

Discussion Questions
"Sermon on the Mount: Be Perfect"
Matthew 5:38-48; Exodus 23:1-9

To be used in groups or personal devotions

1. "You have heard that it was said..." Do you have any phrases or rules you live by that you believed for a long time, but then found out they were not true? (Example: people often think "God helps those who help themselves" is in the Bible, it's not.)
2. In Matthew 5:43 it says it is ok to hate your enemy. Does the Bible teach this? Can you think of any Old Testament passage that might teach this message? If not, why might the Pharisees have taught this and thought this was acceptable?
3. Who is it hard for you to love? If it is too hard to discuss in groups – maybe write down the names of people or maybe even the types of people you can admit are difficult for you to love? Then discuss – why might this be? Past hurts? Current situations?
4. In thinking about loving enemies – what are some biblical passages, Old or New Testament that teach us about love?
5. Exercise: if there is someone, or many people that are hard for you to love, try to write a letter. You don't need to send the letter but write them a letter confessing why. When you put pen to paper – what comes out? Are you still angry or hurt? Do you want forgiveness? Pay attention to your emotions and what comes out. Maybe this can help us understand why we struggle to love our enemies. When we learn this, we can commit it to prayer, asking God to help us overcome our struggles.