

Where's the Love

Small Group Questions: Part 1: Why is Loving so Hard?

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Read

Luke 10:25–37; 1 John 4:20–21; Genesis 9:6; James 3:9–10; Proverbs 17:5; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Matthew 7:12; and Acts 17:26

Reflect

The idea of loving our neighbor is much easier when it remains an abstract concept. In Luke 10, a lawyer stands up to test Jesus, asking him, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus answers with a question of his own. “What’s written in the law?” The lawyer answers rightly. “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 “Love your neighbor as yourself.” But then the lawyer asks, “And who is my neighbor?” How would you answer that question? What’s hardest about loving your neighbor?

Pastor Greg has three questions we can ask ourselves when we’re having a hard time loving our neighbor:

1. Does this person bear the image of God?
 - a. Describe an instance when God made it clear he wanted you to love someone you wouldn’t have chosen.
 - i. Who do you label or view as not having the image of God? Why?
 - b. Since humans are made in God’s image, what does that say about murder, about speaking ill of one another, and about caring for the poor?
 - c. God’s image was placed in humanity at creation, not redemption.
 - i. What does that mean to you?
2. How would I want to be treated in similar circumstances?
 - a. How willing are you to talk about uncomfortable things that matter to Jesus?
 - b. Before you make a judgment call on someone, how good are you at putting yourself in his or her shoes?
 - c. When deciding on whether to help someone, what questions do you ask yourself?
 - i. How often do you wonder, “Is this going to be convenient for me?”
 - d. Describe a time when you acted in a way toward someone that you regret, but God taught you something valuable from it.
3. What is the next loving thing to do?
 - a. When have you been in a situation where issues were so complex that you lost focus?
 - b. What small steps of mercy can you take right now?

Respond: Where is God leading you? How can your small group support you?