

life groups

NLC Life Group Through the Bible Study
CWY & GLR

Week of September 24, 2017

Sermon: Real Love in an Angry World
—Who Is My Neighbor?



Life Group Schedule

15 MIN Eat, Meet & Greet

15 MIN Ice Breaker Game: **Name That Person.** Divide into two teams. Give each person a blank card and ask each person to write five little known facts about themselves on their card. Include all leaders in this game too. **Ex:** I have a pet iguana, I was born in Iceland, my favorite food is Spam, my grandmother is called Doris and my favorite color is red. Collect the cards into two team piles. Draw one card from the opposing team pile. Each team tries to name the person in as few clues as possible. Five points if they get it on the first clue, then 4, 3, 2, 1, 0. The team with the most points wins. (**Note:** if you select the most obscure facts first, it will increase the level of competition and general head scratching!)

NOTE: It is less important to get through all of the study material as it is to engage in meaningful conversations, strengthen each other, and pray for each other's needs.

OPENING PRAYER (PLEASE PRAY FOR PS RICK AND HIS FAMILY)

45–60 MIN *Real Love in an Angry World—Who Is My Neighbor?*

- As Christ followers we should lead the way on how we treat others.”
Real love is the way we treat others.

Q1. What is the second most important thing you're supposed to do with your life while you're here on earth?“

- A lawyer asked Jesus this question in Luke 10:

HAVE OTHERS TAKE TURNS READING LUKE 10: 25-28

- Notice in verse 28, the Word says, “... as yourself...” because you love yourself a lot!

EPH 5:29 (MSG) “No one abuses his own body, does he? No, he feeds and pampers it.”

- 60% of our conversations are about ourselves. 80% of social media is all about you.
- A recent Harvard University study found that when you talk about yourself, dopamines are released in the brain—higher than good food and just below doing crack.
- Jesus knew this guy had an ulterior motive of keeping the law perfectly and making sure everyone else knew it—an ultimate concern for his own well-being.
- We can almost hear Jesus saying, “Now my command to you is this: take all that zeal, all that ingenuity, all that effort and seek your neighbor's well-being with it.” **BAM!** Go Jesus.

- But this man—maybe a little too confident in himself—goes on to say in vs. 29, “Who is my neighbor?”
 - › We tend to all ask this same question—trying to analyze and strategize how we might possibly reach others...someday.
 - › This guy is doing exactly what we do – trying to find a loophole---
- Jesus, knowing his motive to justify himself, does not directly answer him. Instead, he shares a story.

HAVE OTHERS TAKE TURNS READING LUKE 10:29-37

THREE RESPONSES TO AN ANGRY, HURTING WORLD

I CAN JUST KEEP MY DISTANCE. (PRIEST... AVOIDANCE)

- Out of sight, out of mind—the lifestyle of avoidance.

REVIEW LUKE 10:31

- › This is a common lifestyle of keeping relationships superficial, so you don’t have to get involved: drive home, hit the garage door opener, close it, and close yourself off to people.

I CAN BE INTRIGUED BUT UNINVOLVED (LEVITE... BEING INDIFFERENT)

- The second guy is a Levite.

READ LUKE 10:32

- You can go to a service every week of your life and never love your neighbor as yourself. You can look great on the outside--- but still be messed up on the inside. Religion does not make you loving.
- These first two guys are both very religious guys and very unloving.

Q2. The Levite sees a guy who’s been beaten up, this is a pretty graphic scene. But what does this guy do?

- He walks over, looks at him and goes, “That’s interesting.” Walks back to the other side and keeps on going. WHAT!?!
 - › We love to stare, but we hate to stop. If we stop it will mess up our schedule, our plans for that day.

Q3. In what ways has the Lord shown you how to overcome the tendency to avoid others’ issues or become indifferent to their challenges in your own experiences?

- If avoidance or indifference have become your M.O. lately, be honest about it! Admitting where you are is the first step to getting out from under that.

I CAN CARE FOR PEOPLE HOW I WOULD WANT TO BE CARED FOR (KINDNESS)

Q4. When you get sick, do you tend to demand a lot of attention?

LUKE 10:33 “Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him.”

