

## 6-9-24 Facilitator - Love Your Enemies Matthew 5:38-48, Tim Rice

1. **Launchers:** What is your most vivid memory of encountering an enemy?
2. **Worship God** – Read Psalm 136 rejoicing in His steadfast love.

Read each verse and let the group as a whole recite the repeating line in unison.

### 3. **Sermon Reflection:**

#### **A PARTICULAR EXPRESSION OF LOVE**

- What if love only went to the deserving?  
A tailored suit is different precisely because of its fit  
(Quote #1) Real love is not in the worth of the recipient...  
Just as the greatest measure of real love isn't success but failure, the real test of whether or not we are truly loving people, is how well we love those who don't deserve it
- How have and are your enemies been perfectly tailored to discover to Jesus undeserving love for you?

#### **A STUBBORN INSTINCT TO FIGHT**

- What are the pitfalls of self-interest and self-defense that pull us back into cycles of vengeance?
- Why is it so difficult to see our enemy's position and feel their pain?
- Why is it so hard for us to incarnate with our enemies?
- How have your fights with your enemies gone?

#### **HOW ARE JESUS' COMMANDS EVEN POSSIBLE?**

- When it comes to enemies, for what possible reasons could this world full of them make sense?
- When have you been given freely from Jesus?
- As one who trusts in Jesus' saving love, how does His gift redefine what's not just possible but now what is more beautiful?

### 4. **Kingdom Centered Prayer: You Can Pray with Us**

1. Worship the LORD for His holy love. Praise Him, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, for how He is unlike any other, showing mercy and grace to His enemies and working to love us when we were His opponents.
2. How have you lived in stubborn willfulness and opposition to your Maker? Confess your antagonism and prideful resistance to Jesus, asking Him to forgive you and to change your heart.
3. Give thanks to Jesus for how He gives and takes away. Thank Him for taking away the toxic nature of our sin and our corrupt hearts, and for giving us newness of life by His righteousness and Spirit.
4. Who do you know that struggles with resentment or unwillingness to love those who fail? Pray for them, asking the Lord to help them see their sin before His holiness and to seek His mercy so that they can show mercy.
5. Ask the Holy Spirit to bear in you His fruit of love. Pray that He would so work into your heart the miracle of God's saving love in Jesus, that you would be eager to love other sinners as you have been loved.

### 5. **Mission:** Christians are on mission to love our enemies. Read Luke 6:27-36.

- How can you love your enemies this week?
  - How can you do good for your enemies?
  - What can you "lend" them?
  - How can you pray for them?
  - How can you bless them?

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### **His Steadfast Love Endures Forever**

- 136** Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,  
for his steadfast love endures forever.
- 2** Give thanks to the God of gods,  
for his steadfast love endures forever.
- 3** Give thanks to the Lord of lords,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
- 4** to him who alone does great wonders,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
- 5** to him who by understanding made the  
heavens,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
- 6** to him who spread out the earth above the  
waters,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
- 7** to him who made the great lights,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
- 8** the sun to rule over the day,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
- 9** the moon and stars to rule over the night,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
- 10** to him who struck down the firstborn of  
Egypt,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
- 11** and brought Israel out from among them,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
- 12** with a strong hand and an outstretched  
arm,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
- 13** to him who divided the Red Sea in two,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
- 14** and made Israel pass through the midst of  
it,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
- 15** but overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the  
Red Sea,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
- 16** to him who led his people through the  
wilderness,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
- 17** to him who struck down great kings,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
- 18** and killed mighty kings,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
- 19** Sihon, king of the Amorites,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
- 20** and Og, king of Bashan,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
- 21** and gave their land as a heritage,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
- 22** a heritage to Israel his servant,  
for his steadfast love endures forever.
- 23** It is he who remembered us in our low  
estate,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
- 24** and rescued us from our foes,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;
- 25** he who gives food to all flesh,  
for his steadfast love endures forever.
- 26** Give thanks to the God of heaven,  
for his steadfast love endures forever.