

DISABILITY AWARENESS SUNDAY

Just Love

BIBLE STUDIES

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WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR?

'JUST LOVE' BIBLE STUDY SERIES #1

Read Luke 10:25-37

Luke 10 records a conversation between a religious law expert and Jesus. After establishing the two greatest commandments the religious expert asked a relevant question. Who is my neighbour? In true Jesus fashion, He responds with a parable and another question.

Questions and Discussion Points

1. Discuss or consider the differences in the three men (Priest, Temple assistant and Samaritan man) who came across the injured man. What was different in their approach to the wounded man? What do you think was different in their perspectives of him?
2. None of the men were medical experts and they were all on their way somewhere. Why do you think only the Samaritan man showed mercy? Was it because of his ethnicity, his skills, his attitude or something else?
3. What are some of the perspectives or attitudes people might have about people with disability?
4. It's clear in the parable that the injured man was not the literal next-door neighbour of any of the three men. You could say, it's who we are next to or who we come across. Are there people in your life that you come across that you feel you don't have the skills or the time to stop for? What about people with disabilities?
5. Read verse 36 and 37 again.
6. The commandment for us to 'love your neighbour as yourself' has no exclusions. People with disabilities are sometimes excluded, or even avoided, because people don't feel equipped to connect or interact with them. Love is not about getting it right all the time. What is one thing you could do to show love to someone with a disability?

Prayer

Heavenly Father. Thank you for your Word and its ability to guide and instruct us. Help me to realise when I am not loving my neighbour and to see the attitudes I might be holding that hinder me from loving. Please show me how I can love my neighbours with disabilities. Amen.



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THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE

'JUST LOVE' BIBLE STUDY SERIES #2

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Agape love, referred to in this passage, is the highest form of love, being a choice and not out of attraction or obligation.

Love is a biblical principle that guides us to be welcoming and inclusive of all people. Not knowing how to support or interact with another person, with a disability or otherwise, cannot excuse us from doing our best to love and respect others. You may not know the person or their disability, but you know they are human like you, who wants to be seen, respected, feel connected and loved. So, let's love accordingly!

Questions and Discussion Points

1. What challenges or encourages you in verses 4-7?
2. When do you feel you're genuinely loved by others? For those doing this in a group, pay attention to how many differences there are between each of you.
3. Do you know someone with a disability or perhaps have a disability yourself? Discuss or consider some possible examples of how you might show love, as described in verses 4 to 7, to that person with a disability? Keep in mind that every person is unique and although there may be some commonalities it is more likely that how a person will feel loved will be unique to them.
4. Verses 1 to 3 makes it clear that loving others genuinely is significant. Reflect on the statement: 'Love is more important than skills and ability, than knowledge and faith, than generosity or sacrifice'. Do you find aspects of this statement confronting or challenging?
5. Often in church a lot of emphasis is placed on knowledge and outward behaviour. It is measurable and can be seen, so that makes sense. However, sometimes it is an indication of our hearts and sometimes it isn't. How might we ensure we are allowing God to transform our hearts to become more loving?
6. Read verse 13

Prayer

Heavenly Father. Thank you for your love for me. Thank you for choosing to love me. Help me to take the time to get to know people with disabilities in my life so I can love them in a way that is love to them. Please work in my heart to grow my love for others. Amen.



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THE GOSPEL IS FOR EVERYONE

'JUST LOVE' BIBLE STUDY SERIES #3

Read Romans 10:12-17

In this passage, Paul challenges his audience by asking: how can a person believe in Christ if they have never heard of him?

In Christ we are all made of equal value. When we take a view of 'us and them', we separate ourselves from people Christ has called us to be in fellowship with. The society or community we grew up in can mould our attitudes and beliefs about a group of people that we may not even be aware of. These beliefs or mindsets change how we relate to or behave toward people.

Questions and Discussion Points

1. When considering reaching people with disabilities with the gospel, what challenges or inspires you in verses 12-13?
2. Often people with a disability are seen as people to be served, rather than people who can also serve the body of Christ and hold roles within the church, just like any other member. How might verse 15 challenge people's preconceived ideas about people with disabilities in a preaching or other ministerial role?
3. There are many people who believe that the only way to minister to people with disabilities is to create a separate 'disability ministry'. However, this isn't often the best solution or option, with barriers including a separate meeting space and time, the challenge of maintaining regular volunteers, as well as the very real potential damage of creating an 'us and them' culture. Discuss or consider how you would feel if you could only ever be a part of one group at church (such as men's, women's or youth group) and were prevented from belonging to other church groups as well (such as home/small groups, worship or prayer team, etc.)?
4. Re-read 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 & 13.
5. A more loving way of sharing the gospel with people with disabilities, is to be intentional in creating places of belonging within current ministries and groups. 1 Corinthians 13, shows God's blueprint of how best to do this: through LOVE. Discuss or consider 1-3 things that you could do to help create places of belonging in your church, group, or ministry?



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THE GOSPEL IS FOR EVERYONE

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6. People with disabilities have a wide variety of skills, abilities, and impairments. Some people may not be able to talk, some may not be able to read, some may struggle to understand complex ideas, and some may show no outward demonstration of understanding. Many also have none of these challenges! This passage tells us that although knowledge or ability may be useful, it is not more important than love, nor does it last forever. Discuss or reflect on the following questions:
 - a. What allows you to be in relationship with God?
 - b. Is there anything that we do or about who we are that could disqualify us from being in relationship with God?
 - c. Does this passage challenge any perspectives you may have held about people with disabilities and their ability to be in relationship with God?

Prayer

Heavenly Father. Thank you for the opportunities that I have had to hear your gospel and that you choose to love me. Thank you that your love for me isn't based on my knowledge, my skills or my ability to get things right. Help me to do my part in spreading your gospel to others. Please show me ways to create places of belonging for people with disabilities, whether that's in my church, the ministries that I'm a part of or even within my own home. Amen.



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