



Watch the Sermon



Read the Scripture



Submit a Prayer Request



Don't journey alone!
Join a Small Group



Need Information
or Help?

Opening Questions

Read the following story from this weekend's message and then ask everyone in your group to answer the question that follows.

"Clara Barton was an incredibly influential woman as well as the founder of the American Red Cross. She was once asked by a friend if she was still speaking to so-and-so. To Clara, this seemed to be a strange question and quite out of the blue so she asked another question in response to the first: Why certainly, why shouldn't I be? At this, her friend brought up something that so-and-so had done to Miss Barton many years before. Miss Barton's response was both immediate and firm - she simply said, Oh, I distinctly remember forgetting that offense."

- **How does what Clara Barton did hit you? What thoughts and emotions does it create inside your head and heart?**

Read Together

1 John 2:7-11

Big Idea

Choosing love over hate is an essential mark of those who follow Christ.

Discussion Questions

How have you chosen love in the past? Have there ever been difficult people, difficult situations where the emotion of love wasn't there... but you chose to love regardless?

1. Read verse 7 where John begins with the command to love one another. Where did John first hear this command? Read John 13:34 and surrounding verses together.
2. Read verse 8. Can you think of examples from the gospels of how "Jesus lived the truth of this commandment" as John puts it? Feel free to take a walk together through the first 7 chapters of Mark's gospel for examples. Give everyone a portion to read out of these chapters and quietly do some reading. Share your insights with each other!
3. Read verses 9-11. Can you identify what takes place in our lives when we make the choice to hate instead of love or love instead of hate? Are there specific consequences?
4. Can you give an example from your life of how you personally experienced one of these consequences?
5. In verse 11, John writes about how we can get "blinded by the darkness." If this is true, what are the implications for our community if sometimes we actually become blind in our hatred and cannot see the way things really are?

Challenge

Take 2 to 3 minutes for some silence to consider as individuals in your small group what these five verses mean to you. Then take the time to share around the circle about ways in which you've been become blind in your hatred of another brother or sister in Christ. Recognize that we have all been there at one time or another.

Prayer

Now take time to pray for each other specifically for those who have been caught in hatred of others. Put the person you are praying for in the middle of a circle and surround him/her and pray for them for God's help.

Next Step

Don't let this time of experiencing God's grace pass with following up on His work in your life. Make a commitment to your group as to what you are going to do in response to what God has spoken to you about. Follow up with each other as this week unfolds and share next week at your small group about your followup experience. Remember that we need each other and although working this out may be difficult, your obedience will be richly rewarding as God honours those who obey His leading.

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