

# Cultivate Reflection Guide

## Holy Shift: Learning to Love My Enemy

January 29/30, 2022

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Jesus gave his followers practices, rhythms and habits to follow that He knew would change them. Holy Shift invites us to consider our habits and shift our spiritual practices toward God.

Our weekly Reflection Guide equips you to start a REAL conversation in your community group, as well as cultivate God's word into your life through personal bible study. Choose the questions that challenge you to reflect and respond to what we're learning. *It's not about getting through the content, but getting the content through you!*

### Read: [Matthew 5:43-44 ESV](#)

**Reflect:** As you reflect on the weekend message, what most instructed, encouraged or challenged you? This could be any word, verse or point that got your attention.

### Respond:

1. As long as our lives are focused on our enemies, we will never defeat the enemy within.
  - Can you recall a time when conflict with another person, a hurtful situation or even difficult circumstances revealed an opportunity for personal growth and change?
  - What did you learn about yourself, God or others?
2. We are our own **worst enemy**.
  - We struggle **instinctually**, when the desire to self-protect and self-preserve keeps us from experiencing God's best for us. Is there an instinct in your life that you're struggling with? This could be anything that distracts you from God – passions, desires, fear, pride, denial, shame, guilt, envy, etc.
  - We struggle with **feelings**, being deceived by emotions that rise and fall based on our circumstances, rather than seeking truth. Are there any feelings you're believing that are crowding out your trust in God?
  - We struggle with **thoughts**, allowing negativity and self-criticism to take ground in our life. How does your thought life impact your spiritual and emotional health? What about your relationship with God and others?
3. Jesus saves us with **His love**.
  - Read [Romans 8:35-39 NLT](#). In these verses, the apostle Paul answers a question that every single one of us has asked ourselves at some point – "Will God still love me even if I \_\_\_\_\_?"
  - Make note of all the things that **will not** get between you and God. What do these verses tell you about how much God loves you?

**Prayer:** Confess your struggles to God, remembering that He is a better forgiver than we are. Invite Him to save you with His love. *"Lord, save me from my critical spirit. Instead of hating myself, teach me to truly love myself the way you do. Teach me to see myself as you see me and to begin living the life you have for me. Help me to shift my life for all eternity."*

**Live it Out:** Set aside time to be still and reflect on what you learned from this message. Ask God to show you the holy shift that needs to happen in your life. Develop a battle plan – practical steps you will take when your instincts, feelings or thoughts become the enemy of your faith and growth. What will you do to take ground in what is real and true? Who will you invite to encourage and support you along the way?

 **Dig Deeper:** Find a bible verse that will encourage you as you cultivate this holy shift into your life. Write it down and keep it someplace you'll see it or even memorize it.