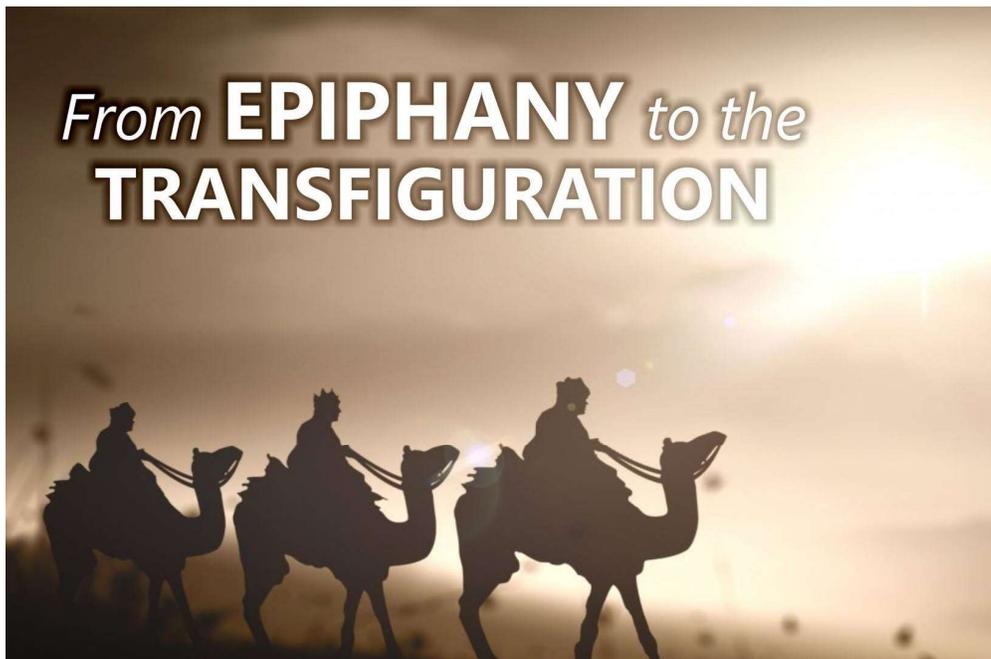




Week 7
20 - 26 February 2022

From EPIPHANY to the TRANSFIGURATION

SMALL GROUP WEEKLY
DEVOTIONAL MATERIAL



Daily Bible readings, a memory verse and a prayer for individual contemplation

Weekly worship song, reflection and small group questions

Epiphany to Transfiguration (6 Jan – 27 Feb)

Week 7: 20 February Love for enemies and judging others

Week 8: 27 February The Transfiguration



Week 7

20 FEBRUARY LOVE FOR ENEMIES AND JUDGING OTHERS

Epiphany Year C	First reading	Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
Love for enemies and judging others	Genesis 45:3-11, 15	Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40	1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50	Luke 6:27-38



Praise and Worship: Love You So Much - HILLSONG

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KmeZ4IDK7T4>

GOSPEL Luke 6:27-38 New International Version – UK

Love for enemies

²⁷ 'But to you who are listening I say: love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who ill-treat you. ²⁹ If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. ³⁰ Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. ³¹ Do to others as you would have them do to you. ³² 'If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. ³³ And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. ³⁴ And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. ³⁵ But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. ³⁶ Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

Judging others

³⁷ 'Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. ³⁸ Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.'

Reflection On the Scripture by: Lusi Badi

Love is not taught but love happens because of natural instinct, it's somewhat an unnatural instruction to be commanded to love where there is no love. While this command from a natural perspective seems misplaced, yet through the eyes of Christ this is what we are called to do.

Loving my enemies will remain an abstract concept if I leave in natural reasoning, let us rather look into the unnatural tools that we have been provided for. Loving those that don't love us, calls and compels us to be at the total will of God. Now, there is no space for our will when we are busy with the will of God. The response to love our enemies should be seen through the lens of executing God's will.

You might be asking yourself; how do I ensure I'm not pretending after all this is my enemy? Here the second tool comes in; of Grace. It is the grace of God that will give you the might to love those that don't love you. The will of God compels us to be uncomfortable, but the grace of God gives us the power to sustain and endure such commandments.

Let us move from giving toxic situations power, over us and the will of God in our lives. When we don't rise to do these unnatural calls, we would be giving up without allowing God to work in us.

