

Matthew 5:43-48

⁴³ "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'⁴⁴ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,⁴⁵ that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.⁴⁶ If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that?⁴⁷ And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that?⁴⁸ Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Disagreement does not inherently equal **OPPOSITION.**

MERCY is God withholding what we deserve.

GRACE is God giving what we do not deserve.

So What?

John 13:34-35

³⁴ "So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. ³⁵ Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."

Embracing others demonstrates our **IDENTITY** in Jesus.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Notes:

***"Faith never knows where it is being lead,
but it loves and knows the One who is leading."
- Oswald Chambers***



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Now What? [For Further Reflection]:

- :: Take a moment to pray that God will use this time of reflection and discussion to refine our relationship with him and others.
 - :: Share one thing God has been showing you or reminding you of through the relate+able message series?
 - :: Re-read Matthew 5:11-12.
 - :: Discuss the meaning and impact of what Jesus said.
 - :: What are some practical implications for us today?
 - :: Discuss some of the challenges associated with this.
 - :: Read Matthew 5:38-48
 - :: What stands out to you as you read Jesus' words?
 - :: What do you find especially challenging or encouraging?
 - :: How does this connect to an "embrace" space?
 - :: Share where you have struggled/succeeded to live this way.
 - :: Compare and contrast mercy and grace. Where have you seen, demonstrated or personally experienced either?
 - :: Pastor Shawn said, "Disagreement does not inherently equal opposition."
 - :: Discuss the implications of this statement.
 - :: Share how disagreement typically plays out in your life.
 - :: What causes an adversarial response? What overcomes it?
 - :: How does embracing those around us impact this?
 - :: Identify at least one person/relationship that God is asking you to create EMBRACE space for. What do you need to do next?
 - :: Invite a friend to pray for you as you take that next step this week.
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How to start a relationship with Jesus:

- 1) Admit that you, like everyone else, are in need of rescue.
- 2) Ask God to forgive your sins.
- 3) Say YES to God by trusting Jesus as Savior & Lord.

You can do that right now by simply talking to God in a prayer like this:

Dear Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner, and I ask for Your forgiveness. I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. Today, I choose to trust and follow You as my Risen Lord and Savior. Guide my life and help me to do Your will. In Your name, amen.

Unless otherwise noted, today's Scripture is from the
New International Version [NIV].

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