

“What’s going on?”

+ Tuesday's 12pm-1pm - Beginning Tuesday Sept 3 we are creating a space for women to come and pray at LifePoint. Sometime it's helpful to have a space where we can go to pray, either individually or with someone. This is a come-and-go format. A great place to stop in if you're on lunch or running errands. Stay 5 minutes, or the whole hour! Childcare will be available.

+ We need your help! - Would you be willing to help people with rides to church? Do you have time in your day to help clean the Children's Ministry toys? Can you help come alongside a young woman with special needs? Are you interested in podcast & video editing, videography, or sound board operation? Would you be willing to, or know of someone who might like to join our childcare team? If you'd like to know more about any of these opportunities, please contact Chris Woodard (cwoodard@lifepointqcy.org). Feel free to share these needs with others as well!

MATTHEW 5 : 43 - 48

ICE BREAKER

Question: What are some of the most famous good guy/bad guy or arch nemesis combinations in literature or film?

Question: Are there any bad guys that you enjoy or have a heart for?

Question: Are there any villains that you despise?

CENTERING FOCUS

Someone read Pslam 139: 23-24 aloud, twice, then pray to open your time together.

Psalm 139:23-24 (TPT):

*God, I invite your searching gaze into my heart.
Examine me through and through;
find out everything that may be hidden within me.
Put me to the test and sift through all my anxious cares.
See if there is any path of pain I'm walking on,
and lead me back to your glorious, everlasting ways—
the path that brings me back to you*

LAST WEEK'S CHALLENGE

We have been practicing the discipline of simplicity. This past week we were challenged to downsize.

Question: Did you participate in this? If so, how has it been? How do you feel like you've been freed up to keep the first thing first?

THOUGHT PROVOKING QUESTION

Question: Do you think real life villains or bad people have friends and family? Do you think they love people and are loved by them?

Question: So what distinguishes them as a villain?

ENGAGING WITH SCRIPTURE

Matthew 5:43–44 (ESV):

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you"

Question: How would you define or describe a neighbor? How would you define or describe an enemy?

Question: What are some ways that someone might become our enemy?

Question: What do you think Jesus means by loving your enemies? Does he want us to feel fondly toward them or do you think he has something else in mind? What might that practically look like?

Question: How or in what ways do you think Jesus is instructing us to pray for our enemies?

Question: How might praying for God's blessing over our enemies change our heart toward them?

Matthew 5:45-47 (ESV):

“So that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?”

Question: What reasons does Jesus give us for loving our enemies?

Question: Why does it matter that we love in the same way God loves?

Question: Basically “tax collectors” and “Gentiles” were viewed as the most sinful and far from God people around. Why does it matter that we love more extravagantly than people who don’t follow Jesus?

Question: Who are your enemies? Who are the people who are hostile toward you or who you tend to be hostile toward? Who are the people you’re afraid of, and who are the people who are afraid of you?

A P P L Y

What are some ways you can begin loving your enemies?

- People who disagree with you politically
- People who are jeopardizing your safety
- People who are hurting you financially
- People who have spread rumors about you
- People who have excluded you and looked down upon you
- Family members you don’t talk to anymore
- Coworkers who have taken a promotion you deserved

What are some specific ways that you can change your current behavior and actively love them this week?

NEW CHALLENGE

As we continue you to practice the spiritual discipline of simplicity, this week's challenge is to stop, be still before the Lord, and ask him to show you the "loud and busy" places in your lives.

Begin to seek simplicity in the area that the Spirit reveals to you.