



MOUNTAIN STREAM NEWS

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www.mountainstreamchurch.com

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES!

MESSAGE FROM PASTOR



Matthew 5:43-48
 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

The quintessential mark of a Christian is the ability to love one's enemies.

Loving one's neighbor can be challenging enough, (*Matthew 5:43*), but loving an enemy is

exponentially more difficult. Jesus argues that anyone can love those who love them (46-47). As difficult as some of us find loving our neighbors to be, Jesus regards that as elementary stuff.

It is the person who can love his enemies that shows the true power of God at work in his life. The one who is learning to love his enemy is tacitly revealing the transforming work of Christ in his life. After all, God sends His rain and sunlight on the good and evil, the just and unjust – even those who blatantly deny His very existence and flout His principles. God still loves them (*Romans 5:10*). The enemies Jesus describes in verse 44 are not just those who harbor a passive sense of malice, but those who are also actively trying to harm and harass. Only God is able to enable humans to love those who actively try to harm them.

What does this truth mean for Christians in a divided, fractious world? What does that mean for Christians in these times when venom is spewed publicly and copiously on social media platforms? When even Christians declare anyone who disagrees with them to be vile enemies who are not fit

to breathe God's air?

Perhaps, if Jesus were walking among us today, he would definitely encourage us to tone down our rhetoric, and corral our angry hearts. He would challenge us to firmly resist those who would entice us to hate. Children of God do not hate their enemies. They pray for them. They strive to love them in spite of their failings. After all, Christians were once wretched enemies of God. But God reached out to us in love, redeemed us from our sin, and won our hearts. We should strive to be like our Heavenly Father in this area.

May God help us to replace hate with love, and curses with prayer. May we learn to speak privately and publicly with grace and consideration. May we remind those who are our friends that Christians don't hate their enemies. Like our Father, we love them and pray for their salvation.

God bless you,

Pastor James

OUTDO YOURSELVES



WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS WEEK

<p>CORPORATE PRAYER TUE @ 7 PM</p> <p>February 9 Join us via Zoom video Please contact Pastor James for log on information at rcantio@gmail.com</p>	<p>MONTHLY EVENING SERVICE EVERY 3RD SUN @ 6 PM</p> <p>February 21 Please contact us by phone (570 856 3310) or email (mountainstreamchurch@gmail.com or rcantio@gmail.com) for login information.</p>	<p>WORSHIP SERVICE SUN @ 11 AM</p> <p>February 14 In-person service and livestream. Livestreaming only on Facebook and our church's website.</p>
<p>ONLINE GROWTH GROUPS THU & FRI @ 7 PM</p> <p>February 11 (in-person) & February 12 (online) Sign up at the information center or online to join. email: mountainstream-church@gmail.com or call for log on details.</p>	<p>YOUTH GROUP FRI @ 6:45 PM</p> <p>February 12 Youth meetings are in-person at church.</p>	<p>VIRTUAL KIDZONE SUN @ 4 PM</p> <p>February 14 Kidzone is available every Sunday. Contact Candice at candicebrich@gmail.com for log on information.</p>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Explore Mountain Stream classes** for folks interested in becoming members or just finding out more about Mountain Stream continue this Sunday at 10 am on the lower level.
- **Men's Breakfast Saturday @ 9 am.** Invite a friend, & bring something to share for breakfast if you can.
- **Growth Groups begin this week.** Please sign up at the Information Center or online to attend. Thursdays in-person 7 pm at church. Fridays online at 7 pm.
- Kelvin Lewis will be baptized this Sunday following the morning service.
- Support the Pregnancy Resource Center of the Poconos' Baby Bottle Fundraiser! Take a baby bottle and fill it with coins, cash, or a check and return it to Lori by this Sunday, Feb 14
- **2021 Church Directory** will be published soon, if you need to update your information or want to be included please visit our website under **ABOUT** at the top of the page or use this convenient link.
- **Bible reading plans for 2021** are available at the Information Table and on our website. Pick up a copy or download one today. Also, please read Pastor Jimmie's daily blog on the readings.
- We are excited to have you at our in-person worship at 11 am on Sundays. Please call ahead to 570 856 3310 or email us at mountainstreamchurch@gmail.com to let us know you are coming.
- Please see our webpage for detailed information on in-person gatherings.

QUICK TIPS

Two ways to give your offering. Traditional with a check by mail or through our secured website online giving is now possible. Please remember to hit "SAVE" after you give if you did not set up an account so the church can have a record of who gave for tax purposes. Thank you!