

SHIFT

the life we are meant to live



February 14th, 2016

Living to Love My Enemies

1. REJECT THE FALSE NARRATIVE:

I HAVE TO HIT BACK HARDER.

- Stems from INSECURITY.
- Driven by FEAR.

You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'
- Matthew 5:38 ESV

2. EMBRACE THE JESUS NARRATIVE:

I HAVE TO LOVE MY ENEMIES.

You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect. - Matthew 5:43-48 ESV

HOW JESUS SEES MY ENEMIES

1. I Don't Have to Be Afraid of My Enemies.

The Lord is my light and my salvation—so why should I be afraid? The Lord is my fortress, protecting me from danger, so why should I tremble? When evil people come to devour me, when my enemies and foes attack me, they will stumble and fall. Though a mighty army surrounds me, my heart will not be afraid. Even if I am attacked, I will remain confident. - Psalm 27:1-3 ESV

2. My Enemy is No Different Than Me.

...For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. - Matthew 5:45b NLT

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. - 1 John 1:8-10 ESV

3. I Should Pray for My Enemies.

Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them. - Romans 12:14

When they came to a place called The Skull, they nailed him to the cross. And the criminals were also crucified—one on his right and one on his left. Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing."... - Luke 23:33-34 NLT

The Good Samaritan - Luke 10:30-37

4. In the End, Justice Will Be Served and There Will Be Peace.

Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." - Romans 12:19

In that day the wolf and the lamb will live together; the leopard will lie down with the baby goat. The calf and the yearling will be safe with the lion, and a little child will lead them all. The cow will graze near the bear. The cub and the calf will lie down together. The lion will eat hay like a cow. The baby will play safely near the hole of a cobra. Yes, a little child will put its hand in a nest of deadly snakes without harm. Nothing will hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain, for as the waters fill the sea, so the earth will be filled with people who know the Lord. - Isaiah 11:6-9

I Will Shift by...

- Memorizing [Romans 12:14](#).
- Beginning to see my enemies as loved children of God, just like me.
- Praying for the blessing and salvation of my enemies.
- Giving my life to Jesus for the first time.

WALK THE TALK

A Growth Group Guide

1. Have you ever been in a fight? In the end, did fighting help or hurt things?
2. Do you have any enemies? Who in your life would you say is “against you”?
3. Have you ever retaliated against someone? What did it feel like? What outcome did it achieve?
4. Is it hard to pray for your enemies? What would it be like for you to regularly pray for people like ISIS? Should we pray for them?
5. When have you seen prayer as a powerful weapon in your own life?
6. How do you see justice working out at the end?
7. Do you think that someone is ever “too bad” or “too evil” to be saved? Explain.
8. Close in prayer together. Have a special time of lifting up your enemies and asking God to reveal Himself to them. Pray for their salvation and blessing.

SOUL TRAINING – PRAYING FOR THE SUCCESS OF YOUR COMPETITORS

A Personal Transformation Exercise

The Principle:

Most of us will not be slapped or sued this week, and hopefully none of us will be cursed or persecuted. For this reason, we can easily sidestep this section of the Sermon on the Mount and think that it doesn't apply to us. The core of this teaching, however, is to begin seeing those who are a threat to us in a different light. Instead of retaliating, Jesus is asking us to bless those who harm us. It might be a good practice to think of someone who is your enemy – someone who you know is actively pursuing your demise. Many of us will be hard-pressed to come with an authentic enemy.

The Plan:

For this week, let's scale it down a little bit and take a smaller step towards obeying Jesus' command. This week, pray for the success of a competitor. A competitor is anyone you are measured against, anyone whose success in some way diminishes yours. It might be a business competitor or someone you compete against in school or in sports. Perhaps it is a parent whose child competes with your child in athletics or fine arts.

Ask God to reveal to you who your competitors are. If you still cannot honestly come up with anyone, think of someone who causes you difficulty. Think of someone who gets on your nerves and under your skin.