



2nd Sunday of Luke

Today's gospel lesson comes at the end of the "Sermon on the Plain." The first line is one of the most famous verses from scripture, the Golden Rule—"Do to others as you would have them do to you." But, Jesus doesn't just leave it there. He goes on to condemn reciprocity as a guiding principle for behavior. Instead, generosity should be our guide. We love, give, and help without expecting anything in return, not even a "thanks." We do this because God is generous to us. God's grace, which he has already shown to us through Christ, is our "thanks." And, this generosity should be extended by us to our enemies and to outsiders. After all, if we only do good to our friends, how is that truly generous?

Scripture: Luke 6:31-36

Bottom Line: By being generous, we're "paying it forward" with the generosity that God has shown us.

Discussion Questions

1. Do you think Christ's command to love our enemies, outsiders, and to give without expecting anything in return is extreme or radical? What strikes you as the hardest part about it? What keeps you from loving those who are hard to love?
2. As I explain below, this command is a form of evangelism, a living witness of the Gospel. When non-Christians see Christians, do you think they see people who love enemies and give without expecting anything in return? Why or why not? How can Christians do a better job of living out their Christianity?
3. God's generosity, his "grace," is often paid forward in little ways. What are some ways this week you can "pay it forward." When you do so, how will those people feel? How will it make you feel?

Moving Forward

Christ asks, "If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you?" In Greek, the word for "credit" is χάρις, which is "grace" in English. Part of the gospel message is the realization that we are all "Gentile sinners." We are all outsiders of the Kingdom. However, through the death of Jesus, we are reconciled with God (see, Romans 5:8-10). In short, God has shown us "grace" and welcomed us into the Kingdom. By loving our enemies, we are extending to them the grace that God has show us. In other words, we are an extension of God's love, a living witness of the gospel. What is one practical way that you can be a living witness of grace for someone else this week?

Changing Your Mind

"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful." (Luke 6:36)