



RADICAL LOVE AT WORK



EVANGELISTIC
PRAYER
TEAMS



RADICAL LOVE AT WORK



Course Summary

These studies examine how we can show radical love with our work colleagues drawing lessons from Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan.

Few of the sayings of Jesus have penetrated our culture as Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan has. The ethical teaching in this simple story has impacted Christians for millennia and has had a lasting effect on our society. Being a "Good Samaritan" still has currency today and still challenges all who are willing to consider it. But it is a story that has many layers and far reaching implications. We are going to explore some of these deeper layers over these studies. These should be shorter studies, leaving more time for reflection and prayer.



Course Structure

1: FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD?

2: SEEING THE BEATEN UP MAN

3: COMPASSION IN A ME ME ME WORLD

4: VIVID COMPASSION IN A BUSY WORLD

5: COSTLY COMPASSION

6: THE NEIGHBOUR WE'RE CALLED TO BE

7: THE ART OF THE NON-ANSWER



RADICAL LOVE AT WORK



Parable of the Good Samaritan

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

“What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”

He answered, “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, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

“You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii[e] and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’

“Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”

The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.”

Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

Luke 10:25-27



RADICAL LOVE AT WORK

1. FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD?



Introduction

God loves everyone, right? And so Christians should love everyone too! If the expert in the law was mistaken because he wanted to limit who he had to love, then is it always wrong to be selective about who we love?

Big Picture

The parable of the Good Samaritan isn't about loving everyone, it's about loving anyone.



Bible Passage

But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

"Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him."

Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

Luke 10:33-37



Key Truths

1. The Samaritan is the example of how to love our neighbours because he loved the person in need God brought across his path.
2. There were many people in Jerusalem, Jericho, and the rest of Israel who needed help, who the Samaritan could potentially have helped if he hadn't stopped for this beaten man - but he isn't held accountable for them - he is praised for loving the man before him.
3. The expert in the law wants to legitimately ignore people around him who need his help so he can limit his love to those like him - Jesus doesn't grant him this loophole.

Thoughts? Questions?



Application

In our global 24 hours news cycle world, we can often feel guilty for issues that have nothing to do with us; while being ignorant of the issues right outside our doors (or in the desk diagonally opposite).

Are you getting overwhelmed by the needs of the world? It may be that you are trying to take on the role of God, rather than sitting under his plan to care for the people he brings across your path.

We can only help the people God brings across our path. (Indeed, when we try to intervene across the globe as wealthy Christians from a different culture, we can hurt more than we help - check out chalmers.org). It is God's job to care for the whole world; under God it is our job to care for those he brings across our path.

Who are the people God is bringing across your path - or bringing to your attention - that you need to have compassion for?

Our sinful hearts will often seek ways to ignore the people around us, in order to care for potential people. Who are the people you may be overlooking who need your care?



Prayer

Pray that God would reveal the people who he is bringing across your path for whom you need to care.

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RADICAL LOVE AT WORK

2. SEEING THE BEATEN UP MAN



Introduction

When was the last time you were in need and someone inconvenienced themselves to help you?

How did it make you feel?



Big Picture

The harvest is plentiful - God sends his workers to love people that he brings across their path.



Bible Passage

He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.

Luke 10:2

A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him.

Luke 10:31-33



Key Truths

1. God sends his workers into the harvest field. God is active in bringing about his kingdom.
2. All three people saw the man. Two pass by on the other side. The Samaritan takes pity on him – the word here is compassion.
3. The beaten man's pain is obvious, but the first two choose to ignore – there are other things more important.

Thoughts? Questions?



Application

We too are workers sent into our harvest fields. The people who come across our path are the people we need to love – to have compassion for.

As you enter your workplace, do you think of yourself as someone who is sent by God?

The beaten man's needs were obvious – he was stripped, beaten, half-dead. Those around us are physically fine, but spiritually – stripped, beaten, half-dead. Many, if not most, have one foot in hell – they desperately need to know the Lord Jesus, and his forgiveness and love.

