Small Group Lesson – Week of May 26, 2024

Opener: Come up with as many definitions of love as you can.

Matthew 5:43 *"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'* **44** But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, **45** that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. **46** If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? **47** And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? **48** Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

1. How would you define an enemy? How did this scripture define an enemy?

2. By these definitions, how many enemies do you have?
As we continue through this lesson, and more come to mind keep adding.

3. Think of an enemy, or a former enemy. In what ways could you love that person?

4. Read **Ephesians 6:10** Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. **11** Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. **12** For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. **13** Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

How does this verse change your perspective about enemies?

5. Read **I Cor 13:4** Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. **5** It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. **6** Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. **7** It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. **8** Love never fails

6. As a group, come up with a plan to respond to your individual enemies.

Prayer requests

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