- Jesus loved to turn the tables on people, especially the religious. So he picked the group the Jews hated the most and made that guy the HERO of the story!
- A Samaritan by definition was half-Jewish, a mixed-race people who lived in Israel. They were “those people.”

HOW CAN I LOVE MY NEIGHBOR IN AN ANGRY WORLD?

1. I MUST SEE THE NEED. (Sympathy)

LUKE 10:33 (MSG) “When he saw the man’s condition, his heart went out to him.”

- The Bible continually points out that what we see and the way we see things are directly related to the condition of our hearts.
- “When Jesus saw...” is sympathy—recognizing the needs of those around us.
 - › Love is sensitive. We must see what they need. Love starts in the eye. You can’t meet a need until you see the need.
- There are wounded people all around you—physically, financially, emotionally, relationally. Wounded by their parents, by betrayal, by grief.
- Why is it that we don’t see it? It’s not because you don’t care. You’re not hard-hearted.

TOP REASON: YOU ARE MOVING TOO FAST

- The busier you get, the less loving you will be. Busyness kills love.
- You can’t love others until you slow down. The slower you go, the more you see.
- Rick has always said you can’t really love traveling at MACH 2.

2. I MUST EMPATHIZE WITH THEIR PAIN

- Sympathy starts with the eyes. Empathy starts in the heart.

READ LUKE 10:33B “When he saw (sympathy) him, his heart was filled with compassion (empathy).”

- First his eyes kick in and then his heart.

- Empathy is all about, “Not only do I see your pain, but I *feel* your pain.” I have to feel what they feel.

“Walk a Mile in My Shoes”—Johnny Cash

IF I COULD BE YOU, IF YOU COULD BE ME
 FOR JUST ONE HOUR, IF WE COULD FIND A WAY
 TO GET INSIDE EACH OTHERS MIND
 IF YOU COULD SEE YOU THROUGH MY EYES
 INSTEAD YOUR OWN EGO I BELIEVE YOU’D BE
 I BELIEVE YOU’D BE SURPRISED TO SEE
 THAT YOU’VE BEEN BLIND... WALK A MILE IN MY SHOES
 JUST WALK A MILE IN MY SHOES
 BEFORE YOU ABUSE, CRITICIZE AND ACCUSE
 THEN WALK A MILE IN MY SHOES

- Behind every person, every issue, is a story.

Q5. What’s your story? If you feel you’ve been healed, that someone has stopped and helped you up or bandaged your wounds, how did that happen for you? What’s your story?

3. I MUST PUT LOVE IN ACTION

READ LUKE 10:34

- The Good Samaritan **takes action.**
 - › Love doesn’t just say, “I’m sorry for this guy. Poor fella.” NO. Love takes action.
- The Good Samaritan **“stooped down.”**
 - › He got on the man’s level. He didn’t pretend he was superior, and he didn’t talk down to him.
- The Good Samaritan **“used what he had.”**
 - › He dressed the man’s wounds with wine and oil, because that’s what he had on his donkey. He simply took what he had and used it to help this man.
 - › He bandaged the wounds. Where did he get the bandages? He’s not a doctor. He’s not carrying band-aids with him. He’s using his own clothes as bandages. He’s doing what it takes, using what he has.

READ PROVERBS 3:27-28 (MSG)

- We have a lot of neighbors who still need Jesus!
- Ps Rick said, in the end times, the love of most will grow cold, but growing cold is not who we are.
- Instead, pressing into the heart of God is who we are, standing firm in our faith in Him is who we are, and growing in boldness to share

his love to our neighbors—that is who we are.

READ JOHN 13:34 (NLT)

- Remember how God met you and loved you exactly where you were on that day when you said yes to Him?
 - › Do you see how He loved you too much to leave you there? He still feels that way—about you and your neighbor!

Q6. Let's talk about schedules. Who in this room has zero margin in life? What is the Lord asking you to clear from your schedule, so you can reach people?

Q7. Where has the Lord already placed you to notice others? Maybe it's when you work out at the gym, maybe when you're coaching your child's soccer or golf team, or when you frequent your favorite coffee shop.

- We're often already in a place where the Lord can use us to bring healing to the wounded. We just have to have eyes to notice the needs around us.

PRAY OVER NEEDS.

ANNOUNCEMENTS