

### Pastor Roy's Sermon from Feb 19, 2017

Who has ever loved all their enemies, and given to everyone who asks, and treated everyone like family, and always honored family, and gone out of their way to help and pray for those who wouldn't hesitate to secretly take your last penny, your last meal, your healthcare, or what savings you have? Who is able to live this way? On our best days as we are aware of Christ's love, yes, and we live into that love in those moments, but doesn't Jesus seem a little extreme in his expectations and call? When we're mindful of our thoughts and actions in the universe of Christ's love, we will give an enemy a second or third chance—we will speak up for them, but when we are not being mindful of this love, all bets are off.

Maybe Jesus and Moses and all the prophets and saints are saying, just do the right thing whenever you have the chance. Perhaps Jesus is reminding us that freedom and joy are found in letting go of the need to be the judge or to make things right. To humbly and simply love freely, faithfully. When in doubt, let it go, over and over again. When pressed to resist and hate and despise and malign, choose love instead—and you will be free, and content.

God is perfect, no preferences to this person or that, to this nation or that. God is free. As we love indiscriminately, we too will be free.

Sometimes we resist this love. If I love, I will be taken advantage of—or maybe the bad guys will win. I believe Jesus is telling us our fears are short-sighted. Jesus is tapping into the power at work in the universe. Loving one's enemy, giving freely, and walking with someone you might not like—these are aligned with the flow of the universe. Clinging to what we cannot keep—demanding what cannot last—this is a matter of trying to get water to go uphill without a pump. All injustice will come undone in its time.

Jesus is calling us to make decisions right now, based on this unity of being in love and mercy with the creator. Hence, we are invited to love our enemies because in the end, I and my enemy are one. There are different circumstances, but we are all learning the same lesson of love, forgiveness, and peace. And though we often do not like the way it feels, we are invited to live our lives in the unity of God's perfect love, to throw ourselves into the mix on the side of peace, because only peace and unity will last.

So be perfect as your heavenly father is perfect. Perfect in love. Perfect in mercy. Perfect in justice. In this perfection we live our lives into God's future of grace. And even when we fail, this future of grace is not diminished, it will just take a little longer for its fulfillment here on earth.

There are many injustices. We often act as it feels best for me right now. Unfortunately, all of our human actions which always feel right in the moment will take millions of years to set back into creative balance. The careless and accidental injustices will be reset in God's mercy.

God's time is patient and there is no hurry for justice. Justice will come. Mercy will prevail.

But here is the point of these teachings. Jesus' words move us more into alignment with God's justice.

Jesus knew this and so he was willing to live, to serve, ultimately to die for sake of justice and mercy, with no fear because he knew that he was sowing his life in the direction of **God's** mercy, and **that** was all that mattered. We do well to do likewise. Following these words of grace and mercy and peace will not only make us sane, but our lives lived according to God's justice simply make sense in the grand scheme of things. Nothing else makes sense, regardless of how it feels in the moment.

God give us courage to follow this love and mercy. Press on sisters and brothers, press on. Though it might feel like we are pushing uphill, we are actually being carried by God. As we live in love, we are