... For the person who hates, the true becomes false and the false becomes true. That's what hate does.

(Martin Luther King, Jr.)

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Loving our enemies saves us from being distorted and deformed by hate.

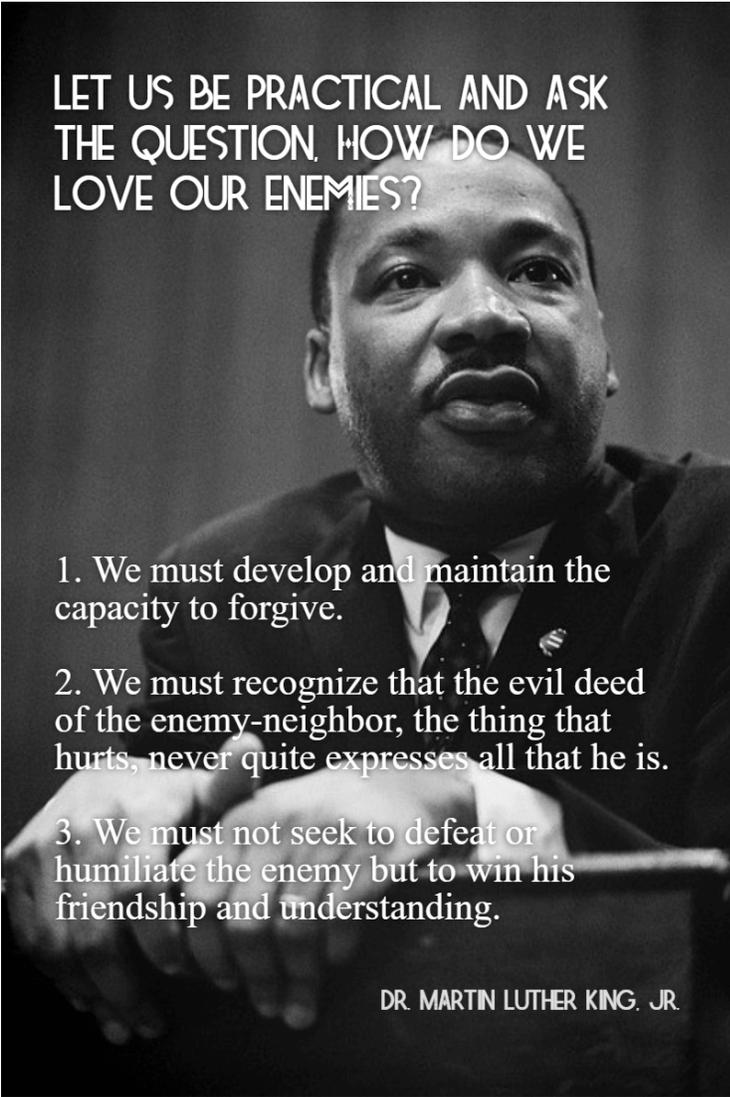


Now there is a final reason I think that Jesus says, 'Love your enemies.' It is this: that love has within it a redemptive power. And there is a power there that eventually transforms individuals.

— *Martin Luther King* —

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Loving our enemies is redemptive and transforms us.

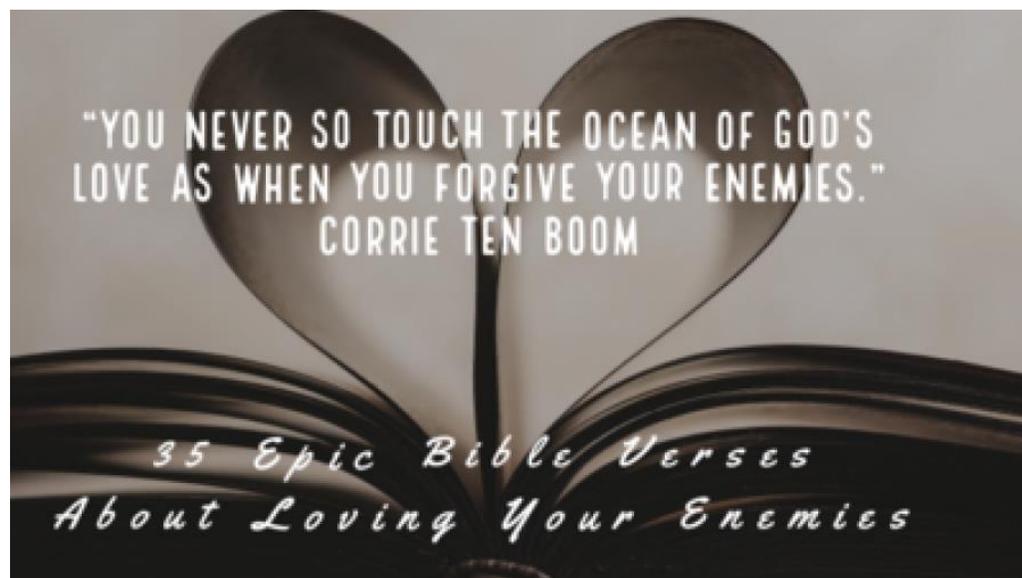


LET US BE PRACTICAL AND ASK  
THE QUESTION, HOW DO WE  
LOVE OUR ENEMIES?

1. We must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive.
2. We must recognize that the evil deed of the enemy-neighbor, the thing that hurts, never quite expresses all that he is.
3. We must not seek to defeat or humiliate the enemy but to win his friendship and understanding.

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.





**“YES, IT IS LOVE THAT WILL SAVE OUR  
WORLD AND OUR CIVILIZATION, LOVE  
EVEN FOR ENEMIES.”**

**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**

