

**“Timeless Truth” Luke 6:27-31 (11/2/25)**

As I shared before, I have lived in and traveled to many countries since I was young. I have experienced many different cultures and met diverse people. Through these experiences, I learned that the world is full of diverse people and cultures, and that each person lives with different values and perspectives. These differences sometimes lead to conflict and division.

The diversity of thought and value does not come only from national or racial differences. Even among family members who grew up in the same house, in the same town, under the same parents, we can see how differently each person thinks. In fact, maybe human beings need to live their entire lives learning to recognize and adjust to one another’s differences.

However, among all the people and cultures I have encountered, regardless of country, culture, religion, or race, I discovered one thing that everyone agrees on. That is the love of a parent for their child. Of course, this may not apply to every single person or situation, but when we say, “Parents love their children,” I believe nearly everyone, across all cultural and value differences, agrees. That parent’s love has been passed down through generations, and it remains a timeless truth that never changes, regardless of the generations.

Today’s scripture also teaches us a timeless truth—one that has never changed since the time Jesus came to this world:

“Love your enemies”

As I shared before, love is one of God’s most unique characteristics. The fact that the relationship between God and humanity can be described with love shows the uniqueness of that relationship. Love stands at the very center of the Christian life. Every Christian wants to become a person who loves God and loves their

neighbor.

The call to love God and love one's neighbor was not new to the people of Jesus' time. Even in the Old Testament, these were the core values that the Israelites pursued. If we were to summarize all the laws and teachings of the Old Testament, we could point to Deuteronomy 6:5—

“Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength,”

and Leviticus 19:18—

“Love your neighbor as yourself.”

So, describing the relationship between humanity and God as one of love was not a new idea for the Jews of Jesus' time. But in today's passage, Jesus goes beyond that—Jesus commanded people to love even their enemies. To love one's enemies was a shocking teaching not only to Jews but also to Gentiles. The general belief at that time was that good people received God's blessings and evil people received God's punishment. Enemies were seen as those who deserved judgment, not love.

The Gospel author Luke recorded his message to share the good news with everyone in the Roman Empire, both Jews and Gentiles. He wrote in a way that Gentiles could also understand and relate to Jesus' teachings. Today, when we say “love,” we use just one English word. But in Greek, there were many words for different kinds of love—romantic love, friendship, family love, and especially the love between parents and children. The word Luke used in this passage was “Agapate.” And this word came from the word “Agapeo,” which refers specifically to God's holy love. So, when Jesus said to love your enemies, He was commanding people to love enemies with God's holy, divine love.

To the Gentiles, this teaching was very shocking. It was already impossible

to think of an enemy as a friend, or even as family—then, how can people love their enemies with God’s love? But, although it may have seemed impossible at first, Jesus’ command to love one’s enemies became one of the most important teachings in Christianity. Generations of Christians have struggled earnestly to live according to it.

When you read the Scripture today, how do you feel? Does it sound unreasonable? Or does it give you some mind, “Yes, I must live loving even my enemies”? I believe that every Christian who reads today’s Scripture must have at least once thought, “Even for one moment, I wish to have the love that can love my enemy.” What once seemed impossible when Jesus first spoke it has now become a hope in our hearts—to hold on to God’s love.

I believe there are two main reasons why this impossible teaching has become our living hope.

The first reason is because of Jesus Christ Himself.

When people first heard these words, they could not imagine that Jesus would later show such impossible love on the cross. But when Jesus showed that love on the cross and when the Holy Spirit came to dwell among people, this impossible love became the love that defines all Christians. The early Christians blessed those who cursed them, did good to those who hated them, and prayed for those who persecuted them. Jesus showed that love Himself on the cross, and through Him, we learned that such love is not impossible.

Second, we can hope to love even our enemies because of our ancestors of faith—our parents and spiritual ancestors who passed down this love to us.

Many people in other countries say that the United States is a blessed nation and land — a land rich in natural resources, talented people, economy, and

opportunity. But what I say the United States is a blessed land is not its physical abundance, but its heritage of faith.

No nation or people in history has ever been perfect, and America's history is no exception. However, this country began with faith and has been carried by people who left footprints of faith for future generations to follow. To have even one day, one moment, when we can speak about the faith of our ancestors, that is a great blessing.

When my father became a Christian, one of the burdens on his heart was that he could no longer participate in ancestral ceremonies. Later, he learned that in Christianity there is something called a memorial service for the ancestors, and he suggested that our family have the memorial service to remember our ancestors. At that time, I was a seminary student, and I had never led a memorial service, so I studied what it meant. I learned that it was a worship service to remember the faith of our ancestors and to give thanks for the spiritual heritage they left behind. But when we tried to plan that service, we realized that we had no stories of our ancestors' faith to share. So, we could not hold the service.

To be able to tell the stories of our ancestors' faith and inherit that legacy is truly one of the greatest blessings of all.

Even if not all of our ancestors lived a perfect life of faith, even if they could not testify to God's love every day, I believe that those who, even for one day in their lifetime, carried God's heart and showed God's love have passed that love down to us. Because of them, we are now able to have so many blessings.

I thank God that our church has such a long and rich history. Though I have only been here for about one year, that one year has been more than enough for me to meet people full of God's love. That love has given great comfort and

encouragement to my family, and it has inspired me to become a better pastor before God.

Today, we take this time to honor those who, during the past year, have gone ahead of us into God's arms. As we remember their names, let us also remember the love they shared with us and the faith they left behind for our church. Let us remember not only those people, but also all who have built the history of faith in our congregation, and let us carry the hope that we may follow in their faithful footsteps.

Amen.