

**I. Introduction.**

- A. What Jesus is demanding is impossible apart from His transforming grace. v. 27a  
v. 35b-36 6:47-49 9:35 Gal. 5:22-23 1 Cor. 2:14 Rom. 8:5-8 John 13:34-35 15:12
- B. To what extent is Jesus call to love a new commandment? John 13:34-35

**II. Jesus expects His disciples to demonstrate supernatural love. v. 27-31**

A. Jesus calls us to radical love. v. 27-28

1. Supernatural love – *love your enemies*. v. 27b,32,35 6:11 23:34 Mt. 5:43-44a  
Lev. 19:18 Job 31:29-34 Prov. 24:17 Rom. 9:1-3 Acts 7:59-60 1 Cor. 13:4-7
2. Supernatural deeds – *do good to those who hate you*. v. 27c 21:17 Ro. 12:17-21  
Ex. 23:4-5 Pr. 25:21-22 1 Th. 5:15
3. Supernatural words – *bless those who curse you*. v. 28a Ro. 12:14 Prov. 15:1  
1 Pe. 2:21-23 3:9 1 Co. 4:12
4. Supernatural prayers – *pray for those who abuse you*. v. 28b 23:34 Mt. 5:44b  
Acts 7:60 Psalm 35:11-16

B. Jesus gives examples of supernatural love. v. 29-30

1. Supernatural restraint – turn the other cheek when insulted. v. 29a Ro. 12:17-21  
Mt. 5:38-39 1 Pet. 2:22 Gen. 4:23-24 Acts 23:2
2. Supernatural forbearance – give the shirt off of your back. v. 29b 3:11 9:3  
Mt. 5:40 Ex. 22:25-27 Deut. 24:12-13 1 Co. 6:1ff
3. Supernatural generosity – give (lend) to everyone who asks and do not demand  
back what is yours. v. 30,34 14:13-14 Mt. 5:42 Dt. 15:7-10

C. The call to supernatural love is summarized by the golden rule. v. 31 Mt. 7:12  
Acts 15:29 Phil. 2:3ff Rom. 13:9

D. How literally are we to take these commands?

1. Jesus is not abrogating all rights to self-defense and private property.
2. Jesus' call to love has to do with our personal responses and does not mean civil  
authorities shouldn't resist evil (pacifism). 3:14 Ro. 13:4 1 Pe. 2:13f Acts 16:37ff
3. We are not precluded from confronting and warning those who do wrong.  
6:24-26 Mt. 18:15ff 23:13ff 1 Co. 16:22 John 18:22-23 Gal. 2:11ff 6:1
4. Nor are we expected to enable sluggards and criminals while forsaking our  
responsibilities to our own families. 2 Thess. 3:10 1 Tim. 5:8

E. What is your response to this hard commandment? Gal. 3:24 5:16ff Rom. 3:20  
Phil. 4:13 2 Cor. 5:17 Phil. 2:12-13 1 John 4:19

**III. Only God's children are able to imitate His supernatural love. v. 32-36**

A. True children of God surpass the natural love of the world. v. 32-34 Mt. 5:46-47

1. Sinners typically love those who love them – reciprocal (mercenary) love.
2. Has the gospel transformed you to be able to love beyond reciprocity?

B. As God's son (child), you are called to love in the way that God loves. v. 35b-36  
Mt. 5:45,48 1 Jo. 4:19 Ex. 34:6 Js. 5:11

1. He shows kindness to all of His (ungrateful) enemies in common grace. v. 35b  
Mt. 5:45 Ro. 1:21,28-32 2 Tim. 3:2 Acts 17:24ff Ps. 145:8-9,15-17

2. God has shown great mercy to you, His former enemy, in saving grace. v. 36  
Ro. 5:6-10 2:4 Col. 1:21 Eph. 2:1ff 1 Pe. 2:3 Neh. 9:19 Ps. 25:6
  3. Jesus perfectly lives out what He commands. 22:39ff Phil. 2:5ff John 15:13  
Acts 10:38 1 Pe. 2:20-23 Mt. 12:19f 26:53,67 Mark 14:65 15:16-20 Isa. 53:10-12  
Mt. 12:19-20 26:53
  4. He calls you to imitate His love. v. 35a Eph. 4:31-5:2
- C. As God's children you are able to love supernaturally. v. 35-36 1 Jo. 3:1-2
1. You share His divine nature. 2 Pet. 1:4 2 Co. 5:17
  2. He empowers us to love and to show mercy. Ro. 5:5
  3. Supernatural love proves that you are truly His child. John 13:35 1 Jo. 4:7-8
- D. What reward should we expect for loving in this godlike way? v. 35b 6:23 Rev. 21:7

#### IV. Application: How can we put these hard things into practice?

- A. First be sure that you are able to do supernatural things.
1. Are you a child of God? 1 Jo. 5:1
  2. Are you abiding in Christ and walking in the Spirit? John 15:5 Gal. 5:16ff  
Eph. 3:14-21 4:31-5:2
- B. Then step forth in faith and attempt supernatural things. Rom. 12:14-21
1. Cultivate an attitude of love towards your enemies. 1 Co. 4:7
  2. Deliberately, actively and generously do good to those who hate you. Ro. 12:20f
  3. Bless those who curse or insult you. Prov. 15:1 Luke 12:51-53
  4. Pray for those who mistreat you.
  5. Don't fight for your rights or seek revenge when wronged, but entrust judgment to God. Ps. 3:7 Rom. 12:19 1 Co. 6:1ff Pr. 17:14 Mt. 5:38 Ex. 21:23-25
  6. Lend (or give) to those who may never be able to pay you back. 14:13-14
  7. Positively treat others as you wish you were being treated.
- C. It is only through the cross that such radical supernatural love is possible.
1. Jesus died both to remove the penalty you deserve for your failure to love...
  2. And to give you the power to love as He loves. 24:49

#### Discussion questions

1. How does Jesus' teaching on love compare to that of other religions and philosophies?
2. What should be our first response in light of how far we fall short of Jesus' command?
3. Why should we even try to obey such radical commands, given that it is impossible for us to do so?
4. How have some of Jesus' commands been misunderstood?
5. How does Jesus' life exemplify these hard teachings?
6. How does the supernatural love of the sons of God differ from the natural love shown by unbelievers?
7. How does the work of Christ give you the pardon and power you need to face these imperatives?
8. How have you been guilty of damaging relationships by seeking returning evil for evil?  
What can you do to show your repentance?
9. Think of three people who have hurt you.
  - a. What is their greatest need?
  - b. What action can you take to show love to each of these people?
  - c. Will you commit to praying for each of them at least once a week?