



kingdom CULTURE

Life Group Discussion Guide Week 5 7/20/25

Message Summary: Have you ever found your peaceful moment shattered by the noise of the world around you, leaving you with a heart full of anger? Pastor Tara Beth invites us to reflect on just that as she delves into Jesus' radical call to love our enemies in her sermon from the Sermon on the Mount. Using the concept of "antithesis," where Jesus challenges our everyday understanding of love and morality, Pastor Tara Beth reminds us that loving only those who love us is far from the Kingdom calling. Instead, Jesus dares us to elevate our love to a divine standard—one that requires us to extend grace even toward those who seek to harm us. Drawing on real-life examples of love and forgiveness, she illustrates that loving as God does is a boundary-breaking act, transcending societal divides and animosities. This essential message resonates deeply with our daily lives, as it prompts us to confront our biases and choose empathy over anger. As you journey through this week, consider who your enemies are and how you might choose to respond with love instead.

Conversation Starter: Name a minor thing that disproportionally irritates you. ex: a noisy leaf blower when you're trying to have quiet time.

Prayer:

Open our hearts to Your word, Your truth, and Your direction.

Read the passage together:

Matthew 5:33-48

3-Question Study Method

Use this method to discuss the passage

1. What is the passage about?
2. What lesson do I learn?
3. How will I apply this to my life?

Discussion Questions:

- How does Jesus' teaching on turning the other cheek (Matthew 5:38-42) contrast with the natural human instinct for retaliation? How can we embody this teaching in situations of conflict?
- Jesus commands us to love our enemies (Matthew 5:44). What practical steps can we take to cultivate this kind of love in our lives, especially towards those who have wronged us?
- Why do you think Jesus emphasizes praying for those who persecute us? How can prayer transform our hearts towards those we consider enemies?
- The sermon highlights forgiveness as a deliberate choice. How does forgiveness free us, and what are some barriers that prevent us from forgiving others?
- Pastor explains that 'agape' is a deliberate, intentional decision to see others as created in the image of God, regardless of how we personally feel about them. Reflect on a time when you chose to act lovingly towards someone you didn't necessarily like. How did that experience affect you and your view of that person?
- The sermon mentions the call to be "perfect" as our heavenly Father is perfect (Matthew 5:48). How do you interpret this call to perfection in the context of love and forgiveness?
- How does living out Jesus' teachings in Matthew 5:33-48 reflect the culture of the Kingdom of God? In what ways can our actions serve as a witness to others about the nature of God's love?

Closing Prayer: Father God, thank You for the teachings of Jesus that challenge us to live as true citizens of Your Kingdom. As we reflect on His words, we ask for the strength and courage to embody His call to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. Lord, help us to break down the boundaries we have set in our hearts, to extend love and grace to all, just as You have shown us. Grant us the wisdom to speak with integrity, to forgive those who have wronged us, and to respond with kindness in the face of hostility. Transform our hearts so that we may reflect Your perfect love in all our interactions. May our lives be a testament to Your goodness, drawing others to the light of Your truth and grace. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.