Will you have compassion on them enough to help them meet Jesus?

What difference would it make to you to know you are sent by God?



Prayer

Pray that we would show real love for God and for our colleagues this week at work.

Pray for the next step for our colleagues meeting Jesus.

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3. COMPASSION IN A ME ME ME WORLD



Introduction

Can you recall a time when someone was kind to you at work?

What happened and how did it impact you?



Big Picture

Compassion in a selfish world stands out and distinguishes us in the world.



Bible Passage

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?" He answered, "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, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

Luke 10:25-27

But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him.

Luke 10:29-33



Key Truths

1. The answer to the question “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” is to love God and love others – it is principally about those outside of myself. What a contrast to the original question which is about *me*.
2. The priest and the Levite refuse to love the beaten man. Did they have good reasons not to stop? Probably. If the half-dead man was to become all-the-way-dead, both would be ceremonially unclean (though there were provisions in the law for this sort of occasion). If they stuck around, they too may meet the same fate.
3. However, neither man is commended for not stopping – they are clearly meant to be scandalous examples of how being religious has no impact on their behaviour. Whereas the Samaritan has great reasons for not stopping – this is a hated Jew after all. But he still has compassion on the beaten man.

Thoughts? Questions?



Application

Me! Me! Me!

We live in a truly selfish time, but so did Jesus. Loving God and loving others has always been an ideal we all struggle to keep. The way the Samaritan loves the beaten man is radical and extravagant then and now. He bandages the man, cleans him up, makes sure he is looked after – spending his time and money to care for him.

Our expectations for others are extremely low when it comes to having compassion for others. Instead, we expect each other to put ourselves first – we marvel at examples of humans being kind, there’s a whole genre of social media devoted to it. Loving others as Christians can and should, will stand out.



Application (cont)

“Go and do likewise.” (Luke 10:37) Jesus calls those who Love God to show compassion in the same radical way. What could it look like to have compassion for others at work?

I know of one worker who goes out of their way to help others meet their deadlines, particularly if they are stressed or if their own work is done for the day. How do you think their colleagues respond to that kind of compassion?



Prayer

Pray for creative ways to show practical, radical, costly compassion with your colleagues.

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4. VIVID COMPASSION IN A BUSY WORLD



Introduction

The saying ‘time is money’ is no longer strictly true. Time is now more valuable than money. Volunteering in Australia has decreased over the last few decades – and the number of hours people volunteered for has also declined. People are more likely to pay for others to do roles that were once performed by volunteers, rather than volunteer themselves.

What do you think?



Big Picture

Radical, extravagant love in a busy world is to spend our time for the sake of others.



Bible Passage

But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

Luke 10:29

But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’

Luke 10:33-35



Key Truths

1. The contrast between the expert in the law and the Samaritan is clear. The expert wants to limit his need to show compassion. The Samaritan shows extravagant compassion.
2. The Samaritan spends his own time and money to help the beaten man. He is a busy man, probably travelling on business where time is money. And yet the Samaritan spends his time to care for the beaten man – going literally out of his way to take him on his own pack animal.

Thoughts? Questions?



Application

When time is more expensive than money, giving of our time for our friends and colleagues can communicate our care for them. How can you spend your time with your colleagues that communicates your care for them?

In his book, *How to Talk about Jesus (without being THAT guy)*, Sam Chan speaks about how compressed people's workdays have become, and how they have little time for coffee or lunch breaks. He suggests offering to go on coffee runs and lunch runs (your shout) as a great way to break the ice and start conversations with colleagues. Eventually they may start going with you...



Prayer

Pray for opportunities to show compassion to your colleagues by spending your time getting to know them better so you can introduce them to Jesus.

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5. COSTLY COMPASSION



Introduction

If you and your colleagues were to compare your bank accounts - would you be able to tell who was Christian by how they spent their money?
What would be different?

 **Big Picture**

Compassion for others is costly; we use our money for the good of others.