Open yourself to God. Open yourself to a new avenue of loving the unlovable, for Christ himself loves the whole world. That's what John affirms when he says, "*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, so we might be saved*" John 3:16

QUESTIONS

Small Group Questions:

1. Looking at my life, does it have room to love my enemies, or am I locked away to self?
2. Mankind is pleased with order and structure; do you believe that the disruptions in life are meant to bring God to us?
3. Agape form of love is filled with benevolence, do you possess such a type of love?



Daily Bible reading, memory verse and prayer:

MONDAY, February 21, 2022: Psalm 38; Genesis 33:1-17; I Corinthians 11:2-16

Memory Verse: Genesis 33 v 4: *“But Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him; he threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. And they wept.”*

Prayer: God of all ages who keeps in all seasons of our life bring us to places where we can meet our enemies and embrace them with Love. **Amen**

TUESDAY, February 22, 2022: Psalm 38; I Samuel 24:1-22; I Corinthians 11:17-22, 27-33

Memory Verse: I Samuel 24 v 19: *“When a man finds his enemy, does he let him get away unharmed? May the Lord reward you well for the way you treated me today.”*

Prayer: Lord creator of all, we are but one in your image, teach us to see you even in our enemies for we were created in your likeness. When foe is at our mercy teach us to remain merciful, kind and loving. **Amen**

WEDNESDAY, February 23, 2022: Psalm 38; Leviticus 5:1-13; Luke 17:1-4

Memory Verse: Psalms 38 v 19: *“Many have become my enemies without cause; those who hate me without reason are numerous.”*

Prayer: You are the God that never slumbers the keeper of Israel, I pray for your constant protection over me, my family and loved ones. May you spark the spirit of Love in all those that consider me an enemy, may your love be greater than their hate. **Amen**

THURSDAY, February 24, 2022: Psalm 99; Deuteronomy 9:1-5; Acts 3:11-16

Memory Verse: Deuteronomy 9 v 3: *“But be assured today that the Lord your God is the one who goes across ahead of you like a devouring fire.”*

Prayer: Lord of old, Lord of now you have always promised that in our times of troubles you arrive before us. We pray today that you keep that promise today and days to come. **Amen**

FRIDAY, February 25, 2022: Psalm 99; Deuteronomy 9:6-14; Acts 10:1-8

Memory Verse: Psalm 99 v 4: *“The King is mighty, he loves justice, you have established equity; in Jacob you have done what is just and right.”*

Prayer: Lord our God, help us in our decision making big or small to always be just, give us the wisdom to choose the low and oppressed, for in doing so we will be doing your will. **Amen**

SATURDAY, February 26, 2022: Psalm 99; Deuteronomy 9:15-24; Luke 10:21-24

Memory Verse: Luke 10 v 23: *“Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, ‘Blessed are the eyes that see what you see.’”*

Prayer: Holy trinity grant us one eye in order for the world to be one, one in understanding and in love. Give us the sight to see your marvelous acts and keep them sacred. **Amen**



It is important for parents to take time to lead the conversations of family time and to be honest with their children in these conversations.

BY JENNY BLAKE – CHILDREN’S PASTOR
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Pray daily: Set up family time for prayer and devotions and stick to this arrangement. All devotions should always begin by with a prayer. Ask a family member to pray or one of the children.

Scripture Reading: Luke 6:27-38

Activity/Family Moment:

SCIENCE EXPERIMENT.

What you need:

- A bowl
- Corn starch (Maizena)
- Water
- And food colouring (optional)

What you do:

1. Put some corn starch to a bowl.
2. Add water with or without food colouring, to the bowl.
3. Mix the water and the corn starch together until you have a wet, honey-like consistence.
4. Now make a fist and try punch the mixture hard. Do you notice that there **is** resistance to your hand?
5. Now gently lower your hand into the mixture. Notice how there **is no** resistance, and your hand gets covered in the mixture?
6. Try squeeze the mixture. It feels different now, doesn't it?
7. Swish your hand around the bowl and discuss how that feels

This can show us how we behave.

So, if we had to approach someone aggressively (*like bullying, teasing, being mean*) we can expect that they will react in the same way. Just like when we hit the mixture hard, we were met with a hard resistance.

BUT if we approach people in a gentle soft way, like being kind and friendly, we get a very different response JUST like the mixture.

Now Jesus has asked us to turn the other cheek. We are to respond with love not hatred!
Jesus is asking something that can be very difficult!

Think about someone who you feel is an enemy. Now think of that person receiving the same amount of love you receive from God. Yes, God loves that person just as much as you!

Now let's try think of that person and why they may behave badly. Do they have a loving family? Do they have friends? What is there homelife like? Sometimes people lash out because they are hurting and feel unhappy.

Proverbs 15:1 NIV. **"A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."**