

10: Care for the Least

Accompanies the 3/14/2021 Sermon

BIG IDEA

The Gospel calls us to give our lives in service to others by showing concern and practicing tangible care for “the least of these” – the hungry, the sick, the destitute and the imprisoned. According to Jesus, our discipleship is evidenced in our care and compassion towards others.

GETTING STARTED

Use the following questions to break the ice and begin your group discussion together:

- *Talk about a time when you had a pressing, tangible need that you could not meet on your own until someone else stepped in and helped provide for you or your family? How did it feel to be stuck and unable to provide for yourself? How did it feel when someone else stepped in and helped in generous fashion?*

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

Read the following Scriptures together and then use the questions below (or any you wish to add) to discuss the text and unpacking its meaning.



Have someone in your group read **Matthew 25:31-46**.



The CONTEXT of Matthew:

Matthew is one of the four Gospels. It was written to a primarily Jewish audience to emphasize that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies about the messiah. Matthew's Gospel is full of Old Testament promises being fulfilled in Jesus, and comes to a climax as Jesus fulfills the promise of salvation. It ends with Christ's charge to "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations."

- What stood out to you in this passage? Why did that strike you?
- The book of Ephesians states that we are saved by faith alone and not by works (Eph. 2:8-9) and yet Jesus words here can sound a lot like we won't be welcomed into the

kingdom unless we feed the hungry and clothe the poor. How do we reconcile the Bible's message of "salvation by grace through faith" with Jesus' call to action here?

- Read verses 41-46 again. Is Jesus saying that if we fail to meet the tangible needs of the destitute when we see them that we will be eternally condemned? Why or why not? Defend your answer from Scripture.

- Who are "the least of these" (vs. 40) in our community and our day and age?

GETTING PRACTICAL

Discuss the following questions together as a group, giving particular thought to how we are called to live based on what the Scriptures have said.

1. Practically speaking, what is the hardest part for you in Jesus' call to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and visit the sick or the imprisoned?

2. How can we as a LifeGroup take a step towards obeying Jesus' call to serve the destitute in our own community? What practical thing could we band together to do this month?

3. What does it look like for you personally to *Give Your Life in Service to Others* in the way that Jesus is talking about in this passage? What things have you found helpful? What things have been challenges or barriers?

4. Spend some time together in prayer as you close and ask God to open your eyes and help you see someone this week that you can serve as the hands and feet of Jesus.