



Sunday Teaching Discussion Guide: SERMON ON THE MOUNT 06.17.2018

Recap:

- In the past, as in today, people take a passage of scripture and misinterpret it to justify their own beliefs (including hatred of others).
- The Old Testament rule to “love your neighbor as yourself” became misinterpreted as love your neighbor and hate your enemy.
- Jesus wants to take away the option that people only needed to love their neighbors but were allowed to hate their enemies.
- Jesus’s charge that people should “love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” shows the radical difference of Jesus’s teaching. The Kingdom of God is a world in which we actively show love to even, and especially, to those we might otherwise ignore, hate, or discriminate against.
- Jesus demonstrates the radical love in his life by choosing to go to die for even those who hated him.

Discuss:

1. Can you think of any passages that are used to separate people from others instead of being used to connect people or show love?
2. READ Matthew 5:43-48.
3. What do you think Jesus means when he says “causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous”?
4. Do you think that Jesus really expects his followers to be perfect? Do you think he is setting up his followers to fail?
5. How do you think this passage shows the difference of the Kingdom of God versus a kingdom of this world?
6. Share a person or a group of people that you have struggled to show love to or pray for. What makes loving or praying for this person or group of people difficult? What steps can you take to try to follow Jesus’s words in this passage?

Pray: Invite members of your group to share prayer requests. Give a short prayer thanking God for your group discussion and asking God to be with the requests that have been shared.

Read at Home: Additional Readings about Loving Your Enemies

- Proverbs 10:12
- John 13:33-35
- Romans 12:14-21