

# Is There Anything Special About You

by Tim Conway

---

*This sermon focuses on the command to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us, highlighting the need to go beyond loving those who love us back and to care for those outside our inner circles. The sermon emphasizes the importance of being sons of our Heavenly Father by reflecting His character of love and perfection in our interactions with others, even those who mistreat us. It challenges believers to examine their prayer life and level of care for those who are different or hostile towards them, urging them to seek a supernatural love that sets them apart from the world.*

**Duration:** 1:01:51

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:44, Matthew 5:48, Matthew 5:46, Matthew 5:45, Matthew 5:46, Matthew 5:48, Matthew 5:44, Matthew 5:46, Matthew 5:48

**Topics:** "Love Your Enemies", "Reflecting God's Character"

---

## Description

This sermon focuses on the command to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us, highlighting the need to go beyond loving those who love us back and to care for those outside our inner circles. The sermon emphasizes the importance of being sons of our Heavenly Father by reflecting His character of love and perfection in our interactions with others, even those who mistreat us. It challenges believers to examine their prayer life and level of care for those who are different or hostile towards them, urging them to seek a supernatural love that sets them apart from the world.

---

## Transcript

Matthew 5 and verse 43 is where we'll read this afternoon. The last section you have heard that it was said, you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

Now that was verse 44 from the English Standard Version. I know if you have a text, King James, New King James, that you have a longer verse 44. Basically, here's the thing.

There is a textual issue here and it's not as though the ESV lacks these verses. You can find them over in Luke 6. It's basically directly from, Luke 6 reads this, but I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you. Do good to those who hate you and bless those who curse you.

If you've got your ESV or you've got an NIV, if you've got a Holman Christian, any of the modern versions, you're basically not going to see those in Matthew 5. And so from now on, I'm not going to include them. They basically are in the same spirit as loving your enemies and praying for those who persecute you, to bless those who curse you, to do good to those who hate you. So, just making that really plain, I know we have different translations here.

Verse 45, So that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven, for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? That's what the ESV says. Again, if you've got a translation based on the received text, you have tax collector twice here.

Critical text goes tax collector and then Gentile. Verse 48, You therefore must be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect. Now, these are some of the most well-known words that our Lord Jesus Christ has spoken.

These are often referred to, often referenced. Wow, I mean these, without the interruptions because of the translational differences, you've heard that it was said you should love your neighbor and hate your enemy. I say love your enemies.

Pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven, for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, sends His rain on the just and the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Don't even the tax collectors do the same? If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? You therefore must be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect. The title of this sermon, the title I'm giving it, is there anything special about you? And of course it comes from verses 46 and 47.

Look at them again. For if you love those who love you, what's special about you? Basically, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? What more do you do? In other words, how are you special? That's the question Jesus wants to ask ourselves. How are you special? Are you more special than the tax collector? You see, one of the things He's been saying in all of this is you better be more special than the scribes and the Pharisees.

But sometimes He actually reaches out to the tax collectors and to sinners, to Gentiles as well. How are you special? That's the question of the hour. That's a question, I mean as I've been preparing this, that's a question I have to ask.

You recognize when I come up here and I ask you this question, I've already had to sit at my desk and ask myself. I don't just do this mindlessly. I'm letting that word hit me right between the eyes.

I'm asking myself this question. That's the question. Jesus is posing the question to each of us.

Is there anything special? Is there anything different? I mean you can take the natural man at his very best, the natural man, the lost man. Take lost men out of this world at their very best and at their very highest. And the true Christian is a man or a woman that will always rise above that.

That's what He's saying here. If you basically look at yourself and you're not any better than that, what reward do you have? What do you more? Jesus has a real big expectation here that if you belong to Him

and you belong to His kingdom and He's actually saved you and redeemed you and the power of the cross, power of resurrection is released in your life and you possess the Holy Spirit, you are going to rise above the natural man. There's going to be something special.

This is something we can never emphasize strongly enough. Brethren, you know this. There's a form of godliness.

There's a form of Christianity that denies the power of it. We are surrounded by it all the time. People, they carry their Bible and they come to church meetings, but you know what? The reality is that when you really look at their love, because that's what He's dealing with here.

He's dealing with not just loving your friends, but loving your enemies. And He says, you know, bottom line, we don't have any problem loving and greeting those that we're friendly with, those who we like. But He's saying outside of that realm, is there something different about you? The Christian is a person who cannot be explained just simply the way the world explains people.

There's something else. Natural terms aren't going to do it. And listen, Tozer said this long ago, but one of the greatest proofs that there is something horribly wrong is when there's nothing mysterious or nothing supernatural about us.

There's nothing that really, you look at the person and yes, they carry a Bible. Yes, they come to church. They might even be real sticklers for being on time.

But the reality is when you look at their life, are they really different in the way they, especially enemies? You know, that's the key here. People that you don't necessarily like, people that maybe rub you wrong, people that aggravate you, people that persecute you, people that are after you, people that make your life hard, people that are unkind to you. How is it there? And isn't it interesting how this is our Lord speaking and He goes after us right at the point where, you know what, if you love those who love you back, if you basically reciprocate, you pat them on the back, they pat you on the back, you get something.

