

WORDS OF JESUS

SERMON SERIES

DISCUSSION GUIDE

“Love Your Enemy”

SPEAKER: Bo Stern Brady

DATE: July 19, 2026

TEXT(S): Matthew 5:43-45 and Luke 6:27-36,
with John 18:36, Prov 18:21, and James 3:1-12

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE: *This resource is designed to help you, and your group, step through a progression of engagement with the Bible passage(s) and the speaker's message.*

Our goal is to help you and your group better understand and apply B4's teaching.

MESSAGE SUMMARY + DISCUSSION PROMPTS

Jesus commands us to love our enemies. It's one of His most challenging teachings because it confronts our instincts for self-protection, retaliation, and tribal loyalty. This message explores how shifts in the Church's relationship with power over time have made this command seem unrealistic: love your enemy *and* conquer them? However, Jesus' intent was not that most of His followers debate philosophical and abstract questions about power and enemy-love. Instead, He invites u into a new way of life that offers our enemies practical goodness, truthful speech, healthy boundaries, and honest prayer.

LEAN IN: *These are icebreakers and warm-ups, mostly to get the group talking and start the flow of conversation. Choose one and talk it over for 5 minutes.*

1. Share about a time when you changed your mind about someone after getting to know them.
2. Who has demonstrated unexpected kindness toward you that you still remember? What was it?
3. What's the difference between disagreement and hostility?
4. Why do you think people naturally divide the world into "us" and "them"?
5. What is one teaching of Jesus besides “love your enemy” that has always challenged you, and why?

LOOK DOWN: *These are questions about the Bible passage(s) from the teaching. Spend about 10 minutes discussing your choice of two or three questions:*

1. In Matthew 5:43-45, what reasons does Jesus give for loving our enemies?
2. How does Luke's version of this teaching expand our understanding of Jesus' intent?
3. How does Jesus' statement in John 18:36 define the nature of his kingdom?
4. Why do you think Jesus connects loving enemies with praying for them?
5. What relationship exists between our words and the kingdom of God in Proverbs 18 and James 3?

LOOK OUT: *These questions help connect the world of the Bible to today.*
Spend about 10 minutes discussing your choice of two or three questions:

1. In what ways do politics, mass media, and social media encourage us to view people as enemies?
2. What does it look like to refuse hatred without becoming indifferent to injustice?
3. Why is truthful speech becoming increasingly difficult in today's culture?
4. How can Christians model healthy boundaries without abandoning enemy-love?
5. What kinds of people are easiest for your (or our) culture to dehumanize?

LOOK IN: *These questions help you consider how to engage the teaching for yourself.*
Spend about 15-20 minutes discussing your choice of two or three questions:

1. Who immediately comes to mind when you hear Jesus say, "Love your enemies"?
2. Is your greatest struggle with enemy-love your thoughts, your words, your actions, or your prayers?
3. How might a healthy boundary actually be an act of love rather than avoidance?
4. How could speaking life instead of criticism change one difficult relationship this week?
5. What would it look like to sincerely pray, "Show me Your heart," regarding someone you struggle with?

LIVE IT OUT: *These prayer practices can help you integrate this message into day-to-day life.*
Choose one prompt and discuss how you will embrace it this week (5 minutes):

1. Practice the "Show Me Your Heart" prayer throughout the week. Each day, bring one difficult person you're struggling with before God and simply pray something like this: "Jesus, here is my 'enemy,' the person I struggle to love. Show me Your heart for them. Show me what I don't yet see. Form Your love for them in me." Resist asking God to change them. Focus on inviting Him to transform your heart toward them.
2. Practice a daily blessing: Choose one person, difficult or not, who cannot repay you. Try to choose someone you would naturally avoid. Intentionally bless them every day this week in the following ways: Pray specifically for their flourishing. Speak words of life over them. Avoid criticism, especially a "prayerful" critique. In addition to praying, perform one quiet act of kindness without expecting recognition or reward. Invite Jesus to participate these practices with you by His Spirit.

You can find B4's [Series Resources here](#).

