

NO PERFECT PEOPLE ALLOWED - WEEK 3

The Good Samaritan

Icebreaker

When your day is already packed, what kind of interruption is most likely to throw you off?

Overview

Read **Luke 10:25-37**. Jesus is asked, "Who is my neighbor?" Instead of giving a definition, He tells a story. A wounded man is ignored by people we might expect to help, while a Samaritan - someone the original audience would not expect to be the hero - sees him, stops, and acts with costly compassion.

The hardest thing about love is not what it will cost you, but who you must give it to.

1. Compassion Changes Course

Read Luke 10:30-34.

The Samaritan is traveling somewhere, but compassion changes what he does next. He sees the wounded man, goes to him, treats his wounds, and puts him on his own animal.

LOOK AT IT

- What differences do you notice between the responses of the priest, the Levite, and the Samaritan?
- What specific actions show that the Samaritan's compassion was more than a feeling?

EXPLORE IT

- Why is it easier to feel compassion than to let compassion interrupt our plans?
- What kinds of people or needs are easiest for us to notice but keep moving past?

GO DO IT

- Where might loving someone require you to change your plans, pace, or priorities this week?

2. Pity over Prejudice

Read Luke 10:33-35.

Jesus makes the Samaritan the compassionate neighbor. The person expected to be an outsider becomes the one who moves toward the hurting man. Love refuses

to let prejudice decide who deserves compassion.

LOOK AT IT

- Why do you think Jesus' choice of a Samaritan as the hero would have been significant to His listeners?
- What does the Samaritan give in order to care for someone he does not know?

EXPLORE IT

- How can our assumptions about someone's background, choices, politics, personality, lifestyle, or beliefs make compassion harder?
- Who is easiest for you to love? Who is hardest? What might that reveal?

GO DO IT

- Is there a person or type of person you've quietly decided is not your responsibility? What would it look like to choose pity over prejudice?

3. Saved People Stop

Read Luke 10:36-37.

Jesus turns the original question around. The issue is no longer simply, "Who qualifies as my neighbor?" but, "Will I become a neighbor?" Jesus ends with a command: **"Now go and do the same."**

LOOK AT IT

- According to Jesus, which person acted like a neighbor?
- What does Jesus tell the expert in the law to do?

EXPLORE IT

- Why are we sometimes tempted to make love theoretical instead of practical?
- What can cause good, religious people to walk past someone who needs compassion?

GO DO IT

- Who do you need to stop for this week? What is one practical act of mercy you could offer?
- How would your normal week look different if you began seeing interruptions as opportunities to love your neighbor?

Now What?

SEE: Who have I been moving past?

STOP: Where might compassion need to change my course?

LOVE: Who is difficult for me to love, and what practical act of mercy can I choose?

Jesus doesn't ask us to determine who deserves to be our neighbor. He calls us to become a neighbor - even when love crosses a line we would rather keep.

Group Prayer

Ask God to give you eyes to see people you normally overlook, compassion strong enough to interrupt your plans, and grace to love people you would not naturally choose. Pray specifically for opportunities to stop and show mercy this week.

On Your Own

- **Day 1 - Luke 10:25-37:** Read the story slowly and notice every action taken - and not taken - by each person.
- **Day 2 - Matthew 9:35-38:** Notice how seeing people produces compassion in Jesus.
- **Day 3 - James 2:14-17:** Consider the relationship between compassion and action.
- **Day 4 - 1 John 3:16-18:** Ask God to help you love with actions and truth, not words alone.