

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Session 4

Reminders:

- Lent is coming up - it is the 6 weeks leading to Easter. Talk to your group to see if they would like to do a small group study through Lent.
- Make sure to take the time to share prayer requests and pray for each other.

Keynotes from Session 4:

- In the sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:21-26) Jesus tells us that holding onto anger and conflict in our relationships is as serious as murder.
- The two key theological principles are: 1. Every person you interact with is “blessed” and valued by God. 2. We are created for good relationships.
- The hard work of discipleship is to both hold onto truth and hold onto relationship.

Questions for Discussion:

- When you have conflict, do you tend to avoid it or do you tend to lean into the conflict? Or, are there certain situations when you do one or the other? (And what are those situations?)
- Could you tell us about a time when you (or someone near to you) did conflict really well? What made it good? Was it still difficult?

Read Ephesians 4:25-32 (take turns reading if helpful)

- Paul is teaching a group of people at a church how to get along with each other. What difficult truths (boundaries) does Paul mention in this passage (i.e. no more brawling)?
- How does he encourage them to hold onto the relationship with each other even when confronting these truths? Where does he encourage grace?
- How do you or could you practice this in your life/family/work?

Read Matthew 18:15-17

- In your own words - what plan is presented for dealing with conflict?
- Do we usually see people using this plan? Where do we often deviate?
- Would it be realistic to use the principles of this plan when you deal with conflict today? What would that look like in your life?

Passages to Read:

Ephesians 4:25-32

25 Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. 26 “In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, 27 and do not give the devil a foothold. 28 Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.

29 Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. 32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Matthew 18:15-17

15 “If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. 16 But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ 17 If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.