

Growth Group Leader Guide

This “growth group leader guide” is meant to be just that, a guide. Please feel free as the leader of your group to add questions or comments, as you feel necessary, to fit your group’s dynamics.

Also, don’t feel pressured to cover every question.

Love Your Enemies – Nov. 9, 2025

- What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend’s message did you find to be most helpful, eye-opening, or troubling? Explain.

3 Points

- **The Scribes & Pharisees’ Teaching**
 - **Jesus’ Teaching**
 - **The Application**
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- Share a time when someone felt like an "enemy" to you—maybe a coworker, family member, or online critic. How did you react then, and how does Jesus' command in verse 44 ("Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you") make you rethink that situation? What might have changed if you were consistently in prayer for them?
 - In verse 43, Jesus quotes "Love your neighbor and hate your enemy." Why do you think the religious leaders added the "hate your enemy" part when it's not in the Old Testament? How were they trying to justify their own self-righteousness?
 - How did the Scribes and Pharisees misuse Leviticus 19:18?
 - As a group, read the following Old Testament passages.
 - Exodus 23:4-5
 - Leviticus 19:33-34
 - Exodus 23:9
 - Proverbs 25:21-22
 - Psalm 35:12-14
 - Job 31:29-32
 - Which one of these passages surprises you most?

- How do these passages prove that Jesus isn't giving "new" teaching, but correctly interpreting the OT?
- **Read and discuss** what the following two passages say about love.
 - Matthew 22:36-39
 - 1 Corinthians 13:13
- In the sermon, it was said that "Love is the greatest commandment and virtue, and loving one's enemy is the greatest thing love can do." Do you agree?
- What do you think is meant by this phrase (loving one's enemy is the greatest thing love can do)? Read Romans 5:6-8 to help answer this question.
- **Read and discuss** the following quote.
 - *"This is the supreme demand. Through the medium of prayer we go to our enemy, stand by his side, and plead for him to God."* - **Bonhoeffer**
- Matthew 5:45 is describing what theologians call "common grace." In God's common grace, how does He show love to enemies daily?
- Read Matthew 5:44-45. What does "so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven" mean? How does 1 John 4:19 help clarify this passage?
- What does "be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" mean in the context of our passage?
- **Read and discuss** the following quote.
 - *To return evil for good is devilish; to return good for good is human; to return good for evil is divine. To love as God loves is moral perfection.* - **Alfred Plummer**
- Verse 44 commands us to pray for persecutors. Who in culture/news (or personally) feels like an "enemy" to Christians today? Are you praying for them (Why or why not)?

Announcements:

Celebration Sunday (11/30)

It's a tradition at Country Oaks that every 5-Sunday month, we celebrate baptisms, child dedications, the Lord's Supper, and new members. Please join us to celebrate what God is doing in the lives of our church family! If you're interested in *getting baptized, becoming a member, or dedicating your child to the Lord*, sign up online.

Sunday Night Service

11/30 | 6pm | Worship Center

Join us for Sunday night service at the end of the month! Childcare is available for ages 3 and under.