

Talk It Over

Questions are prepared each week and are designed to prompt insights, questions, and the life experience of each listener. If these are used immediately following the sermon, it would be much the same as what was done in Israel at the time of the early church.

For the sake of time, you may want to choose one or two questions.

Read

Read Matthew 5:43-48

Why does Jesus instruct his followers to love their enemies?
What bigger ideas lie behind his teaching?

Discuss

1. What specific reason does Jesus give for praying for our enemies? What does this do for us?
2. What is the significance of Jesus' statement that God "makes the sun shine and the rain fall on the evil and the good"?
3. In Deuteronomy 6:4 we are told that "the Lord is one." How is Jesus urging his followers to manifest this oneness in his teaching? How does a life defined by our enemies undermine this oneness? How does Jesus' teaching in John 17:21-22 underscore the notion that "the Lord is one"?
4. How does Jesus' teaching promote unity while still recognizing distinctions? What phrases in this passage show that God recognizes differences in people, while still being loving and kind toward everyone?
5. How do you love someone you don't like? How is it possible to disagree with someone--or be frustrated or angry with them--and still love them?



Wrap Up:

Close your time together in prayer.