I mean, it's a son, it's a daughter, it's a brother or a sister, it's somebody that you're close to and you're greeting them and loving them. It's to say to the Lord, well, you know, I love my grandson or I love my niece or nephew or I love my child. He says, well, that's great.

Tax collectors do that. Is there anything more special about you than that? That's what's happening. When the world can explain us, when the world can basically say, well, look at them.

Yeah, they go to church and everything, but they're just like us. That's what He's after. I mean, you know what, there's way too much willingness to accept this kind of Christianity in our day.

There's too much apathy about this reality. Jesus is laying down His initial massive sermon that's dealing with His kingdom and what people in His kingdom are like. And as He's wrapping up this first chapter, He brings it to a head.

Perfect. You know what He doesn't want us to do? He doesn't want us to sit here and wrestle with, well, can we really be perfect or not? People that just wrestle with that, they're not even thinking about what He's hitting us with here. That isn't what He's wanting us to do.

He doesn't want us to get in some big theological argument about whether you can be perfect or not. That's not the issue. What He's saying is this.

Look at your life. Are you just like the rest of the people out there, but you come to church once or twice a week? You maybe carry around a Bible. Maybe you say your prayers.

Maybe you actually read from that Bible from time to time. But your love, is there something about your love that is distinctly different, distinctly God-like? That's one of the issues here. I mean, when Jesus says, what more are you doing than others? He poses that question to us precisely because He saves us to take us higher, on a higher realm, a higher platform than the rest of the people are.

You get that? That's His expectation. If you're saved, you are different. You are unique.

You're not like the lost man. The Christian can never be explained in simply natural terms. Why? Because there's something supernatural about us.

The reality is we're indwelt by the Spirit. We're new creations. We've been born again.

The power of God is unleashed in our life. The divine nature Peter talks about. If you've got that divine nature operative in you, if you're a new man and not the old man anymore, you know what? You're going to be different.

And you can't help but be different. You must be different. Why? Because Christianity goes deep.

It goes into our very essence. We are transformed people. And that's what He's after.

I mean, we have to ask, am I doing more than others? Am I something beyond what others are? In fact, am I doing something that other people are actually incapable of doing? Because they're bondage. They're dupes of Satan. They're locked into their sin.

But I have a freedom they don't have. I have the ability to do what they can't do. So let's break this down.

Look at our Lord's teaching here. You have heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. Now, we have not heard that.

See, what do you mean? I mean, we're not like His disciples He's speaking to here. You do recognize that at the time Jesus was teaching this, basically Israel had sat under the Mosaic Law for 15 centuries. Not us.

You know what we've done? We basically are in the West that has sat under Jesus' teaching for 2,000 years. You don't think you should love your... even when you're lost. We're not raised where we think, Well, we should love our neighbor and hate our enemies.

We don't think that way. Why? Because Jesus' teaching too much permeates our thinking. We've heard.

Have we not heard? Love your neighbor as yourself. I mean, even when we're lost. Even as a nominal Catholic.

If you would have told me, Love your neighbor and hate your enemies. Well, none of us hear that. We hear that we're supposed to love our enemies.

Because we've gotten it from Jesus' teaching. That's basically where we are. But the people at that time, it was different.

And I would just ask you this. You think there's anything in the Old Testament that would lend credibility to hating your enemies? Obviously, we know that the Old Testament taught to love your neighbor as yourself. Jesus said as much.

They asked him, what's the great commandment? And he said, well, it's loving God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength. And loving your neighbor as yourself. Obviously, the Old Testament taught to love your neighbor as yourself.

That was the golden rule that you want to do unto others. And we know that reality. But was there anything in the Old Testament that actually said we should hate our neighbors? Or hate our enemies, rather? Anything? There's the imprecatory Psalms.

And maybe even more than that. You had statements like this. When the Lord your God brings you into the land that you are entering to take possession of it.

And clears away many nations before you. The Hittites. The Girgashites.

The Amorites. The Canaanites. The Perizzites.

The Hivites. The Jebusites. Seven nations more numerous and mighty than you.

When the Lord your God gives them over to you and you defeat them. Then you must devote them to complete destruction. You shall make no covenant with them.

And show no mercy to them. And then, of course, you had people like the Amalekites. And God said, I mean he basically said, I'm wiping those people out.

Thus said the Lord of hosts, I've noted what Amalek did to Israel in opposing them on the way. When they came out of Egypt. Now go and strike Amalek and devote to destruction all that they have.

Do not spare them. Kill man, woman, child, infant. Ox, sheep, camel, donkey.

I mean wipe them out. No pity. No mercy.

No compassion. Even that little baby that's just three days old. Kill that.

Now, you know, what I would say is this. We need to recognize that when God wiped out Sodom and Gomorrah. He did it by fire from heaven.

When he wiped out the Canaanites. He did it with the sword of Joshua. But you know what? In both cases, it was a divine judgment.

