

WSU Christian Challenge Study Guide  
Matthew 5:43-48  
1/19/2023

*Read Matthew 5:43-48.*

### ***The Contemporary Teaching of Jesus' Day (v. 43)***

*Read Leviticus 19:18.*

- What *addition* and what *omission* had distorted Leviticus 19:18 by the time of Jesus' ministry?
- Do you think the contemporary teaching of Jesus' day is still a belief held by many people in America today? Why or why not? Can you think of examples from popular culture to support your idea?
- Are you tempted to believe and act upon the idea that we should love our neighbor but hate our enemy? If so, what does that temptation look like in your life?

### ***Jesus' Authoritative Correction (v. 44)***

- Jesus' call to love our enemies is *first* concerned with action, rather than affection. Do you think the concept of love as an action makes the idea of loving your enemy easier or more difficult? Why?
- Do you think it is possible to get to a place where you do actually feel affection for someone who is your enemy? If so, how do you think that would happen?
- Why is prayer one of the most important actions we should take toward our enemies?
- What kinds of things do you think you should pray for your enemies?
- What does it look like to love an enemy without condoning their evil actions?

### ***Jesus' Moral Examples (v. 45-48)***

- In verse 45, what is the moral foundation on which Jesus builds His argument that His followers should love their enemies?
- How does the phrase "imitation grows from admiration" help us make sense of verse 45?
- Theologian Alfred Plummer said, "To return evil for good is devilish; to return good for good is human; to return good for evil is divine." How does this help us make sense of what Jesus is saying in verses 46-48?

### ***Application***

*Read Romans 5:10-11.*

- How are you consistently practicing an adoration of God's perfect love?

- Are there any ways you need to practice an imitation of God's perfect love by loving your enemies this week?