

Participant Handout

Week 3: How Shall We Live? The Ethics of Jesus

Focus Scripture

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" He answered, "You shall 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." And he said to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live." But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.' Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise." (Luke 10:25-37)

Taking It Home Exercises

- ∞ Do you ever wonder what principles or guidelines should impact your daily choices? Read Mark 12:28-34 and imagine Jesus speaking to you in his reply. If you were to respond to these words of Jesus, how would it change your family, neighbors, or co-workers? Allow these words to shape your actions today.
- ∞ Read Luke 10:25-28 and John 13:34-35. In what ways are your decisions guided by the ethic of love? Are there any areas where this ethic raises difficult questions for you? Pray about these now and listen for God's reply.
- ∞ Read 2 Corinthians 3:5-8. Think of a situation in which you found it important to have an ethic based on freedom in the Spirit. Now think of a time when the simplicity of a rules-based ethic appealed to your heart. What was the difference in these situations?
- ∞ Read Matthew 7:12. Consider how politics and business would be conducted differently if they were fully based on the "Golden Rule." Identify one area in your life where you want to live into this God-given principle of ethics more fully, always asking the question, "Would I want someone to do this to me?" Express your commitment in prayer.
- ∞ Read Luke 12:22-34. Does fear, spoken or unspoken, drive any of the choices you make about how to act? If so, how might trust in God help you live beyond your fears?