

(Matthew 5:43-48, NIV84)

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'

But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that 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. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Apparently there are social media platforms that allow people in limited geographical areas to stay in touch and post comments about what is happening in their neighborhoods. This could be a great way to build friendships and foster a deeper sense of community. But, as with anything, if misused it can also cause a lot of heartache and sow seeds of discontent in a neighborhood.

Rather than becoming self-appointed enforcement officers of social distancing and the stay-at-home orders, let us instead look for ways to show love to all our neighbors (even to those who may seem unlovable).

It's always easy to justify an unloving attitude toward someone; people can be so disagreeable. But remember where we were in relation to God. St. Paul tells us, "God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). Two verses later he says, "For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!" (Romans 5:10). God made us -- sinful though we were, enemies though we were -- He made us His very own dearly loved children through the sacrificial death of Jesus. What amazing grace!

Let our words and actions toward others always reflect the love that our God so mercifully showed to us in Christ.

A light to the world with you in Christ,  
Pastor Golm

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April 27

Children of the Father

Ye are the light of the world. . . Let your lights so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in

heaven. Matthew 5:14, 16

A story is told of a boy who was leaving home for college. His father had included him in the morning prayer at the breakfast table, asking God to protect him and to grant him success in the career which he was undertaking. Rising from the table, the young man expected some final instructions and directions from his father. But all that his father said was: "Son, never forget whose son you are." Need he have said any more?

We Christians too are children of a Father away from our Father's house. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God", exclaims the apostle John. How frequently in his "letters" to us-the Bible-has our heavenly Father admonished us to remember whose children we are. "Ye were sometimes darkness", he writes to the Ephesians, "but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light!" The Savior himself has told us: "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

How have we been behaving "away from home", away from the Father's house? Have we reflected credit upon our family name -"children of God"? Can our friends see our Father in us?

If we have failed in this respect, let us implore his divine forgiveness, for Jesus' sake, for whatever shame we have heaped upon his holy name by our waywardness and sin. Then, with the Spirit's help, may we put forth every effort to heed the admonition of the text above, to let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in heaven.

My Father! Cheering name! Oh, may I call Thee mine!  
And may my life while here on earth Reflect the light of Thine!