God has a prerogative. God does. And I want you to just recognize something.

Do you know when God spoke to Abraham? He said, the sin of the Amorites is not yet full. And he gave them another 400 years of shining his sun on them and sending his rain on them. Before he came in and totally wiped them out.

And I'll tell you what. When you come over to the New Testament and you look at like the divine judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah. We are specifically told that that is an example of what God is going to do to all of the ungodly.

So before, I'll tell you this. Before we get bent out of shape. We recognize this.

God was very long suffering. Very long suffering. And he specifically said, by the time he sent Israel in there to kill them.

He said, look, I want you to recognize something. It's not because of your righteousness that this is happening. It's definitely because of their unrighteousness that this is happening.

But don't think it's your righteousness. And in fact, in the end, they ended up, most of them perishing as well. The thing is, what we need to recognize is this.

What Jesus is arguing from is the fact that God allows his son to shine on the just and the unjust. The good and the evil. That's what he's calling us to imitate.

Does God have a prerogative to bring judgment? He does. But you see what the scribes and the Pharisees were doing? They were basically taking all of this so far as to think it was their business. It was their right.

It was their duty to hate certain people. And we see their hatred. Can you think of the hatred of the scribes and the Pharisees? I just very quickly let it flow through my mind that they called Jesus.

They said he's a Samaritan and has a demon. Look, if you're calling Jesus a Samaritan and you're trying to come up with the most derogatory thing that you can possibly say to him. You see their hatred for the Samaritan.

In fact, you know that even the disciples were surprised that Jesus talked to the Samaritan woman. Because the woman was surprised that Jesus talked to her. Because the Jews don't have dealings with them.

They would walk around Samaria usually. But you also see that these scribes and the Pharisees, the Jews all together. Do you remember what happened very early on in Luke's gospel? Where Jesus said, hey, let me tell you something.

There he is in the synagogue. And he says, hey, you know what? In Elijah's day, guess what? There were many widows in Israel. But Elijah didn't go to any of them.

Went to a Gentile. Oh, guess what? In Elisha's day, there were many lepers in Israel. But guess what? Naaman, the Syrian.

And you know what they wanted to do? They wanted to kill him. Why? Because there was a hatred for Gentiles. And we could go on with the hatred.

The Pharisees, they saw Jesus eating with the tax collectors and sinners. And you can tell, they wouldn't do that. They despised them.

They distanced themselves. Jesus, he was in there eating with them. But, you know, they were finding fault with him.

Or you think about this. The Pharisees. This crowd that does not know the law is accursed.

They didn't even like their own people. You remember the blind man in John 9. They answered him, you were born in utter sin. And would you teach us? And they cast him out.

I mean, basically, here's what the Pharisees had done. They basically defined neighbor as just anybody that they wanted to love. And their enemy, the people that they felt justified to hate, was just anybody that they didn't like.

You can see their hatred just being cast all around. They basically just whittled neighbor down to whoever they wanted to. And again, you remember, these guys were really skilled in trying to cover their sin by some technical apparent law keeping.

Well, you know, we have a right to do this. Because after all, what? God wiped out the Gershites. I mean, if he can do that and he wanted us to hate the Amalekites, well, certainly we can hate our enemies and we can do this.

They basically justified hating anyone they wanted to hate. Okay, so what does the Lord have to say? But I say, love your enemies. Pray for those who persecute you.

Now, this takes us back to the message last week about dying to self. See, this all has to do with our attitude towards ourselves. What we looked at last week was the negative.

Don't resist him who is evil. It was the negative. This week, it's the positive.

Brethren, I'll tell you, this is the climax of the Christian life. Really, the climax of the Christian life does come down to this. It comes down to love.

And that's what we find before us. Not just loving our wives and our husbands and our son and our daughter and our mother and our father. It's not that.

But even our enemies. How? How do you love an enemy? Like we talked about last week. Detachment from self.

Until a man is detached from himself, he's never going to be detached from what others do to him. That's really at the heart of this. As long as I'm living for myself.

You know what happens when you're living for yourself? You know what happens when you're all absorbed with yourself? You're going to be sensitive. And other people are going to control you. You see, what Jesus is after is when you can't be controlled by other people.

And you know exactly what I mean. You see, how'd your day go? I had a horrible day. Why? So and so, well, they gave me a hard time.

They didn't do this. They didn't do that. They didn't slap me on the back.

They didn't give me all my strokes. They didn't speak kindly of me. You see, you're just controlled by other people when you're having a good day or a bad day based on how people treat you.

And that's the thing. It's becoming detached. As long as I'm living for myself, you know what happens? I'm sensitive.

I'm protective. I get jealous easy. Why? Because I'm living for me.

And if you've got something I want, then I don't like it. Very protective. Very offended easily.

Therefore, always reacting immediately to what others do to me. And the only way to detach yourself from what others do to you is detach yourself from yourself. I mean, brethren, do you realize what has to happen? As new creations in Christ, something happens.

