



WEEK May 1 – 7

MAIN IDEA

Love is bigger than retaliation or reciprocation.

CHECK IN (HIGHS & LOWS)

 15 min

A great, quick way to catch the highlights of what is happening in the lives of the people in your group is to take turns quickly sharing the “highs & lows” of your week. High: What was the highlight of your week? Low: What was the low point of your week?

SETTLE IN (ICE BREAKER)

 10 min

1. Tell the group about a fight (physical, verbal, relational) that you saw get steadily or quickly worse.

DIG IN (UNDERSTANDING)

 15 min

1. Read Matthew 5:38-42. What are the different ways Jesus calls us not to retaliate? How might these situations translate to moments we face today?
2. What parts of this teaching are hard for you to apply?
3. Read Romans 12:17-21. What is Paul calling for here? Why is this hard? Why is this passage encouraging?
4. Have you ever seen someone not only refrain from retaliating but return an offense with kindness? What impression did that make?

5. Read Matthew 5:43-48. What actions is Jesus calling for? What are the results of obeying Jesus in these things?
6. Read 1 Timothy 1:4. What is the aim of our charge? What are the three places this love is produced in us?
7. How can you shape and invest in those three places that produce love in your heart and actions?

GEAR UP (APPLICATION)

 20 min

1. How can you apply Jesus’ teaching in Matthew 5 to your life? You might not have people slapping you or stealing your coat, but how can you apply his principles?
2. Do you find yourself being an initiator of love, or only reciprocating it to people who show you kindness? Where might you have opportunities to be an initiator?
3. How might living this way change the culture we live in?

STEP UP (HOMEWORK)

 5 min

1. Read the Gospel of John this month. There are only 21 chapters, and they are filled with powerful teachings from and about Jesus.