



SPRING 2024 // WEEK 5

Life Group Questions

Kingdom Stories: Living in the One True Kingdom // May 4-5, 2024

What Does Love Look Like? // Luke 10:25-37

Introduction

This week's sermon took us through the parable of the Good Samaritan, a recognizable narrative that challenges followers of Jesus to reflect on compassion, prejudice, and the true essence of loving our neighbors – as well as our enemies.

We invite you to look over all the questions on the following pages and write your thoughts down before you meet with your group. Some people even use these questions to take notes during the sermon. The questions are meant to stir your thinking and prompt open discussion and we do not expect you will cover every question each week.

Warm Up *(Suggested time: 30 min)*

- 1) What's the funniest, weirdest, or most memorable encounter you've had with a stranger?

- 2) Have you tried any of the Personal Spiritual Exercises this session? How did God use it in your life in a specific way? Or what have you heard God saying to you in your personal time in quietness, prayer and scripture reading?

Getting Started

Transition into group discussion.

Open group discussion with prayer. Here are a few potential prayer items:

- a. For the Spirit of God to lead you in truth
- b. For the fruit of the Spirit to be cultivated in your lives
- c. For grace to hear and apply what the Spirit says to you

Read the full passage together with your group.

Study Questions *(Suggested time: 40 min)*

- 1) To whom is Jesus telling the parable of the good Samaritan? Why is this audience significant?

When the lawyer asks what he must do to inherit eternal life, Jesus directs him to two commandments that he would know from the Law: love God and love your neighbor. **What is the connection between these two commandments?**

When the lawyer follows up by asking “Who is my neighbor?” scripture makes it clear that it’s not out of genuine curiosity, but from a desire to justify himself (verse 29). **In what contexts or relationships do you find that you tend to struggle with justifying a lack of love for someone?**

- 2) Jesus makes the lesson of His parable very clear: to be neighborly is to have compassion for those around you. **What did Pastor Jeff tell us about how a first-century Jewish audience would respond to the Samaritan in this story?**

The context of this parable alludes to the audience using their cultural identity as an excuse for their prejudice and even hatred. **What excuses do you use to avoid acting in love like Jesus toward those around you?**

How does this parable help us to think about who our own neighbors are?

3) Let's take some time to consider how we love our neighbor in the way that Jesus demonstrates. On the lines below, write down up to 4 areas of influence you have in your life. These could be friend groups, teams at work, social clubs, classmates, etc. Then, in the spaces beneath them, write down the names of 1-3 people in each group that you may find some conflict with (personal, political, moral, ideological, etc.).

<p>1. _____</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p>	<p>ME</p>	<p>2. _____</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p>
<p>3. _____</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p>		<p>4. _____</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p>

When you've completed the lists above, take a few minutes to pray for one of your areas of influence and the people in it. You can either do this with your entire group or split up into groups of 3 or 4 to pray together. The goal is to practice praying for those who you may not always understand or get along with, to surrender control of those relationships to the Lord, and to ask Him to provide you with new methods and opportunities to show love to those people as Jesus taught.

4) What does the parable of the Good Samaritan teach us about what it means to live in God's Kingdom?

We are assured elsewhere in the Bible that we will always face all kinds of trials and adversity in this life. Because of this, we can assume that conflict will come our way even if we behave like a good neighbor every day of our lives. **How do we prepare our hearts and minds for that conflict?**

In the next week, how might you take a step to intentionally love someone that you struggle to love, bringing God's love in the power of His Spirit?

Personal Spiritual Exercises

Just like physical exercises help strengthen and stretch our bodies for healthy living, these spiritual exercises are meant to move us spiritually in ways that may be new so we might experience inner growth. Since God longs for us to experience Him with our whole selves—mind, body, spirit—we invite you along each week to strengthen your souls with suggestions and prompts. **Next week in Life Group, take a few moments to share how the Lord may have used this exercise in your life.**

Prayer Focus: Revisit our group discussion exercise in question #3 in which we prayed for the people close to us that we don't always agree with. Plan out time this week to pray for all of your areas of influence and the people in them. Pray for God to work in their lives and allow them to glorify Him and ask Him to open your eyes to how you can show them love and compassion in your everyday life.

Scripture Focus: In this week's chapter, when asked what one must do to inherit eternal life, Jesus alludes to the commandments "love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself," (Luke 10:27). Elsewhere, in Mark 10:17-22, Jesus is asked the same question and responds in a slightly different way. Take time to read both of those passages this week and consider what Jesus is saying about the reality and nature of the eternal life that He provides, and how it relates to the Kingdom of God.

Prayer *(Suggested time: 20 min)*

A significant part of "coming together" is being open and honest with our lives. Sitting in a group of people for prayer may be new or it may be familiar to you. If you would rather not pray aloud when it is your turn, feel free to pray silently and then say "Amen" aloud signaling the next person in the group to pray. Whether or not you choose to verbalize your prayer, everyone is a participant in sharing this time before God together.

Take a few moments to prepare a prayer request. What did the message, working through the above questions or the discussion cause you to notice about your own relationship with Jesus? Would you be willing to share your prayer request with the group?