

Intentionally Reaching Others for the Cause of Christ

Big Idea:

Last week we struggled through what it means to intentionally pursue a relationship with God. When we begin to pursue relationship with Him, we learn that He wants us to intentionally pursue relationships with others as well- all for His glory and the growth of His Kingdom. Jesus' statement about the Greatest Commands leaves us no doubt that our purpose on Earth is to, first, love God, and, second, love all those He has created.

ICE BREAKER:

Begin this group session by playing the game, "Would You Rather?" Here are some examples of the kinds of questions you might ask. You can use these questions, or come up with your own...except for the last few questions, which will lead us into the study.

- 1) Would you rather spend an entire week without an Internet connection or a week without your cell phone?
- 2) Would you rather have no one show up for your wedding or your funeral?
- 3) Would you rather be half your height or twice your weight?
- 4) Would you rather be completely deaf or totally blind?
- 5) Would you rather live in a society that shows mercy but no justice, or justice but no mercy?

Ask these next two questions as a lead into the lesson:

- 1) Would you rather be extremely wealthy and miserable, or extremely poor, yet happy?
- 2) Would you rather be completely blind to, and unaware of the needs of others, or fully and painfully aware of other's needs?

THINK:

1. In your opinion, how sensitive are you to the needs of others around you? Rank your answer on a scale from 1-10, where 1 is “not sensitive” and 10 is “very sensitive”.
2. When you see someone in need are you more likely to take action, or to rationalize inaction? Why?
3. What kind of excuses do we make to avoid helping others who have physical needs?
4. What kind of excuses do we make to avoid helping others who have spiritual needs?...in other words sharing the Good News about Jesus with someone who has yet to accept Him, or encouraging/challenging a believer who is struggling in their walk with Him...

EXAMINE:

Read Luke 10:25-37 to answer the following questions:

1. In Matthew and Mark, it is Jesus who tells us what the most important/greatest commandments are. Here an expert in the law is the one who points it out. In your own words, what are those two commandments? How are these two commandments connected to each other?
2. If we read in between the lines, we can see that the expert in the law didn't challenge the idea of loving God with all his heart, soul, strength, and mind. What he did challenge- in an attempt to justify himself- was what kind of a person he was obligated to love/engage lovingly. Why do you think he challenged Jesus this way?
3. Jesus tells this man a parable about a presumably Jewish man who was attacked and left for dead on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. Jesus says that the first two men who passed by intentionally avoided the beaten man (passed by on the other side). Who were these men, and why do you think Jesus included them in the story in the way he did?
4. The 3rd man who passed by, deciding to help the wounded man was a Samaritan. What significance is found in the fact that he was a Samaritan? What about the fact that he chose to help anyway?
5. What should we learn from this parable about reaching out to others in an intentional way? What implications does this have for folks who are physically needy? Spiritually needy?

THIS WEEK: This week take time to ask God to open your eyes to the needs of others around you- needs both of the physical and the spiritual variety. Pray as well that God will give you the wisdom to know how to meet those needs. Take the time to reach out to at least one person for the sake of Christ.

"Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?" Jesus asked. The man replied, "The one who showed him mercy." Then Jesus said, "Yes, now go and do the same."

Luke 10:36&37