

Small Group Questions

Sermon Based Small Groups – June 5, 2011

Adult Education – Woodbury Community Church
Woodbury, Minnesota

Sermon Title: Perfect Love

Sermon Series: The Sermon on the Mount: Living as Citizens in the Kingdom of Heaven

Pray: Each week, we want to take time to lift up one another's prayer concerns. True Christians pray for one another. Take some time at the beginning of your small group time to pray for each other. Be real with each other. If you are hurting, take the risk and share how you are feeling with the group. If you have something that God has blessed you with this week, share it. Give Him the glory for what He is doing in your life. Record the prayer requests in the "Notes" section on the right of this page, and make a commitment to pray for the needs of the people in your group throughout the week.

Opening Question: Everybody has people that they are naturally drawn to and people that are difficult for them to love. Who are the toughest types of people for you to love?

Discuss: We've come to the end of the first chapter in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. As you reflect on what you have learned over the past few months, which parts of the Sermon on the Mount have become most impactful in your life? Which parts are most difficult to live out?

Read: Matthew 5:43-48

Discuss: Why do you think the Jewish people of Jesus' day added the phrase "hate your enemy" to the command to love your neighbor?

Are there some ways that you see the church of the 21st Century mirroring the attitude of the 1st Century Jewish people (loving our neighbors but hating our enemies)?

It's one thing to say that we are supposed to love our enemies. It's another thing to do it. What are some ways that we can proactively show love to our enemies?

Notes:

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The Parable of the Good Samaritan

Most Jewish people in Jesus' day considered the Samaritan people to be their enemies. With that in mind, read the Parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37 and then discuss the following questions.

Who do you relate with most in the parable of the Good Samaritan?

It's interesting to see that Jesus chose to use religious leaders of his day as the people who walked by the beaten man and a Samaritan man as the one who helped the man. Who do you think the Samaritan represents in this story?

Have you ever considered that you might be the beaten man in the story and Jesus might be the Samaritan? How might that impact your understanding of the Parable?

What are some ways that you can be like the Samaritan in your world?

Reread Matthew 5:48

How does this verse make you feel?

Is it possible to be perfect like your Heavenly Father is perfect?

How does the maturing process in the Christian life (sanctification) correlate with this verse? How does this verse relate to James 1:2-4? Read James 1:2-4 in several different versions.

Pray: Ask God to help you live a life that honors Him. If you have some enemies in your life, take some time to pray for them. Pray that God will continue to mature and conform you into His image.