

## DISCUSSION GUIDE: Loving Others- Love Your Enemy - April 23, 2023

### PRIMARY PASSAGES:

**Matthew 5:43-44:** *“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.”*

**Luke 6:27-28:** *Jesus said “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.”*

**Matthew 5:23-24:** *“Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.”*

**Luke 6:32-35:** *“If you love only those who love you, why should you get credit for that? Even sinners love those who love them! And if you do good only to those who do good to you, why should you get credit? Even sinners do that much! And if you lend money only to those who can repay you, why should you get credit? Even sinners will lend to other sinners for a full return. “Love your enemies! Do good to them. Lend to them without expecting to be repaid. Then your reward from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be acting as children of the Most High.”*

### MESSAGE HIGHLIGHTS:

Four steps to love your enemies

- Pray for them
- Put yourself in their shoes
- Pursue reconciliation
- Practice forgiveness

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Read Matthew 5:43-44. When you read the words “Love your enemy and pray for those who persecute you,” whose face do you see? Who has done something to you that you consider unforgivable? Who is your enemy?
2. Read Luke 6:27-28. Who are the enemies in your life that you find it difficult to love? What is it about them that makes you consider them your enemy? Picture your enemies. Are you willing to pray for them as your first step toward forgiveness?
3. Read Matthew 5:23-24. What can you do to put yourself in your enemy’s shoes? What can you do to pursue reconciliation and forgiveness with them? Maybe you need to write a letter or make a phone call you have been avoiding.
4. Read Luke 6:32-25. What steps do you need to take today to be like Nadine from Emmanuel Church in South Carolina, who said “If God forgives you, I forgive you”? What steps will you take to reconcile and forgive your enemy this week?

***Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for the unconditional love and forgiveness that You have lavished upon us. If we are honest, it is difficult for us to love our enemies and those who have hurt and mistreated us. So we are asking for Your strength and power to forgive our enemies and love them the way You have forgiven and loved us. Amen.***

