

# Loving the Undeserving

## Matt. 5.43-48

*Focus: calling the church to love our enemies, as God Himself has loved us*

Here is a helpful article on our passage by John Piper:

<http://www.desiringgod.org/messages/but-i-say-to-you-love-your-enemies-part-2>

### **2016 Annual Priority:**

*To establish a greater devotion to believing and being shaped by the three great loves embedded in our mission statement's goal of becoming a mature and ministering worshiper of God; love for God, love for the church, and love of neighbor.*

### **Discussion:**

- Read Matt. 5.43-48 and discuss the incentives for loving enemies Jesus gives. Which is most motivating for you? What other reasons can you think of to love, rather than hate enemies?
- In Luke 6.27-28, three commands flow out of the command to love enemies: do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. What makes those so hard? What makes them such significant evidences of love?
- How do passages like 1 Jn. 4.19 indicate how we can get power to love enemies? How would praying verses like Eph. 3.17-19 enable love for enemies?
- How have you seen the lack of application of these verses to relationships in the church affect the church? Why is it sometimes harder to love enemies/haters in the church?
- Give people ample time to share about enemies they are or should be struggling to love. Listen well and have focused prayer for each one who shares.

