

**Sermon on the Mount : Pursuing Your Kingdom Life**  
**15 February, 2015**

**Small Group Questions**

Matthew 5:43-48; LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

Out of the week previously...

- Discuss this; ***“turning the other cheek doesn’t mean that we put up with abuse.”*** Jesus and the disciples often fled dangerous situations. Proverbs 27:12 (NIV) says that the prudent see danger and take refuge. And I think Christian psychologist, Dr. James Dobson, says it best when he points out in his book *“Love Must Be Tough”*, that maintaining strong boundaries and limits with those who have boundary or self-control problems is a loving thing to do!

GAME CHANGERS! Do you know what I mean when I say “That was a game changer?” A *game changer* is an event, idea, or procedure that effects a significant shift in the current way of doing or thinking about something. We often hear about game changers in the world of sport, business, history and on the odd occasion, politics.

I wonder if you’ve personally experienced a game changer. Maybe something significant has happened to you and it was a game changer! Maybe a health scare or a Holy Spirit revelation! Maybe it was a conversation, or a decision, or an event that significantly shifted your thinking which considerably shifted the way you went about your life.

- Spend some time sharing that moment with your small group.

My prayer is that Christ’s game changing words would be a game changer for you.

It’s my hope that as we listen to the game changing words and ideas of Jesus that it would be a moment in your spiritual journey that will significantly shift the way you think and the way that you pursue and live out your Kingdom Life.

- Let’s read the TEXT...  
***Matthew 5:43-47 (MSG) ‘You’re familiar with the old written law, ‘Love your friend,’ and its unwritten companion, ‘Hate your enemy.’***

The NIV says in v43 “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbour and hate your enemy.’

- Where have we heard this?

In my message I told a story about a truck driver and bikie gang.

- Retell the story for those who missed the message.

Metaphorically we back our truck over people all the time.

***THEN JESUS SAYS: I’m challenging that.***

- What was Jesus challenging?

***I’m telling you to love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst.***

- Discuss this verse in your group.

I wonder...

1. How do you react to people who make life difficult for you?
2. We all encounter people who are hard to live with.  
How do you treat “those people” in your life? Do you back your truck over them?
3. How do we do this?

***Then JESUS SAYS; when someone gives you a hard time, respond with the energies of prayer, for then you are working out of your true selves, your God-created selves.***

- Discuss this... “What the heck does that look like especially when the sound of their name repulses me?”

Let's take a moment now to PRAY FOR OUR ENEMIES in silent contemplation.

- *Pray that God will rescue them from the dominion of darkness and bring them "into the kingdom of the Son He loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (Colossians 1:13-14).*
- *Pray that they will "put to death whatever belongs to [their] earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry" (Colossians 3:5).*
- *Pray that they will rid themselves of "anger, rage, malice, slander and filthy language from [their] lips" (Colossians 3:8).*
- *Pray that they will become one of God's children, holy and dearly loved, clothed with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience (Colossians 3:12).*
- *Pray they will come to know and possess the love of Jesus (Colossians 3:14).*

Group leader to wrap this time of prayer up!

Church I know that this might seem weak to some, but in this ALTERNATIVE KINGDOM, in THIS KINGDOM OF LOVE we fight our enemy on our knees. The cool thing is we are becoming like CHRIST as we pray for those who hurt us.

- Let's continue to read...  
***This is what God does. He gives his best—the sun to warm and the rain to nourish—to everyone, regardless: the good and bad, the nice and nasty. If all you do is love the lovable, do you expect a bonus? Anybody can do that. If you simply say hello to those who greet you, do you expect a medal? Any run-of-the-mill sinner does that.***
- What is Jesus saying here? Discuss.

Ok let's wrap this up...

***Jesus Continues in v48 "In a word, what I'm saying is, grow up. You're kingdom subjects. Now live like it.***

Here Jesus reminds us that we are no longer a part of the kingdom of this world. The game has changed for us we are DISCIPLES IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD which is a KINGDOM OF LOVE. If we are to take this seriously we need to GROW UP and LIVE IT.

Remember our Kingdom Life TREE? The whole purpose of this plan is to HELP PEOPLE FIND AND FOLLOW JESUS. It's been designed to encourage you and to help you GROW UP in your Kingdom life. Can I encourage you to grab a brochure, read it and ask God as we embark on a new year, *"Where do I need to grow this year and what do you want me to intentionally put in place that will help me to grow up and live out this Kingdom Life?"*

***Then Jesus finished this chapter by saying, "Live out your God-created identity. Live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you."***

#### **YOUR RESPONSE**

- Where are you at with all of this today? This "loving your enemies" is a tough gig for some of us but what we have heard Jesus teach, is the rubber hits the road, game changing Kingdom Living.
- What did the SPIRIT of GOD whisper into your heart and soul this morning?

*These verses call us to GROW UP and to live this Kingdom Life. We have heard a radical game changing idea that calls us to love our enemies and we do that by praying for them and by following Christ's example.*

- *Spend some time praying for each other.*

God Bless