We're in this position of detachment so that I'm no longer in that position where that person has the ability like the strings of a puppet to pull my heart or my brain or my thinking one way or the other. I mean, you have to ask yourself this. Are you controlled by others? How much are you controlled by others? You know, you go downtown and you get, like you just think about this, you go to the city center and you get somebody screaming in your face and using the most detestable language, insulting you, mocking you.

You know what? As saved people, as new creations, we see people through a different lens. You see, this homosexual is attacking me. But what do I see? I mean, do you not remember how it was when you first got saved? I'll tell you what happened to me.

I didn't see people the same way anymore. I began to look around at everybody and everybody was now, the lens I looked through, there was only two categories. You were saved or you were lost.

And if you were lost, you needed to be saved. And if you were lost, you were like, I just was before I got saved. And I'm looking at myself and I recognize I was absolutely ignorant.

I was a dupe of Satan. I was being led around by the lusts of my sins. And what now? Now I see everything as it is.

I see that they're lost. I see that they're running madly to an eternity in hell. That's what I see.

I see that they are governed by the God of this world. I see that He has blinded their eyes. They can't see the beauty of Christ.

They can't see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. They can't perceive the glory of the gospel. Their eyes are blind and He's blinded them.

And I recognize I am holding. It's just like in that second part of Pilgrim's Progress. The angel is holding the crown over the man's head.

And he's just raking the muck. Raking the muck. And he won't look up.

And there's a crown offered to him. And what a picture Bunyan created there. That's what these people are doing.

They're raking their muck. The muck of their sin and their lust. And they're down there and they're just furious.

And they're trying to justify their own consciences, which are all seared and screaming. So much do they scream. There was one girl that called yesterday after being offended.

A day before she woke up and still that thing is just grating at her. That we would tell her that there is hell for people who won't repent of these things. But see, we see everything through a new lens.

You see, folks, the thing is you suddenly have to come to this place where because your eyes have been opened supernaturally, you're in a place where you become so sorry for them that you stop being sorry for yourself. You see, that's how we were when we were lost. We were just sorry for ourselves, thinking about ourselves.

Everything was built on pride. Everything was built on us. And now He's given us eyes to see past it.

We're safe. We're in His hands. That blood covers us.

But we look at them and we recognize they're not safe. And judgment's coming. And life is short.

And it's but a vapor. And they only have a few more days. And you look at them.

I was looking at that young lady that called yesterday and wanted to complain. But I was the one that provoked her on Friday. I mean, I basically just, she got that track, Are you a good person? And it wasn't really even me.

It was the words that the Apostle Paul wrote. But she said, she's screaming out to everybody, They're telling me I'm going to hell. But that's the truth.

I mean, we're not doing any favors to gloss over this. And you see what happens. What happens is we suddenly are caring for other people more than we're caring for ourselves.

That's what love is about. And that's, I mean, this is the way in which we have to test ourselves. That's what Jesus is going after here.

Are they our enemies? Well, yeah, they hate us. They hate us. They say the most vile, profane things.

They want to hurt us. I mean, you know, they hit Angus with their milk, with an egg, with other food. But I'll tell you what.

It's no different from the crowd that threw stones and hit Howell Harris in the head. And he was never the same after that. I mean, some of the Methodist preachers, I've read of some that have lost their eyeballs.

Because they got hit by rocks. I mean, some of them probably didn't live. It's the same kind of crowd.

They hate us. And why are we up there? Why are we up there? Somebody was saying to Sonny yesterday, you know, about how we hate them. And Sonny said, no, we love you.

That's why we're out here. Well, that's a reality. That's what Jesus is after.

Is there anything special about you? You see, that's the issue. Well, the world, how do they react when somebody strikes out? Well, we saw it last week. They strike back.

But what happens? What happens when suddenly you're saved? I'll tell you what happens. I mean, I rode my bike down there on Friday to go see Dale and Angus and Peter. And had that encounter with that girl.

And riding all the way home, probably 20, 30 minutes, riding up Rochdale Road. I could not stop thinking about her. And I was just pleading with the Lord.

Please, save that girl. Save that girl. Lord, I felt so strong for her.

And see, he says right here, pray for those who persecute you. There was a lady in the crowd that said, I know that girl. You're telling her she's going to hell? That's one of the nicest girls I know.

And the girl's just up in arms. They're telling me I'm going. And she looks to Peter who's preaching, like, to salvage the whole thing and help her.

And she says, he told me I'm going to hell because I'm homosexual. And he said, you are. And, you know, here's this lady over here telling us what a great girl she is.

And now the most vile language came out of her. This nice girl. I mean, you see what they really are.

How does the world react to that? How does the world react at being swore at? At being called all sorts. Well, they strike back. And that's how we were.

But what Jesus is saying is, you know what, if that's all you do, if you're able to love your little grandchild or your child or your mom or your dad, well, that's great. But if you're not able to go down there, and if you're not able to be basically confronted in the workplace by people that don't like you because you're a Christian, people that will distance themselves from you because you're a Christian, and you single them out and love them and pray for them. See, he says, pray for those who despitely use you.

