



Counter-intuitive Kingdom: Love Your Enemies

John Bodily – 5th May 2026 ([watch talk here](#))

John introduced this new sermon series exploring Jesus' counter-intuitive, risky and costly teachings. From a worldly perspective, the ways of the Kingdom of God appear upside down. But if we consider that it is in fact the world that is upside down and we've simply become disoriented, we can learn to see the world the right way up through Jesus' eyes, doing things not because it looks or seems right but because God says so (Luke 5:5).

In this talk, John unpacked for us the counter-intuitive instruction to love our enemies from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount in Luke 6:27-31. Humanly, when we've been personally wronged we're hardwired to seek justice and it's humbling when we hear stories of people resisting the urge to do this, responding instead with grace and forgiveness. We ask ourselves 'why would they do this?' and 'how is this possible?'. We're encouraged by Jesus' example: *'He did not retaliate when he was insulted, nor threaten revenge when he suffered. He left his case in the hands of God who always judges fairly'* (1 Peter 2:23-24). Breaking the otherwise destructive pattern of this world - the cycle of revenge - Jesus models another way. We're instructed to give up the temporary relief revenge might afford us and instead are invited into something eternal - the healing of the world. This is a journey of the heart; to choose to become a vessel of love rather than hate and a conduit of God's grace rather than resentment.

Reflect and discuss

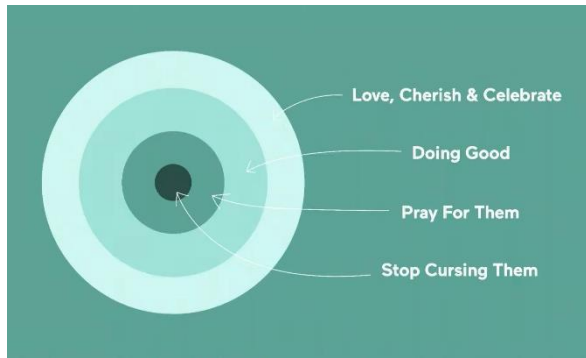
Read Luke 6:27-31 together and share your initial reflections on Jesus counter-intuitive teaching. **You may want to draw out discussion on the following:**

- **Verse 28** - John suggested that when we give into the temptation to curse instead of bless, we give the enemy a seat at our table. How does this relate to your experience?
- **Verse 29** – Non-violent protest exposes the oppressive person. Rather than retaliating, we can cast light on oppressive practices by adopting a posture that brings about conviction through contrast. Our light shines brightest to those around us when we act differently to what they expect. How can you shine a light on oppressive practices in non-violent, non-retaliatory ways?
Verse 29-30 - This is a costly choice between our rights and our relationship. How might your relationship with God & others be improved by surrendering your rights?
- **Verse 31** – When have you experienced the grace and forgiveness of others? How could this help shape your response to those who have wronged you?

Share & Pray

Consider the diagram below demonstrating the heart journey described in this passage. John challenged us that when we see our enemies as an embodiment of our pain, we don't see them as God sees them - his child who he longs to see come to repentance. Our counter-intuitive obedience can cast light on their actions and lead them to repentance.

- In smaller groups, share honestly where you are on this journey presently. Pray for one another for God's love and grace to flow.



Activate

Ask God to help you this week to see the person/people who have hurt you, as God sees them. Is there something specific he is asking you to do in counter-intuitive obedience? Commit to praying and acting as you feel led. Share your intentions with a trusted friend or Small Group member; ask them to pray with and encourage you. Perhaps journal your experience.