

Luke

Carefully Investigating the Gospel ... Together

SSBC Luke Bible Study #17

Take this Bible Study home and use it to guide your exploration of the scripture passage that next Sunday's sermon will be focused on.

Passage: Luke 6:27-36

Sermon Date: Jan 8, 2006

Introduction:

If asked to list their enemies, many people in our area might list a certain sports team from New York City and its fans. Is it okay for Boston-based Christians to actually hate the Yankees? And what do we do after a certain center fielder defects and becomes one of “them”?

If we turn to God’s Word for counsel about what to do with this baseball quandary of ours, we find ourselves in quite a pickle. Jesus tells his disciples, and us, to love our enemies. What does this look like for ...

... the Red Sox fan who visits Yankee Stadium and is heckled by New York fans?

... the Christian faced with Massachusetts political tides that support gay-marriage?

... the worker who is told he or she is to say “Happy Holidays” instead of “Merry Christmas”?

Take some time to study this week’s passage in Luke, and see how God would have you apply it to your life.

This bible study was developed by South Shore Baptist Church in conjunction with our weekly sermon series. To hear a sermon on the same scripture passage covered in this bible study, come to one of our Sunday worship services (8:30am or 11:00am) on the date listed on page 1. Or after that date you can hear it by logging on to www.southshorebaptist.com/sermons/

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Bible Study:

1. Read this week's bible passage and use the chart below to make observations and jot down any questions you have.

Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p>Luke 6:27-36</p> <p>²⁷"But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. ²⁹If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic. ³⁰Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. ³¹Do to others as you would have them do to you.</p> <p>³²"If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' love those who love them. ³³And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' do that. ³⁴And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' lend to 'sinners,' expecting to be repaid in full. ³⁵But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. ³⁶Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.</p>	

Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p>Parallel Passage: Matt 5:38-48</p> <p>³⁸"You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' ³⁹But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. ⁴⁰And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. ⁴¹If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. ⁴²Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.</p> <p>⁴³"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' ⁴⁴But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵that you may be sons 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. ⁴⁶If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? ⁴⁷And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? ⁴⁸Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.</p>	

2. Next, use this chart to **interpret some key observations**.

a. Select a few of your observations & questions from pages 2-3 that you find most interesting or important. Rewrite these below, and interpret and apply them using the columns to the right.

b. For each observation, begin to interpret by asking yourself these kinds of questions:

- What does it mean?
- Why is this important?
- What does this tell me about the Father? Jesus? The Holy Spirit?
- Are there other scriptures that could help me understand this?

Observation What does it say?	Interpretation What does it mean?

3. Now consider how you can **apply** the Word to your life. Look for:

- **S**ins to avoid
- **P**romises to believe
- **E**xamples to follow (remember "SPECK")
- **C**ommands to obey
- **K**nowledge to share

Don't just write things to write them – listen carefully to God's Word and what he seems to be teaching you, and look for relevant things that you're truly stirred to do. Then as you do them, God will help you learn, grow, and help others grow.

Application How do I apply what it means?

Dig Deeper:

4. The phrase “sons of the Most High” in Verse 6:35 is similar to that in Luke 1:32, reflecting our opportunity to somehow become like Christ.

a. When did Jesus love his enemies? (John 13:5,21,27, Lk 23:34)
How does loving our enemies make us more like Christ?

b. Does loving our enemies earn us a position as sons of the Most High? How can someone become a son of God?
(consider Gal 3:26-27, Titus 3:4-7)

5. In studying the Bible, a healthy approach is as follows:

☞ Begin by looking for the **original intent** of the words (what the writer and/or speaker meant for his audience to hear)

☞ Then look for their **meaning and relevance today**

a. What did “love your enemies” probably mean to those Jesus was speaking to in his Luke 6 sermon? Who were some enemies?

b. What did it mean to those Luke was writing to some years later, as first century Christians experienced extreme persecution?

c. What does it mean to you today?

6. While the word “enemies” may be a bit too strong to apply to most of our relationships and circumstances, for each of us there are certainly those who oppose us, speak unlovingly toward us, take things from us, or otherwise mistreat us.

a. Who are a few people or groups that treat you in some of these ways?

b. How might you reach out to one or more of these people to love them in the week ahead? As in verses 6:27-28, how might you love them, do good to them, bless them, or pray for them?

7. The “Golden Rule” of Luke 6:31 says, “Do to others as you would have them do to you.” What have you been hoping someone would do for you? Can you think of an opportunity you may have right now to do that same thing for someone else?

8. Applying this passage is a rather unlikely thing for us to succeed at, particularly on our own. Ask a trusted friend or group to pray for you as you endeavor to love an enemy or difficult person. And take time to pray for God’s help. You might try reading through the passage again and converting it to a prayer. This might look like reading one verse at a time, and then responding to God about it – what it means to you, how it feels to you, what you want to do in response, etc. Then do the same for each subsequent verse in the passage. Praying through a scripture passage in this way can be a very powerful way to connect with God. See page 8 for an example, then try it.

Example of Someone Praying through a Scripture Passage

But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,... (Luke 6:27)

Lord, I do hear you today as I read this passage. You want me to love my enemies – which for me I guess means even loving _____. He and I have not got along with one another for years. How can I love him, Father? It's hard for me to think of doing good to him after all we've been through. ... But if that's what you want me to do, I'd like to try. What can I do this week, Lord? Show me how to love him. Change my heart so I actually want to.

... bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. (6:28)

Lord, this makes me think of _____, who has been so mean to me at work lately. She has taken advantage of me, and taken credit for some things that I actually deserved the credit for. But Lord, I haven't been so nice to her either. Please forgive me for my bitter attitude, and show me where I have wronged her. Help us to reconcile, Lord. Maybe you could even open a way for me to share with her about my faith, and lead her closer to Jesus. That would be amazing. You can do that Lord. Please do that.

If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic. (6:29)

Lord, does this mean I should let her get the credit for things I've done? That would be tough to do. Is that what turning the other cheek looks like? But our workplace is a tough place – I don't think you want me to let go of all my rights and let people walk all over me, right? But I do see how in this one instance, maybe letting it go would be wise. Especially if it opens the door to us beginning to build a relationship again. Help me to know the best way to handle it, Lord. May I bring you glory by living as Christ would. Jesus, did you have similar troubles with the other carpenters?

Get the idea? Try this yourself. Perhaps you can do it with your small group or family. Pray from your heart. Know that God will hear you. And listen for God's voice as well. Perhaps through the scriptures, or perhaps some other way – God does answer our prayers.