

## Transformed From Hate to Loving Others

### Reflect

- 1) In your opinion is it easier to say, "I love you" or "I hate you?" Why?
- 2) What words are associated with hate and reinforce, or elevate, our feelings of revulsion towards others?
- 3) Have you ever surprised a person with the words, "I love you?" What impact did it have in the conversation?

### Read Your Bible

- 1 Corinthians 13:1-13
- Matthew 5:43-48
- 1 John 4:16-21
- Romans 12:9-13

### Apply God's Word to Your Life

- 1) 1 Corinthians 13 states, "Without love, faith that even moves mountains, is nothing; without love, even if I give everything away in service, I gain nothing." Why is love so central to who we are as followers of Jesus?
- 2) 1 John 4 states "God is love." What does it mean to you in practical terms, "To rely on the love that God has for us?"
- 3) In Matthew Jesus commands us, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." This is a radical and seemingly impossible command to put into practice. How can it be done? What steps can you take personally to move towards loving your enemies?
- 4) As you read through the scriptures above, what is the biggest takeaway for you personally?
- 5) Why do you think God commands us to focus on loving others and even our enemies? What's His goal for you in that command?

This world is filled with hate. People hate each other and put that hate into actions that bully, betray, injure, and kill one another. Hate does deep and permanent damage to a person's soul. In living out hate in word and deed, a person is pushed further and further from the presence of God. You and I, as followers of Jesus, need to move from hate to loving one another as God in Christ has loved us. To put love into practice is the antidote to hate. And as we love one another and seek to love even our enemies and pray for them, God does His miraculous work of transforming our inner nature to be more and more like Jesus. So, put love into action in your life. Take a huge step and tell someone today, "I love you." Get radical and pray for one of your enemies today. Fulfill God's command of you, "Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister."

### Pray

Lord God, I want to thank You from the bottom of my heart for who You are as a God of love who loves me even when I am not lovable. Your love revealed in the cross of Christ has redeemed me and made me Your own. Now I pray for Your love to continue to transform my life. Move me from hate to loving one another following the example of Jesus. Teach me Lord, to work at loving even my enemies, as challenging as that may be, for I know when I am able to do that I will have been transformed fully into the image of Christ. In Jesus' name I pray Amen.