You want to test yourselves? Do you pray for people that are mean and unkind to you? Do they find a chief place in your prayers? You see, this is where he's coming from. Is there something special about you? That's pretty special. I told you last week about the guy in Khartoum, Sudan, who prayed for his persecutor.

The guy broke his leg, broke his arm, put his eye out. He prayed for him for 25 years. And God saved that cruel Muslim man that had so abused him.

What more do you do than others? You see, this is the real issue. Do you feel sorry for those who attack you so that you begin to pray for them? And Jesus takes us even further into more glorious truths. Still look at it.

Verse 44, I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. I mean, did you grasp that? I mean, what's a Christian? Well, one of the elect, undoubtedly. A disciple.

Yep. A believer. A saint.

What makes a Christian so different and unique and special is that we're sons. We're actually sons. Do you know we're sons legally by adoption? But we're sons by nature through the new birth.

Which means we're actually bearing something of the nature, the divine nature, in ourselves as new creations, as born again individuals. What more are you than others? Is there something of your Father that shines through? That's exactly where his argument is going. Is there anything special about you? This is what makes a Christian special.

Jesus does not simply say right here, well, so that you're like God. He doesn't even say so that you're sons of God. That's how he says it.

Sons of your Father who is in heaven. God actually births us into his family. And now, you know this.

God is not a universal Father. The Bible never teaches that. A lot of people like to tout that.

But, you know, the truth is that the vast majority of mankind, they bear that very ignoble title of being children of the devil. That's what the Scripture teaches us. He is no universal Father.

But the point is this. If God is your Father, I mean the test in all of this, is that there's going to be a resemblance. Jesus doesn't simply say we're to be perfect, even as God in heaven is perfect.

But he says, be perfect as your heavenly Father. He really likes to take us there. Your heavenly Father.

Think how he is. If God is your Father, you're going to be special. Listen to what John says.

No one born of God makes a practice of sinning. Why? For God's seed abides in him, and he cannot. You see, you must rise above others.

Why? You cannot stay the way you were. You cannot be like that. His seed's in you.

I mean, if you're a child, he's your father. His seed is in you. That's not just theory or theoretical.

I mean, there's a reality there. You actually are different. I mean, we cannot overestimate this in the church.

But the true Christian is not simply a person out there that decided to get religious and started going to church. Or simply said a prayer and walked it out. That is not it.

There is something supernatural that happens here. And that's what he's after. That's what he's driving.

So the question is this. Is there something of your father about you? That's his argument. There's only one reason our Lord speaks the way that he does in these verses.

He assumes that any true, legitimate, born in the Spirit, son of God, he's always going to resemble his parent. And so, what's special about you? If you love those who love you, and if you greet those who greet you, there's nothing special. But there's plenty special about our Father in Heaven.

Look at this. Verse 45, For he makes his Son rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rains on the just and on the unjust. Don't you love that? He makes his Son.

I like that. The unbelieving scientific world, they basically look at the sun, they see this hot ball of glowing gases. Isn't it amazing? They study it.

They can dissect the basic chemical composition of this thing and what they estimate the temperature is in this thing and how long they think that this thing has existed and they've got all their theories. Isn't it amazing? They dishonor God. They suppress what can be known about him.

They're evil. They're the evil people. Some of the evil people that are being talked about here.

But it's his Son. The Christian, we look up at the sun. That's my Father's Son.

I love that. His Son. It's his earth.

It's his building. Those are his clouds. It's his rain.

That's his Son. And he makes it rise on the evil. So, the question is this.

Are you a son of this Father? Do you take what's yours and give it to the evil as well? Are you so protected? No, no. I can't go there. I can't share with the evil.

I can't give to the evil. I can't let the evil people take up too much of my time and my prayer. Then what's special about you? You see, that's where Jesus is coming from in all this.

What's like your Father in you? Do you get annoyed with people? Or do you become so sorry for them that you forget yourself? I mean, do you imagine? Do you see them? Do you imagine people? I imagine this. I imagine judgment day. I mean, that girl down there.

That's where I took her. Judgment day. She said, well, I'll say to God.

No, I said, you won't say that. Your mouth will be closed. But do you imagine people? I mean, you read there in Matthew 7. Before we get done with the Sermon on the Mount, we're going to see it.

People are thrown into hell. Into the lake of fire. Do you imagine people? Do you imagine the shock? Do you imagine just the people on their deathbed? When all of a sudden their youth is gone.

Their life is spent. And now their conscience is just screaming. And the devil who deceived them is now.

He doesn't hold back. Now he just accuses them. And laughs at them.

He deceived them. He kept them in the dark. Now he shows himself.

Oh, I know. People die and they begin to see demons. And they begin to hear them.

Because the veil is being pulled back. And now those demons are not so interested in keeping themselves concealed. They just love to toy with mankind.

And hold them over the pit of hell by a string. And every time the string snaps and another one falls in. They just rejoice.

They laugh. They mock. These people that were made in the image of God.

