



First Baptist Cumming, GA

Who's Your One • Showing Christ's Love to Your Neighbor • Matthew 5:1-16 • 08/18/2019

Main Point

Sacrificially serving and blessing others is an important step in reaching people with the gospel. Immense opportunities are at our fingertips both locally and globally.

Introduction

[As your group time begins, pass out the one page participant's guide. Then use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.]

Describe an experience of being the receiver of another person's generosity or benevolence. What impact did that person make in your life? How did you see Jesus through his or her compassion?

When have you felt emotional or bothered by the spiritual climate of our city?

Which of our church's local missions opportunities have you been a part of? What have you learned about the needs and spiritual climate of our city in the process?

So far we've prayed for God to show us the "ONE" person He's leading us to pray for and share Christ with. We talked about how to eliminate excuses and fears. Then last week, we began to look at different ways and places we can connect with people who need Jesus.

Ask if someone in the group has a praise to share related to this study series or if someone has newly identified their "ONE."

This week we are talking about something called "Servant Evangelism." It is SHOWING Jesus to people, knowing that most people need to be SHOWN Christ's love before we will get an opportunity to SHARE about Christ's love. People often talk about taking the gospel message around the world, but it is equally important that we be a church committed to showing the gospel in our own backyard among people we encounter regularly.

Discover

Today we're going to hear what Jesus Himself taught us on the subject; then we'll troubleshoot together how we can really live it out. As we go to this first scripture, I want you to pay very close attention and listen to the type of person Jesus is describing...

Have a volunteer read Matthew 5:1-11

What adjectives did you hear Jesus use to describe His kind of people?

Most people tend to think about these descriptions as *different* kinds of people. You've got meek people here, mourning people there.... It's actually more accurate to think of Jesus as describing ONE kind of person.... His kind of "Kingdom people." They'll be characterized by these fairly unpopular qualities: poor in spirit, mourners, meek, hungry and thirsty for righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers, persecuted because of righteousness...

What do you suppose would be YOUR impression if you were to meet a person who exhibited all these qualities? Do you think you would want to be around them? Why? When might you want to be around such a person?

This sort of person would be much different than other people in the world. Most people in the world will value and portray the world's values: strength, wealth, power, pleasure, pride. These "kingdom people" are the exact opposite. They are lowly, humble, merciful, selfless, peaceful, persecuted. Such a person is so different that we might be drawn toward them. However, they will often be overlooked by the world.

In what ways are all Christ-followers meant to fit this description?

Jesus continues...

Have a volunteer read Matthew 5:11-16

What thoughts, feelings, or desires do you have as read those words from Jesus?

Why do you think Jesus chose to compare us to "salt" and to "light"?

As Jesus continues to teach, He tells his disciples to "love [their] enemies and pray for those who persecute you." (vs. 44). Elsewhere in John 13:35, He tells His disciples the world will recognize them as His followers HOW?... by their love.

What are some ways you've seen or experienced this kind of love from God's people?

Why should love characterize God's people?

When the world thinks about Christians, what words do you think come to mind?

Hopefully everyone has *received* love from Christians and *given* that love to others somehow. It is truly better to GIVE than to receive! We also need a credible witness. If we just tell people about Jesus but can't demonstrate a transformed life of love and selfless holiness, they aren't likely to care. Or what if we go into a poor neighborhood to tell them Jesus is their greatest need without making any attempt to meet a basic immediate physical need? What will that tell them? When many people think about Christians, they think "condemnation" rather than "compassion". "Legalism" not "love". "What we're against" rather than "what we're for".

Now that we've had some time to think about this, let's get practical by watching and jotting down some notes on this short video from our High School Minister, Scott Carpenter....

Watch

[Have everyone watch and take notes on the session 4 video featuring FBC's High School Minister, Scott Carpenter.]

Application

[Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

[Put into small groups for the Application time.]

Scott mentioned several helpful principles. What was the most helpful for you?

One way we can show Christ's love is by first meeting a practical or physical need. What are some practical needs you've seen in your ONE's life? Is there a way you or even your group could be used to meet a need like this?

In your small discussion groups, brainstorm together for 3 minutes and quickly write down as many practical ways to demonstrate the love of Jesus in our city or community. Have each group read their results out loud for the entire group.

CLASS ASSIGNMENT: Coordinate with your class leadership to make plans for your group to sign up and serve at the Cumming Fair this October. It's an easy way to show Christ's love that opens their hearts to receive Christ's truth. If that's just not possible, contact one of our church's local Acts 1:8 mission partners to plan a practical way your group can be a blessing and serve others in the name of Jesus.

PERSONAL ASSIGNMENT: Pick one of the following two to accomplish this week.

1) This week try to ask someone (perhaps your ONE) any of the following questions:

- What comes to your mind when you think about Christians?
- Do you know any real Christians?
- What do you think makes someone a real Christian? What would that person be like?

2) Reach out to your ONE this week. Find a way to show them the love of Jesus. Encourage and bless them. Listen to them. Serve them somehow. Meet a need...with no strings attached. Once you do, be ready... they may ask WHY. You always want to "be ready to give an answer to those who ask!" (1 Peter 3:15).

Close

It's said: No culture, language, or people is immune to the language of love. It's also said: More people have been brought into the church by the kindness of real Christian love than by all the theological arguments in the world. We'll talk next week about how to share Jesus with our words; but this week, let's preach Christ without words - by our love and selfless service.

Pray

Close by reading Daniel 9:18-19 over your group as a prayer for your community/city.

Further Resources

Participants Guide

Pinterest is full of ideas for Servant Evangelism. But if you need help thinking of more ways to be missional, a great resource is Ben Connelly and Bob Roberts' [Field Guide for Everyday Mission](#) or Ben Connelly and Jeff Vandersteldt's [Saturate Field Guide](#). There's even a website: servantevangelism.com!