

The Fruit of the Spirit: Love

Lesson Two

radiate

Settling In: About 10-20 minutes

- 1) Make a note to yourself who, if anyone, is missing from your home group this week.
- 2) Spend some time finding out how everyone is doing: make a note for prayer requests.
- 3) Introduce a time of conversational prayer. Make it clear that group members are not required to participate if they are not comfortable.
or
- 4) After a more brief time of prayer, take turns completing the prayer: "Father, I thank you for your great love that I see in _____."

This is only for your information...don't make a big deal of who is missing to the members who are present.

Conversational prayer means each member taking turns praying for various concerns with reasonably short and to the point prayers.

Opener: About 10 minutes

- 1) How would our culture define "love"? Do you agree or disagree with that definition?

You may not have time to ask every question in the study. Also, some of the discussion questions may not be appropriate depending on who is at the home group on a particular night. That's okay! We've intentionally given you more material than you can usually use.

Mini-teach: About 10 minutes

Love is a Verb

- 1) One of the most well known Bible passages on love is 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.
 - a) Rather than a description of what love is, this passage is a description of what love does.
 - b) The Bible places an emphasis on love as action rather than feeling.
- 2) But what about sincerity? Isn't it insincere to act as if we love someone if we really don't?
 - a) Certainly there is a feeling dimension to love, but action ought to lead the feeling of love rather than the feeling lead the action.
 - b) We often don't feel like doing the loving action that we should do. Mature people have learned that they can often act their way into a feeling but rarely can feel their way into an action.
- 3) Love is partially defined by the other facets of the Fruit of the Spirit, for instance: kindness, patience, and loyalty.
- 4) You can only understand love as you apply it to individuals. "Love your neighbour as yourself." This must apply to the people you are already in relationship with.

This optional section is meant to be delivered as a short teaching to get everyone thinking down the same track.

Discussion 1: About 15 minutes

Luke 10:25-29

- 1) What is the agenda of the teacher of the law?

Teachers of the law were the Bible scholars of the day. This teacher of the law would have probably considered himself more qualified than Jesus to teach the crowd about the Bible (the OT). It is possible to read a condescending attitude

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- 2) Based on his question, whose welfare was he concerned about? Put his question in your own words.
- 3) How does Jesus answer him? Why does Jesus refer him back to the Law?
- 4) What does the teacher of the law quote in his answer? (Dt 6:5; Lev 19:18)
- 5) How does Jesus respond to his answer? If the teacher of the law was primarily concerned about his own salvation, about whom is Jesus saying he should really be concerned?
- 6) Why would the teacher of the law feel the need to justify himself? How does he attempt to complicate the issue?
- 7) What words could Jesus have substituted for "neighbour" that might have made the teacher happier? (Religious people? good people? fellow Jews or Christians?)

between the lines in his questions to Jesus.

These verses had been often paired together long before Jesus.

Jesus' answer would have seemed obvious to the teacher of the law and to those who were listening. The scribe was trying to make Jesus look foolish but ended up looking foolish himself by asking such a basic question and getting such a basic answer.

Discussion 2: About 15 minutes Luke 10:30-37

- 1) Describe the situation the traveller found himself in.
The man was assumed to be a Jew. His journey from Jerusalem to Jericho was common albeit somewhat dangerous for a lone traveller. Robbers would often lay in wait along certain passes on the Jericho road.
We don't know if Jesus is referring to an actual event but the story was true-to-life. Judging by the response of the teacher of the law, it seems likely that Jesus is citing a real event as it silenced the teacher who could have otherwise objected, "such a thing would never happen."
- 2) Who were the first two people to come upon the wounded traveller? What claim would the wounded man have on them as a "neighbour"?
- 3) How did the priest and Levite respond to their "neighbour"? How do you think they might have justified excusing themselves from helping the wounded man? What excuses might we use today in similar situations?
- 4) Remember the teacher of the law's original question: "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Does it seem like Jesus' story is getting off-track of the original question? Why or why not?
- 5) Who was the third person to discover the traveller? How does the Samaritan get involved? What motivates him? Describe each step of his assistance to the traveller.
- 6) Why does Jesus use a Samaritan as the hero of the story?
Jews and Samaritans hated each other. The Jews considered the Samaritans to be inferior because centuries earlier they had been Jews who inter-bred with non-Jews

Jesus changes the teacher's question (Who is my neighbour?) to 'to whom shall I be a neighbour?'

The priest and Levite were both religious professionals (clergy) as was the teacher of the law.

Apathy? Fear of robbers? Concern about ceremonial uncleanness?

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and then became political and religious opponents of the “pure” Jews who returned to Israel from exile. The Samaritans responded in kind to the Jews with religious hatred and racism. See the exchange between the Samaritan woman and Jesus in John 4:4ff.

- 7) Jesus concludes his story with a “zinger”: “Who was a neighbour to the traveller?” How does the teacher of the law answer? What does he avoid saying? (The Samaritan!) Why? What does that reveal about the teacher of the law?
- 8) How does Jesus conclude the exchange with the teacher? Does he mean if you are kind to strangers you will go to heaven? Why or why not?
- 9) How did the actions of the Samaritan answer the question original question: “What must I do to inherit eternal life?”
- 10) How can we be transformed into the kind of person who “loves the Lord with all our heart, mind, and strength and loves our neighbour as ourselves”?

Jesus has changed the question to “What kind of person must I become to inherit eternal life?”

Closer:

- Do you think the Samaritan felt his way into an action or acted his way into a feeling? Explain.
- For meditation: Love leads the description of the Fruit of the Spirit. What acts of love do you need to take with your “neighbours” to further grow the Fruit of the Spirit in your life?

Have a suggestion to make this Home Group Guide better? Email us at: contact@radiate-uk.com