Anything Christ like about them. They despise. They hate.

Anything God like about them. They can't stand it. They hate God.

They want to attack. That's why the devil was so keen on deceiving Adam in the beginning. This was God's chief creation in this world.

He just wants to destroy. He's a murderer. And he just loves to dangle these people over.

Do you envision them? Do you see the people? I see them. On their deathbed. I saw this girl on her deathbed.

Just suddenly her youth is gone. Oh you can be real bold when you're young. And you think you've got forever to live.

I always love it when Sonny likes to tell the 20 year olds how many weekends they have left. Because they're numbered. And that's if they live to be 70.

But so many people's lives are cut short. And then what? I remember standing at the side of my stepdad as he passed off into eternity. And you're just thinking what is he seeing? This man who would not surrender to the Lord.

Do you see people? I mean, then what's special about you? What's like God in you? Does that lead you to pray for people? I just ask you, what sort of Heavenly Father do you have? What's the God like that you know? I mean, I find that God doesn't only make His Son rise on the evil and the good. I find that this God, He saw this sinful, arrogant, stiff-necked, vile world. And He sent His only begotten Son into it.

He saw us in our sin. He saw us in our filth. Just like Ezekiel 16.

It just describes Israel as being in their blood. Like a baby born with the umbilical cord hanging off. Nobody watched it.

It's just in its blood, in its filth. And God saw it. And came and He had mercy.

That's the kind of God we have. That's the kind of Father we have. And Jesus is saying this.

That's what you want to be like. You want to be like Him. When you see that rainfall, you can look up and down your street.

You can recognize the vast majority of these people up and down my street. They don't know the Lord. And you know what? This rain is falling down in the fields.

It's going to bring nourishment. It's going to bring moisture to the very fruit and vegetables that they are going to eat. It's nourishing the grass that those lambs, that those sheep out there, that those cows out there are going to eat.

And the wicked are going to enjoy those steaks. And God is good at doing that. And Jesus is saying this.

Are you different than the rest of the world? Are you like this Heavenly Father? Because if you're a son, you will be. See, sonship in Scripture has so much to do with an identity that's characteristically like the one who's your father. See, Jesus, he full well knew they were biologically offspring of Abraham.

But he said, you're no son of Abraham because you don't do the things that he does. They said, no, we're children of God. He said, no, you're not.

You would love me if that were the case because God loves. And so his children will love. See, it's a characteristic reality.

He said, no, as a matter of fact, you're like your father, the devil. What Jesus is saying here is this. How do you react to people? We could just examine your prayer life because that's one of the things he says.

You pray for them. You say, well, I'm nice to my children. No, no, no, that's not what he's saying here.

If you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same. If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? See, I don't know a better test than this, our prayer life. I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

I just would ask you to do this. Be honest. Honesty is always the best thing when it comes to God, when it comes to Scripture, when it comes.

We're people of truth. So we want to lay it all on the table. Be honest before the all-seeing, all-knowing God.

Your whole prayer life, your prayer life is illuminated before him right now. He knows underneath his all-seeing gaze. Don't claim more than you know to be true.

But I want to ask you some questions. Jesus is talking about those who persecute us. And I want to ask you something.

Do you personally live godly enough to even be persecuted? So that you have persecutors to pray for in your prayer life. That's a worthy question. Because the Apostle Paul said that all who are going to desire to live godly.

What did he say? Basically if you desire to live godly, you will be persecuted. In Jesus Christ, you think of the holiest man that ever lived. He could not escape it.

He was a man of sorrows. And those sorrows were chiefly brought on him by mankind. And they killed him.

In the end they killed him. Here's the thing. We're told to be salt and light.

I'll guarantee you this. If you proclaim the gospel even halfway sufficient enough to let people know. That Christ is the only way to eternal life.

And if you don't have eternal life, you have eternal death. If you will make that message halfway understood. You will be persecuted.

If you do what Jesus did. He said, they hate me without a cause. You know what he did? They hate the light.

Why? Because they basically wanted to hold on to their darkness. And Jesus exposed their sin. If you tell people what they're doing is sin.

And will take them to hell. You will be persecuted. I'll just say this.

Anybody who desires to live godly. Is going to be persecuted. Anybody that is any amount of salt and light in this world.

You will be persecuted. And the Bible says as much. This isn't coming from me.

And so I would say this. If you're not being persecuted. Then you are not living godly.

And or. You are not taking that godliness out. Into the world where they can see you.

If you will live godly in front of the watching world. You will be persecuted. So that's the first question.

Do you face. Even the kind of mockery. Or people wanting to distance themselves from you.

Are you being that faithful to be salt and light. That you're actually bringing persecution. Because Jesus is assuming.

That if you're living. According to the Beatitudes. And everything he's been teaching here.

That you will indeed. He just assumes it. He doesn't say live so as to be persecuted.

But he says. Pray for those who persecute you. He just assumes that's going to happen.

Second question is this. I want to ask you this. How much do you actually pray for people that are outside of your inner circles? If you love those who love you.