Bible Passage

But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

Luke 10:33-35



Key Truths

1. Count the resources the Samaritan uses to care for the beaten man; bandages, oil and wine, his donkey, a room in an inn, two denarii, plus any extra costs. And that's before we consider any lost income for deviating from his business.
2. Compassion is costly, and the Samaritan is commended not because he has done something amazing, but because he has done what was expected of him in loving his neighbour.

Thoughts? Questions?



Application

Compassion is costly.

How do you use your money - your God given resources - to show compassion to your friends and colleagues?

How does being a Christian change the way you spend your money?

One way Christians are different in our spending is our support of Gospel work. City Bible Forum exists largely by the generosity of Christian workers who value what we do in seeking to reach the world through workers with the good news about Jesus. Will you give to City Bible Forum's End of Financial Year appeal?

citybibleforum.org/give



Prayer

Pray that you would consider how you can use your resources to see your friends and colleagues come to know Jesus.

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RADICAL LOVE AT WORK

6. THE NEIGHBOUR WE'RE CALLED TO BE



Introduction

How do you feel about your colleagues?

Happy? Annoyed? Frustrated? Ambivalent?

How about heartbroken?



Big Picture

Being the neighbour Jesus calls us to be is all about having compassion.



Bible Passage

A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him.

Luke 10:31-33



Key Truths

1. All three men travelling down the road to Jericho see the beaten up man. Two pass by on the other side, one - the Samaritan has pity on him.
2. Pity (or compassion) is the difference between being one of the crowd and being the neighbour Jesus wants us to be.
3. The word for pity, or compassion, is a word used only three times by Luke. The other times it is used either of Jesus or God the Father. This is not an easy or common calling. This is a divine calling to compassion.
4. The Samaritan's compassion for the beaten man is radically exceptional, but at the same time we recognise that this is exactly how we should all be.

Thoughts? Questions?



Application

The paradox of the parable of the Good Samaritan is we recognise that the Good Samaritan is both acting exactly as we should, but at the same time uniquely and radically exceptional. We are meant to marvel at how well he cares for the beaten up man, but at the same time recognise that this is precisely how we must behave, even if we consistently fail to do so.

Think of your colleagues and friends who don't know Jesus. Do you see their needs? Do you see them as half-dead already - one foot on the earth, one foot in hell? Do you have a visceral reaction to the knowledge that without Jesus they are on their way to hell and judgement?

Do you need to ask God to grant you that divine compassion for the lost around you?



Prayer

Pray that God would give you divine compassion for those around who are “half-dead” and that you would respond radically in compassion.

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RADICAL LOVE AT WORK

7. THE ART OF THE NON-ANSWER



Introduction

Think back to the last time someone asked you a question that put you on the spot.

What were you asked?

What did you say?



Big Picture

When asked a tricky question, Jesus often turned it back on the questioner - and we can too.



Bible Passage

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

"What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

He answered, "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, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

"You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

Luke 10:25-28



Key Truths

1. The expert in the law wanted to test Jesus, so he asked Jesus a tricky question, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” This was not an innocuous question. Wrapped up in this lawyer’s question are hidden assumptions – the lawyer already *knows* the answer he’s looking for.
2. And so, Jesus refuses to play his game. Jesus asks the expert in the law to give his answer.
3. Once the lawyer has had his say, Jesus can affirm his position before challenging him to keep the standard he has set.

Thoughts? Questions?



Application

Questions can put us on the back foot – particularly when they come out of nowhere – and especially when they come from someone trying to trip us up. But have you considered that we don’t have to answer every question asked of us?

We could turn the question back on the questioner, like Jesus does. We could ask, “why do you want to know?”.

Think back to a time when you found yourself stumped by a question (or when you last flubbed an answer). How could you handle it differently now?

Of course, when we’re asked a question it’s a great time to be praying that God would provide us with more good questions – or a helpful answer.



Prayer

Pray for confidence and wisdom to know when to ask a good question rather than give an answer.

Pray for good questions from our colleagues and friends.

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