

MOOREBANK HAMMONDVILLE ANGLICAN CHURCHES
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION
Matthew 5:38-48 – Loving like God

Read Matthew 5:38-42

1. Read Exodus 21:22-5 (see also Deut 19:15-21). What difference does it make to know that these laws were addressed to a judge? How did these laws positively curb vengeance and vigilantism?
2. What is common to each of the problems addressed in verses 39-42? What is common to the response Jesus demands of us in each of these situations?
3. How has Jesus changed the Old Testament proportionate penalty approach?
4. Do you think Jesus demands are reasonable? How well do you follow them? Why/why not?
5. [When injustice occurs, is it ever right to use the legal system/call police/go to war?]

Read verses 43-48

6. In verse 45, what does Jesus say should motivate us to love our enemies? Does it motivate you?
7. We might think we don't have enemies. Is that still true when we notice Jesus' broader understanding of the word?: 44: "those who persecute you"; 45: "the evil", "the unjust"; 46: "those who don't love you"; 47: "those who aren't your brothers".
8. "Christians don't hate or love their enemies, but rather settle for the middle-ground of ignoring, tolerating or dismissing their enemies or papering over differences." Does this describe how you respond to enemies/those unlike you?
9. Do you think we have a problem with truly desiring good for our enemies? What is wrong with us? Are our perceived rights getting in the way of obeying Jesus (cf vs 38-42)?

For Personal Reflection:

10. How often and in what way do you pray for your enemies? Could you pray the Lord's Prayer (6:9-13) for them?
11. God sends rain and sunshine (45), we are to love and greet (46-47). How are rain/sunshine/greetings teaching us about what love is? In Luke 10:25-37 the Samaritan shows love. Are you practising this kind of love for enemies/those unlike you? Why/why not?
12. Are you meek? Do you hunger and thirst for righteousness? Do you rejoice in insult and false accusation? How do you need to live in repentance about your lack of enemy-love?