

Matthew 5:45

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

Analysis

Enemy-love and prayer for persecutors reveal family resemblance to your Heavenly Father. God's common grace—sending rain and sun on righteous and wicked alike—models impartial benevolence. As God's children, Christians must reflect His indiscriminate kindness, not showing favoritism or withholding love based on merit.

Historical Context

Ancient cultures, including Jewish and pagan, typically limited love to one's own group. Jesus's teaching was revolutionary, extending love even to occupying Roman forces and hostile religious leaders. This became Christian distinctiveness that attracted notice and converts.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. Who are your 'enemies'—people you struggle to love and pray for with genuine goodwill?
2. How does God's common grace giving good gifts to all people challenge your selective kindness?

Interlinear Text

ὅπως γένησθε νἱοὶ τὸν πατρὸς ὑμῶν τὸν ἐν
That ye may be the children which Father of your which is in
G3704 G1096 G5207 G3588 G3962 G5216 G3588 G1722

οὐρανοῖς ὅτι τὸν ἥλιον αὐτοῦ ἀνατέλλει ἐπὶ πονηροὺς
heaven for which sun he maketh on the evil
G3772 G3754 G3588 G2246 G846 G393 G1909 G4190

καὶ ἀγαθοὺς καὶ βρέχει ἐπὶ δικαίους καὶ ἀδίκους
and on the good and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust
G2532 G18 G2532 G1026 G1909 G1342 G2532 G94

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 145:9 (Good): The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.

Luke 6:35 (Evil): But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

Acts 14:17 (Good): Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

Job 25:3 (Resurrection): Is there any number of his armies? and upon whom doth not his light arise?

Ephesians 5:1 (Parallel theme): Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

Matthew 5:9 (Parallel theme): Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

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