

**Discussion Questions for**  
**“Neighbor Here, Neighbor There: Will It Be Easy?”**  
*Matthew 5:43-48, Pastor Tom Olson, Weekend of November 25, 2018*

*Ice Breaker:* Have you had any neighbor interactions in the last two weeks? How has this sermon series challenged you to be more intentional with those you live nearby?

1. What’s the modern-day equivalent of “*Love your neighbor and hate your enemy*” (v. 43)? In other words, what does the same sentiment sound like today?
2. Look at v. 44. How does Jesus broaden and deepen the command to love your neighbor?
  - a. What is an *enemy*, according to Jesus? (What He says earlier in the chapter might help you answer this question – like in vv. 10-12 & vv. 38-42.)
  - b. What, then, does it look like to *love* our enemies, according to Jesus? (The passages mentioned in the previous question might be helpful here, too!)
3. Who, specifically, are *your* enemies?
  - a. What practical steps can you take to start loving them *this very week*?
  - b. How, particularly, can your group help you or pray for you in this?
4. In v. 45, we see that loving our enemies makes us *like our Heavenly Father*.
  - a. How does He love His enemies?
  - b. How do you see the gospel in v. 45? That is, how do you see Jesus in v. 45?
  - c. In what ways do these answers *motivate* you to love your enemy?
  - d. Is it even possible to love your enemy without such motivation?
5. According to vv. 46-47, loving our enemies takes us *far beyond* the love of the godless (represented by “Gentiles”) and the self-interested (represented by “tax-collectors”).
  - a. Share a time when you’ve been loved in the way vv. 46-47 describes.
  - b. How can we, as sons and daughters of God, go *far beyond* this kind of love?
6. If we are commanded to *love our enemies*, how does this shed new light and bring fresh perspective on the command to *love our neighbors*?

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7. This three-week sermon series on loving our neighbors is intended, in large part, to help launch an outreach initiative that will occur throughout 2019 at our church.
  - a. What kind of outreach activity that you've engaged in has felt the most natural? What has felt the most forced and foreign to you?
  - b. As you look around your LIFE Group, what do you see in each person's history, temperament, and personality that could be used by God for outreach?
  - c. What are the names of 3-5 neighbors, friends, or co-workers that you'd really like to reach out to with the gospel of Jesus Christ?

*Resource:* Good conversations are always started with good questions. Here are 5 questions to help start a spiritual conversation with a non-believing friend:

- 1) What's making you happy in this season of your life?
- 2) What challenges or struggles are you facing?
- 3) What's your personal story when it comes to faith and God?
- 4) What do you believe about God?
- 5) What's your perception of Christians?

What questions would you add to this list?