

WITNESS – Reaching out to others **(Aim for 20 – 30 minutes)**

Heavenly Father we take upon ourselves the mantle of authority that Jesus delegates to us and in His name we speak to every household in Hungerford and say to you:

1 Relationships

We bless you in the Name of the Lord. We bless your marriages that they may be strong and whole. We bless the relationship between each marriage partner that it may be loving, forgiving, merciful and strong. We bless every intergenerational relationship within each household that there may be peace and love and understanding flowing between each one.

In Jesus' name we bless every network of wholesome and supportive friendship.

2 Health

We bless your health that you may be strong and well. In Jesus' name we resist any sickness or disease which seeks to invade this parish and to every person in the parish we say, be well, be strong, be healthy. To any who are sick right now we say we bless you in Jesus' name with a speedy recovery.

3 Wealth

We bless your wealth that you may have plenty to replace poverty. We bless you to have enough to live and enough to give. We bless the work of your hands that whatever you turn your hand to which is wholesome may be profitable. We bless every wholesome enterprise that is conducted by you that it may prosper and be successful. We bless the local businesses that they may be successful and profitable.

4 Education

We bless the local schools that they may be secure, safe places for teachers and pupils alike. We bless the children's capacity to learn and develop relationships and we bless their simple trust in Jesus that their trust may grow and become enriched.

5 Church

We speak to the Church and we say we bless you in the Name of the Lord that the Holy Spirit and the Word of God may flow out from you in power. We bless the hearts of all who live in the parish that they may be quickened to hear and respond to the Voice of the Living God. We bless all who live and work here, that the overspill of the blessings of the presence of the kingdom of God may fall upon you. **Amen**

MATTHEW **Matthew 5.38-42**

How to respond to evil people

WELCOME – Breaking the ice

(Aim for 10 minutes)

What situation might cause you to want revenge?

WORSHIP – Meeting the Lord

(Aim for 10 – 15 minutes)

What has been the best thing that has happened since our last meeting?

OR

When have you felt closest to God since our last meeting?

Say thank you to God

WORD – Applying the truth
(Aim for 40 – 45 minutes)

1 "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" (Exodus 21.24) was to clarify the meaning of justice and to limit the extent of revenge?

4 What might be accomplished by turning the other cheek or going the second mile?

2 How would you answer someone who felt it right to take Jesus' instruction "do not resist an evil person" absolutely literally on every occasion?

5 How do you respond to an injustice? Are you more like a rhino or a hedgehog? Both responses are wrong. What would be a more helpful way to respond? How can we help one another?

3 Jesus gives four illustrations of areas where his followers are not to seek revenge. What are the nearest modern equivalents for each of these?

6 How might this be relevant to safeguarding?

7 In the light of this passage and our discussions "How then shall I live?"