

Life Group Homework

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES!

Matthew 5:43-48

Let's Get Started:

In the culture of Jesus' day, love was reserved for those you get along with. Enemies were to be hated. A case in point was the brutal disdain the Jews felt towards all Gentiles.

A saying of the Pharisee's has been discovered that reads, "If a Jew sees a Gentile fallen into the sea, let him by no means lift him out, for it is written, 'Thou shalt not rise up against the blood of thy neighbor, 'but this man is not thy neighbor.'"

Read the following scriptures: Lev 19:18, Mark 12:32-22 & Luke 18:11

Where did the Pharisee go wrong in Luke 18:11? What narrow group of people do you think his definition of "neighbor" included?

How easy is it for you and I to slip into an attitude of "Thank God we are not like other people?"

Let's Dig In:

Misconceptions of Six Old Testament Laws

After reading each passage below from Matthew 5, state what the true intent of the law was really supposed to be, according to Jesus.

1. Vs. 21-22 Murder

1. Vs. 27-28 Adultery

2. Vs. 31-32 Divorce

3. Vs. 33-34, 37 Swearing on oath

4. Vs. 38-39 An eye for an eye

5. Vs. 43-48 Love your neighbor

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

Read Luke 10:25-37. In this parable, the Good Samaritan ignored the Jewish culture's approval of blatant racism against him. Even though he was considered a "despised Samaritan," he rose above

such shallow thinking to care for a fellow human being.

Have you ever personally gone out of your way to care for someone that society might reject or ignore because of their race, religious beliefs, political beliefs, social or economic status, addiction or other “undesirable” characteristics?

If so, tell us about that. How did your decision help expand your definition of “neighbor”?

Let’s Live It Out Together:

At your gathering, have someone read verses 45-47 out loud. In these three verses, Jesus gives us three reasons to love our enemies. What are those three reasons that pastor Jerry shared in his message?

1. It reveals our true **I** __ __ __ __ __ **y** as sons (daughters) of God.

2. It reflects the **h** __ __ __ **t** of God to those who hate Him.

3. It reminds you that you are **d** __ __ __ __ __ **t** than the world.

Close your gathering by asking if people would like to offer up a prayer for their “neighbors.”

*And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.
Hebrews 10:24-25*