

Sunday May 23, 2021  
Matthew 5:43-48  
Applied Christianity: Be Loving

P\_\_\_\_\_ and C\_\_\_\_\_

Faithful followers of Jesus are to love a a\_\_\_\_\_ p\_\_\_\_\_ regardless  
of their i\_\_\_\_\_.

Only those t\_\_\_\_\_ by the g\_\_\_\_\_ of God can love  
an e\_\_\_\_\_.

Only those who love their e\_\_\_\_\_ take on  
the c\_\_\_\_\_ of God.

Faithful followers of Jesus m\_\_\_\_\_ l\_\_\_\_\_ like God l\_\_\_\_\_.

God's l\_\_\_\_\_ sets b\_\_\_\_\_.

God's l\_\_\_\_\_ d\_\_\_\_\_.

God's l\_\_\_\_\_ seeks h\_\_\_\_\_ t\_\_\_\_\_.

Faithful followers of Jesus must c\_\_\_\_\_ to love  
o\_\_\_\_\_ e\_\_\_\_\_.

We must s\_\_\_\_\_ w\_\_\_\_\_ of the person who  
w\_\_\_\_\_ e\_\_\_\_\_ on us.

We must m\_\_\_\_\_ to the n\_\_\_\_\_ of our e\_\_\_\_\_.

We must i\_\_\_\_\_ with the Father for those who m\_\_\_\_\_ us.

Faithful followers of Jesus f\_\_\_\_\_ the p\_\_\_\_\_ for which  
we were created when we love as He loved.

## Devotional Thought

Are you now or have you ever been a perfectionist? Do you know anyone that you would consider to be a perfectionist? Keep in mind that perfectionists aren't perfect, but they work hard at getting everything they do right. The truth is, I have a bit of "perfectionism" in me. I always want to be the best at what I'm doing, but I am keenly aware that I have never been perfect – at least not in the sense that we think about perfection. I know some people who expect to be perfect in everything that they do, and that leads to lots of frustration. Often, if they don't get it right on the first try, they just give up. And that is sad because I have discovered that it is on my second, third, or seventeenth attempt that I get it right.

The truth is that we have been taught all of our lives that the only perfect human being to ever live was Jesus. But in our Scripture today, Jesus says, "...you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect." The easy (but wrong) assumption is that Jesus was talking about when we get to heaven. He's not. He is talking about perfection right here on Earth – just not the same kind of perfection that we think about. The word that He uses for perfection carries the idea of accomplishing the purpose for which we were created. That doesn't mean we don't make mistakes; it means we keep working to be the people that God wants us to be. In the message, I will tell you specifically what that purpose is, but in the meantime, what do you think God created you to do? And are you doing it?

- What are some ways that you can "bless those that curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you?"