What reward do you have? Tax collectors and Gentiles do that. And I'm not talking about the prayer meeting. Listen in the prayer meeting.

That doesn't count. Why? Because in the prayer meeting. You got other people watching.

You got other people listening. I ask you this. When you're by yourself.

How much are you praying for people that. How much do you pray for the homosexuals? Or for the Muslims? Or for the guy at work? Or the guy at school? Or the girl? Who mistreats you? Or the family member? That brother or sister? Who hate you because of your Christianity? How much do you pray for those in other countries? How much do you pray for those of other ethnicities? Other skin color? How much are you praying for those outside of your immediately little inner circle? Your irritable neighbor? And then I would ask this. What reward do you have? Jesus says this.

If you love those who love you. What reward do you have? And I find that very interesting. See he brings this into a reward category.

And you know. Often times the scripture is just setting things in a perspective of judgment. And the end.

Reward. What reward do you have? Let me ask you something. If your life ended today.

And judgment. It's pointed to men once to die. And your day was today.

And then the judgment. Would your prayer life give you away as deserving a reward? Because he says pray for those who persecute you. I mean this has to do with loving our enemies.

This has to do with how far our love goes. This is way beyond loving your wife. Or loving your child.

But does your prayer life give away that you love people way beyond your inner circles? Does it give proof? Because that's where Jesus is here. This is what he's teaching. This is what this is all about.

Reward. Would Jesus say that your prayer life warrants a reward? Christ is going to be the judge. And he's going to see it all.

Or would Jesus say to you. You see that tax collector over there? I know. I know you visited the church every Sunday.

But you know the reality. When I look at your love. When I look.

And the love is tested by your prayer life. Truth is. You prayed for the same.

You prayed for the people. You loved. Who loved you back.

That tax collector over there did the same thing. Yeah you had a morality. And you had a veneer of Christianity about you.

But the truth is. You're just like them. That's really what he's saying.

What more do you do than others? What's special about you? See that's. I told you. When I was preparing for this.

I have to ask myself that. And brethren I know. I mean I can honestly say.

I know I should pray for. I should pray more. I should be.

Brethren. I can have somebody. Call me the most vile name.

But I feel. I can weep tears for those homosexuals down there. I greatly desire.

That our church should be filled with a bunch of them. That have been saved. Would there be such a massive difference between you and them.

That it would prove that you are indeed. A son of this father in heaven. That we have in scripture.

I mean. You know. We're told.

He's going to say well done. And basically what's going to be. It's going to be from everything that we did in the body.

It's going to be what we did in this life. And what Jesus is talking about here right now. See.

Love. Love your neighbor. Or love your enemy.

Sometimes we. Love. Can be something that can become somewhat ambiguous.

And we can. We can think we are. That's why I bring it to the.

To your prayer life. Because a prayer life. You know what you pray about.

You know how much your prayer life is selfish. And I'm not saying we can't pray for ourselves. I would call it selfish.

Only if. You only pray for yourself. That is.

That is revealing selfishness. I'll tell you this. And I think this is something to stick with all of us.

She said you know the opposite of love. Is not hatred. The opposite of love is indifference.

You just don't care. It's not that you feel a hatred. It's you just don't care about people.

Like. It's beyond me. How anybody can hear these stories coming out of Myanmar.

And not just be shaken. To the depths of your soul. I can understand it.

From a lost person. From my lost days. I wouldn't have cared.

But see. You see what the whole thing is. What are you more than others? Because.

Because the thing is. That. Our God.

He. Makes. His son.

Rise. On the evil. He makes it happen.

He initiates it. He causes it. And what.

If we're his children. What is it? Where are we at? To hear those words. I mean do you want a reward? What reward do you have if you're just like them? Why? I don't want to be just like them.

I don't want to be just like the Gentiles. And the tax collectors. I don't want to be like.

I don't want to be like the scribes and the Pharisees. I want to. I want something supernatural.

Something like Jesus is talking about here. I want something in my father to shine through. Don't you? I mean.

Brothers. Sisters. Listen.

One of. One of the things he talks about here. Is.

Just. Just such a simple mundane thing. As.

Greeting. One another. If you just greet those who greet you.

And I thought. You know. The church is such a. Great.

Proving ground. Even for that. I mean I would ask you this.

Somebody new comes in the church. Do you greet them? Say no. You greet your husband or wife when you get up in the morning.

You greet your children. You greet your friend. You greet.

Yeah I greet them. But you come to church. And a new person comes in.

Do you greet them? No I don't greet them. Okay. What does Jesus say? We greet those who greet you.

Tax collectors. The Gentiles. They do that.

You see the point is love. The point is. Again.

Dying to self. It's coming out. Of.

Our comfort zone. For the sake of. Others.

