

PERSONAL APPLICATION

When Jesus told us to love our neighbors as we love ourselves, he had something radical in mind. He was challenging us to see others' messes as opportunities, not inconveniences. He was calling us to put others ahead of ourselves just as he put us ahead of himself. Is there a mess in someone else's life that you need to move toward? What can you do this week, month, or even year to begin to treat that mess as an opportunity instead of an inconvenience? How can our group support you?



PRAYER

On the space provide below, record prayer requests and answered prayers. Pray for one another.

Part 4: Messy-er

WARM-UP

1. Who are the people in your life that you would help out of a mess no matter what?

2. What is it about those relationships that motivates you to move past any discomfort to offer help?

Jesus told us to love our neighbors as ourselves. But that's easier said than done. Which people qualify as neighbors . . . and which don't? How far does our responsibility to others extend? If we make the effort to move toward the messes in other people's lives, how inconvenient is too inconvenient? How unsafe is too unsafe? How dangerous is too dangerous? What are the limits to loving others as we love ourselves? Here are some things we can take away from this week's message:

1. We know that we're too busy when messy people become an inconvenience instead of opportunities.

In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. Luke 10: 30-32

In the story of The Good Samaritan, Jesus showed us how to see other people's messes as an opportunity instead of an inconvenience. We tend to not get involved when it costs us something. Having a religious life is to walk the other way. However, Jesus doesn't call us to be religious but rather to be disciples and discipleship means that sometimes we need to move towards the mess. Talk about a time in which someone moved towards your mess. How has that experience shaped you and changed you?

2. We will never meet the best version of ourselves while we are in our comfort zone.

But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on

him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.' Luke 10:33-35

If we insist on "comfortable", boredom is inevitable. And we tend to do things we wouldn't normally do when we're bored. Thinking about this passage, talk about a time when you passed by someone else's mess. What do you wish you had done differently? Which person or group of people are you tempted to disqualify from 'neighbor' status? What makes you hesitant to move toward that person's or group's mess?

3. We are called to walk towards the mess by engaging our culture and community, not to walk the other way.

"Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise." Luke 10:36-37

At the end of the story, Jesus commands the lawyer to follow suit with the Samaritan in the story and to not walk away. We tend to avoid following this instruction due to the three c's: convenience, comfort, and control. "Move toward a mess, but not every mess." If you try to move toward every mess, you'll make a bigger mess. What are some ways you decided which messes to move toward?