It's. It's being gripped. By.  
The needs of others. It's being gripped by. Others.  
And. And. Becoming consumed enough with them.  
And caring enough about them. That you stop thinking about yourself. That's really the issue here.  
And then there's this last verse. In Matthew chapter 5. Brethren. This is.  
This is the sum. Of all of it. This sums up the Christian life.  
In one amazing statement. You therefore. Must be perfect.  
As your heavenly father. Is perfect. I mean this is the quality of life.  
We're to live. And you see. What the context is.  
Again. He doesn't want us to go home. And debate.  
Theologically. About whether you can be. What he's wanting you to do.  
Is. Be godlike. In the way you treat other people.  
Even people that don't like us. Even people that attack us. Or attack you.  
That's the issue here. Be perfect. This is.  
And you know the thing about this. You can mark it down. The very fact we're commanded.  
To do these things. Carries with it. The implicit reality.  
That it's possible. For people who are born again. To do what's commanded.  
I mean this is something we can do. This is something we must do. I know.  
Listen. You know what. It can almost be discouraging.  
That the standard seems so high. But you know what it also does. It ought to encourage you.  
To bring you up. Into the realm of glory. By reminding us.  
I'm a child of God. He's my heavenly father. I'm not in this all by myself.  
His seed's in me. His spirit's in me. His son died for me.  
His son's saving me to the uttermost. I'm a child of God. He's my father in heaven.  
I'm not left to myself in all of this. There's life. There's power.  
There's sustenance. There's help. I'm abiding in Christ.  
I can go forth. And I can live. Like he calls me to live.

And I can have a reward in the end. And there is a reward in the end. And there is an inheritance in the end.

And that's what we're told. We can live. You know what brethren? You can live.

Above. The tax collector. And the Gentile.

Why? Because. Because the power of God is sufficient. Is there anything special about you? I mean.

Look. If this father. In heaven.

Is your father. Then there is something very special about you. Perfection brethren.

That's what our Lord calls for. And do you feel the authority in all of this? He's like. You've heard it said.

But I say. Wow. Jesus authoritatively makes plain.

What the demands of his kingdom are. And that Jesus is here with us. And the church hasn't changed.

Two thousand years. He still speaks the same to us. This is what he expects.

This is the expectation as we go forth. To live our lives. In our day.

In our time. In this generation. This is our time to live this way.

Is there anything special about you? That's what he's calling for. Special. Christianity.

Not just the. You know. The.

Life. In the old. Adamic.

Nature. Where. We just avenging wrongs all the time.

And hating our enemies. And only returning favors to those. Who.

Who pat us on the back. Love cares. Love gives.

Love takes notice. God so loved that he gave. And that's what's being called for here.

Look. I'm not asking you if you're moral. That's not the issue.

I'm not asking you if you attend church. That's not the issue. This lost world.

Those who don't like you. Your prayer life. When you look at it.

Is there anything special about you? What do you. What do ye more than others. KJV says.

Don't we believe in a God that makes. His sun rise on the just and the unjust. I mean that's.

Yeah. Okay that's. That's what he's calling forth from us.

Jesus calls to renounce all the. The convenient restrictions. We'd like to put on love.

And we do. Well you know. We can love those people over there.

But we are. Oh we become such. Very skilled.  
At the restrictions we put on love. And you know. We we so misconstrued worldliness.  
I'm moral. But you know what if all you do. And all your morality and all your church going.  
Is love those who love you. And greet those who greet you. You're exactly like the world.  
So brethren. I mean this sermon on the mount is. It does hit us between the eyes.  
But. Brethren. I'll tell you this.  
If you really have a new heart. We hunger. And thirst after righteousness.  
So something in you resonates with this. Lord you want the Lord to help you. Be this.  
God give us tears. You know one of the things. That I wrote in my last report.  
I send out. A Manchester report. To a bunch of people on my mailing list.  
And I. I said. You know. Our baptistry is dry.  
Remember the old Keith Green song. My eyes are dry. My faith is old.  
My prayers are dry. Something is cold. But I wrote in that last report.  
I said you know. I'm afraid that our. Baptistry is dry.  
And so are our eyes. Brethren. God help us to weep.  
For the lost. And to see them perishing. See the utter hopelessness.  
Without Christ. God help us feel something. Unfeeling Christianity is.  
That's not. Being a son of. The Heavenly Father.  
Father we. We pray. That you'd break our hearts.  
I hear of all the tears that. Our sister Rebecca. Weeps.  
Lord give us to groan. Give us to sigh. Give us to care.  
Help us. To be just Lord you call us. What are we doing more.  
Than the tax collector in the Gentile. You want us to be perfect as our. Heavenly Father is perfect.  
Lord we pray for the. For the power of the Spirit of God. To be unleashed upon us.  
To bring us into the realm of that kind of. Perfection to love to pray. To be.  
Special. To rise above. Lord please may that.  
Mark. The character of this church. May the reputation.

Grace Fellowship Manchester truly be. They care. They love they help.

They pray. They weep. Lord I pray that I'm just.

On judgment day it would indeed be found. We pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

You are dismissed.

---

Video: [https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/9Twh\\_-HTgxw.mp4](https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/9Twh_-HTgxw.mp4)

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/tim-conway/is-there-anything-special-about-you/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**